

**TRANSLATION AS INTERPRETATION:
A STUDY OF WILLIAM RADICE'S
TAGORE TRANSLATIONS**

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DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

I hereby declare that in writing down my Ph. D thesis titled “TRANSLATION AS INTERPRETATION: A STUDY OF WILLIAM RADICE’S TAGORE TRANSLATIONS”, submitted to North Bengal University under the supervision of Dr. Chandanashis Laha, I have abided by the norms and ethics of Ph.D, including those of avoiding plagiarism.

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This is to certify that Sri Suvash Chandra Dasgupta has worked under my supervision for his PhD thesis titled, " TRANSLATION AS INTERPRETATION : A STUDY OF WILLIAM RADICE'S TAGORE TRANSLATIONS". As his supervisor I have always been impressed by his diligence and intelligence, and I am sure that he has all the qualities that go to make a dedicated researcher. I wish him every success.

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*Dedicated to my teachers who ignited in me the critical
sense and the spirit of research*

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PREFACE

The present study is an attempt to evaluate the achievement of William Radice as a Tagore translator in the light of translation theories. A bilingual study of this nature involving the twin disciplines of Translation Studies and Tagore Studies requires, on the one hand, an acquaintance with the history of translation theories and the 'poetics' of translation studies. It also requires, on the other, a first-hand acquaintance with the original and the translated works of Rabindranath Tagore as well as the critical works on him. In order to preserve the bilingual nature of the present study I have followed the principle of bilingual documentation in the "Works Cited" section. Tagore formed his own concept of translation and its evaluation on the basis of his experience of translating *Gitanjali* poems. Surprisingly, his reflections on translations are, in many respects, similar to those of Western translation theorists; but they have not yet received the importance they deserve from the translation critics. While evaluating Radice's Tagore translations I have included in my discussion Tagore's translation thoughts alongside the views of the Western translation theorists.

The seminal idea of the title of this study comes firstly from Roman Jakobson's definition of translation as 'interpretation' (Kelly 1) and secondly from Axel Buhler's article "Translation as interpretation" included in *Translation Studies* (2002) edited by Alessandra Riccardi and published from Cambridge University Press. Translation, as understood by William Radice, is not the mere transfer of literal meanings of words or expressions from one language to another; it is an 'imaginative insight' into the life, the creative works and the thought processes of a writer one is translating. In "The Task of the Translator"(1923) Walter Benjamin identifies something 'unfathomable', 'imaginative', and 'poetic' about the creative works of a great writer and a literal or word-for-word translation is incapable of capturing the spirit and essence of their originals (Schultz and Biguenet 71). In the Introduction to his book *On Translation* (1959) Reuben Arthur Brower refers to the translator as a "creator" equating him with the "original author" (Brower 7). He also adds, "[...] in spite of the fact that the study of "the creative process" has been a matter of speculation since Plato, and has become increasingly fashionable since Coleridge, it is surprising how little attention has been given to

the obscure business of *re-enacting some one else's creation*" (emphasis added) (Ibid 4). According to Brower, the translation critic is theoretically concerned with the re-enactment of some one else's creation whereas the translator re-enacts it in another language performing a parallel act of creation (Arrowsmith and Shattuck 62). This seems to go against the basic task of a translator who sacrifices himself so completely to the work that his personality completely disappears. But translators and translation critics down the ages have glorified the subjective role of the translator in the act of translating a work from one language to another. In his epoch-making book *Toward A Science of Translating* (1964) Eugene A. Nida unequivocally says, "[...] *the human translator is not a machine, and he inevitably leaves the stamp of his personality on any translation he makes*" (emphasis added) (Nida 154). This 'stamp of personality' unconsciously colours the interpretation of a translator. Again, in the Preface to *The Translator's Art* (1987) William Radice and Barbara Reynolds rightly observe, "[...] however self-effacing the translator's art may be, *the translator's personality is never wholly suppressed, nor should it be*" (emphasis added) (Radice and Reynolds 7). In "Ten Rules for translating Tagore" (1986) Radice seems to have mentioned the interpretative role played by the translator in the act of translating: "*The personality of the translator always comes into play; a translation of a poem can never be like a photo or carbon copy of the original*" (emphasis added) (Rao 34). What Radice implies here is that the intrusion of the 'personality of the translator' into a translation makes it interpretative as well as creative.

According to Buddhadev Bose, Rabindranath Tagore is "one of the most elusive poets of the modern times" (Bose 411) and the rendering of such an 'elusive' poet undoubtedly presents formidable challenges for a translator. Literal or word-for-word translation, translation theorists opine, cannot capture the spirit of the creative works of such an 'elusive' and imaginative poet like Rabindranath Tagore. It is only the free and interpretative mode of rendering that is capable of exploring the spirit and essence of his creativity. In "The Challenge of Translating Tagore" (2012) Radice sums up the true nature of his Tagore translation: "But as a poet myself, and one for whom the sounds and rhythm of poetry have always been immensely important..., I found myself responding to the sounds of Rabindranath's poems in an instinctive and intuitive way. I cannot claim, even now, that I hear the poems in quite the same way as a native speaker would hear them, but they

immediately get 'translated', from the very first reading, into sounds and rhythms that are natural to me in my mother-tongue" (Chakravarty 445). It is now abundantly clear from the above observation that in his translations Radice makes the intuitive and imaginative interpretation of Tagore in English. In "Confessions of a Poet-Translator" (2003) he does not hesitate to describe his approach to Tagore translations as 'imaginative and intuitive' (Radice 139). I have therefore tried to highlight this aspect of Radice's translations in my dissertation.

I am extremely grateful to my friend-turned supervisor Dr. Chandanashis Laha, Associate Professor of English, of North Bengal University, who brought me back to the world of academic research at the fag end of my career. Aware of my interest in Tagore he suggested sometime in 2004 that I should work on William Radice's Tagore translations. I jumped at his suggestion and made up my mind to pursue the job. He made an arrangement for me to meet Mr. William Radice when he had come to Kolkata in 2008 at the invitation of Dr. Damayanti Basu Singh, Buddhadev Basu's youngest daughter, to deliver the Buddhadev Basu centenary lecture at Rotary Sadan, Kolkata. In this connection, I would like to express my gratitude to my revered teacher Dr. Basu Singh, ex-Reader in the Department of English of North Bengal University, for giving me the kind permission to attend the centenary lecture. I am also grateful to Dr. Radice who took time off his busy schedule to meet me and talk to me about his Tagore translations. Chandan also requested Dr. Basudev Chakravarty, Professor of English of Kalyani University and an authority on Tagore translation, to allow me to have photocopies of some of the rare books on translation that he had in his possession. I am thankful to Dr. Chakravarty for the help I received from him. Besides, Chandan made available to me for my use some of the important books on translation from his personal collection. I am also thankful to Prof. Mohit Kumar Roy of Burdwan University and Prof. Fakrul Alam of Jahangirnagore University, Dhaka, Bangladesh for their help.

I extend my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the librarian and the library staff of National Library, Kolkata and Rabindra Bhavan Library, Santiniketan, for giving me access to the books and journals required for my research. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge with thanks and gratitude the services I had received from the librarian and the library staff of Raiganj College (University College) throughout the entire period of my

research. I would also like to convey my gratitude to all the authors and publishers included in the “Works Cited” section of this study.

I am grateful to my brother-in-law Shri Prodyut Kumar Sinha who, from time to time, made enquiries about the progress of my work and was never tired of encouraging me. His son Somnath also deserves my sincere thanks for collecting some rare books for me. I am also thankful to Shri Ranjit SenGupta of Raiganj College for discussing with me many problems of Tagore translations from time to time and for supplying me with ready solutions.

My loving daughter Samhita also helped me a lot by collecting some important books from College Street and Kolkata Book Fair. My wife-cum-colleague Sumita took upon herself the burden of day-to-day domestic chores lest they should have interfered with my work. As I am not good at Bengali computer typing, she did the entire Bengali typing work for me. No word of appreciation is sufficient for the unfailing support and constant encouragement that I received from her at every stage of my research.

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Finally, I would like to convey my gratitude to the authority of North Bengal University and the Teacher-in-Charge of Raiganj College (University College) for granting me Study Leave for eight weeks for the completion and submission of my Ph.D. thesis.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

<i>CC</i>	<i>Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation.</i>
<i>CCT</i>	<i>The Craft and Context of Translation.</i>
<i>COD</i>	<i>Concise Oxford Dictionary.</i>
<i>CPPRT</i>	<i>Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore.</i>
<i>EWRT</i>	<i>The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore.</i>
<i>ML</i>	<i>The Manipulations of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation.</i>
<i>OALD</i>	<i>Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary.</i>
<i>OPRT</i>	<i>One Hundred One Poems of Rabindranath Tagore..</i>
<i>OTT</i>	<i>Oxford Tagore Translation.</i>
<i>PJS</i>	<i>Particles, Jottings, Sparks.</i>
<i>RTCV</i>	<i>Rabindranath Tagore: A Centenary Volume.</i>
<i>RTTM</i>	<i>Rabindranath Tagore: A Timeless Mind.</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Rabindra Biksha.</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>Rabindra Rachanabali.</i>
<i>SL</i>	Source Language.
<i>SOAS</i>	School of Oriental and African Studies.
<i>SLT</i>	Source Language Text.
<i>ST</i>	Source Text.
<i>TL</i>	Target Language.
<i>TLT</i>	Target Language Text.
<i>TPC</i>	<i>Translation from Periphery to Centrestage.</i>
<i>TT</i>	Target Text.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

William Radice (1951--) who emerged as a Tagore translator in the mid-1980s with his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore has carved out a prominent niche for himself among the contemporary Tagore translators. What distinguishes his translations from those of his predecessors is his ‘imaginative and intuitive’ approach to Tagore translation (Radice 139) coupled with some innovative translation devices that he employs to reincarnate Tagore’s works in the receptor language. Radice seems to have been indebted to his mother Betty Radice, whose classical scholarship and editorship (1964-1985) of the Penguin Classics series brought him into contact with the world of literary translation. In “Betty Radice: A Memoir” Margaret Wynn quotes Radice as recounting the lesson he learnt from his mother “[...] translation is not just a matter of handling words and meanings; [and] it requires deep imaginative insight into the person whose works one is translating” (Radice and Reynolds 38). As he grew up in an atmosphere of literary translation at home, he had developed an almost instinctive fondness for it from an impressionable period of his life. But translation is such an arduous and problematic task that it requires tireless endeavour and dedicated effort for a translator to re-enact the creative process of a writer from the Source Language Text to the Target Language Text (hereafter SLT and TLT). This was why his mother reminded him of the trials and tribulations of a translator in a letter written to him in 1974: “I don’t want you to be under any delusions about translating being more creative than critical writing --- in the sense that nothing in my experience involves so much drudgery, minute application, exasperation at being *tied to another’s thought processes*. *Great self-discipline is needed if one is to be a faithful interpreter* and not fall into the temptation of “improving” one’s original (emphasis added) (Ibid 29). This letter could not deter him from undertaking the act of translating; on the contrary, it ignited in him the desire to traverse the arduous path of literary translation. Consequently, he had undertaken the translation of Tagore poems since the late 1970s. But he had kept his mother in the dark about his translation efforts only to

give her a pleasant surprise by bringing out a book of Tagore translations. Unfortunately, his mother had died a few months before the appearance of his *Selected Poems of Rabindranath Tagore* (1985) from the Penguin. While translating Tagore poems Radice emulated many of the strategies and techniques of translation that were being followed by the translators of the Penguin Classic series under his mother's editorship. He brought about some basic changes in the nature and concept of Tagore translation in keeping with the ideals and principles of Penguin Classic series. The changes include, among others, a scholarly introduction, imaginative rendering of the original, explanatory notes to each poem and a glossary of unknown and culture-specific words. Radice, thus, played an active role for the 'Penguinification of Tagore' [to use Trevor .J. Saunders's term from his essay "Penguinification of Plato" in *The Translator's Art* edited by Radice and Reynolds] to enhance his credibility and reception in the West as one of the great creative writers of the world. With this "Penguinification of Tagore" he tried to revive interest in him in the Western world that had turned its back on him since the late 1920s.

According to Radice, the translation of 'a poet as complex and as lyrical' as Rabindranath ought to have a sound intellectual and scholarly foundation, however imaginative and creative it might be. "I do believe", he says in "Confessions of a Poet-Translator" (2003) "that the translation of a poet as complex and distinguished as Tagore needs to be *scholarly*, however literary and creative it may also be" (emphasis added) (Radice138). One of the important contributions that Radice made to Tagore translations is the addition of an intellectual and 'scholarly' background to enable the foreign readers to locate Tagore in his proper 'context'. The pre-Radice Tagore translations, with the exception of Amiya Chakravarty's *A Tagore Reader* had been marked by the conspicuous absence of this 'scholarly' and intellectual background. Even the one volume *Collected Poems and Plays* of Rabindranath Tagore (1936) published by Macmillan & Co. (hereafter *CPPRT*) provides no such background information about Tagore and his translations. The pre-Radice Tagore translations were concerned more with the mere rendering of the Source Text (hereafter ST) than with providing any 'textual notes' or 'explanatory prefaces' that characterize the modern translations. Radice is the first among the contemporary Tagore translators to have initiated the art of accurate rendering of the original with preface, introduction, afterwards, notes,

glossaries and indices. The celebrated Indian poet-translator A.K. Ramanujan (1929-1993) adopts a similar method for translating Anantha Murthy's *Samskara* (1976). He claims that the Notes and Afterward to his translation of Anantha Murthy's *Samskara* (1976) are a part of the effort 'to translate a non-native reader into a native one' (Holmstrom 6). Radice's notes and glossary are likewise an attempt--- as is the introduction --- to equip the non-native readers with a native-like insight and understanding about the original text. It is only in the aftermath of Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore that Sisir Kumar Das brought out a three volume edition *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore* from Sahitya Akademi with long introductions, detailed notes and numerous annotations (hereafter *EWRT*). Radice is therefore the first translator who revolutionized Tagore translations with an 'imaginative and intuitive' approach together with a scholarly background of his works. Commenting on Radice's contributions to Tagore translations Ananda Lal says : " For the first time, a sensible introduction to Tagore, notes to each poem explaining difficulties in meaning, and a glossary brought standard international editorial procedure to a Tagore translation"(Lal 35). Radice therefore emerged as a pioneer of a new kind of Tagore translation and elevated it to an international height breaking down its linguistic and cultural insularity.

In his essay "Translating Tagore" (2003) Radice frankly confesses how he became a Tagore translator: "I must confess that I have always found it difficult to read Tagore's own translations objectively. I have never liked them, and as soon as I had learnt enough Bengali to compare them with the originals I was impelled, as a translator , by a deep sense of the injustice that Tagore had done to himself" (Radice 216). Distressed by this 'deep sense of injustice' that Tagore had done to his originals, Radice takes upon himself the most challenging task of translating his works faithfully in order to make him 'credible' as a great poet in the Western world. He draws our attention to the following shortcomings from which translations of his works done by Tagore himself suffer : (1) they lack 'context and information', (2) they fail to represent 'the range and variety' of his original works, (3) they give no impression of his 'technical virtuosity' and (4) they fail to convey his 'poetic talent'(*Ibid.* 230). What Radice here seems to emphasize is that Tagore's translations of his own poems fail to represent the true qualities of his poetic greatness as well as his 'range and

variety'. In his lecture on "Tagore's Poetic Greatness", delivered in Ahmedabad in 2003, Radice dwells on those factors that go to make a poet great: "To be a great poet you need to write great poems, and that requires a number of purely literary gifts and qualities, some of which are quite technical"(Radice 5). According to him, a translator needs to convey these literary qualities and technical aspects of Tagore's poems in order to make the translation new and 'credible'. Further, Tagore himself attached great importance to craftsmanship which is an indispensable quality for the evaluation of a great poet. In this connection Radice says, "As a poet myself, craftsmanship is immensely important to me too, for I believe *no poet or artist, in the long run, will be credible unless he or she possesses it*" (emphasis added) (Ibid 6). The credibility of a great poet or artist, therefore, depends largely on this quality of craftsmanship. Radice then goes on to describe the traits of craftsmanship that make a poet great as well as credible: "[...] these elements working together in concert --- verse-form, rhythm, structure, language, feeling, imagery, moral depth, wit---embody that power of poetic mind that makes a great poet, distinguishes him from the second-rate. It was that quality of mind that I felt was lacking in earlier translations of Tagore, including his own, and which I was so anxious to capture" (Ibid 7). While translating the poems of Tagore for his *Selected Poems* (1985), Radice's main objective was to convey the true qualities of Tagore's poetic greatness that remained unrepresented in his own translations or in translations done by others. In "The Challenge of Translating Tagore"⁽²⁰¹²⁾ Radice tells us what he really wanted to achieve in his Tagore translation: "When I started working on my *Selected Poems* of Tagore for Penguin books, it quickly became clear to me that the book would have to be *far more than a translation*. If I was to give a *new and credible impression of Tagore's range and power as a poet*, I would have to select poems from *the whole span of his output*, I would have to *annotate them carefully*, and I would have to write *an extensive Introduction*. The wind in my sails would have to be carefully and meticulously *directed and controlled by scholarly effort*" (emphasis added).(Chakraborty 457). The above extract seems to elucidate the intuitive 'translation project' that Radice mentions, for the first time, in his essay "Confessions of a Poet-Translator"⁽²⁰⁰³⁾. According to this project, his Tagore translations would be something more than a traditional rendering giving 'a new and credible impression of Tagore's range and power' as a poet of versatile genius. Having selected poems for his selection from 'the whole span of his output' he would have to write an

elaborate Introduction and to provide detailed annotations for them. Like the translators of the Penguin Classic series, he seems to have felt the inner need of directing and controlling his translations by an intellectual and 'scholarly effort'. With the passage of time he tried to give a concrete shape to this intuitive 'project' by bringing out books of Tagore translations one after another. In "An Interview with *Boier Desh*" (October-December 2009) Radice tells us how the rendering of Tagore's "Agaman" gives him the intimation of his arrival in an 'untrodden continent'. The objective of the 'translation project', as conceived by him, is to explore this 'untrodden continent' of Tagore's creative world and to enhance his importance and 'credibility' as a great poet. The 'project' of exploring this 'untrodden continent' begins with his rendering of *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore, continues through *Selected Short Stories* (1991), *The Post Office* (1996), *Particles, Jottings, Sparks* (2000), *The Post Office* and *Card Country* (2008) published by Visva-Bharati in a single volume and leads up to the translation of *Gitanjali* (2011) coinciding with his 150th birth anniversary. The imaginative rendering of Tagore's works together with the innovative translation devices initiated for the first time in *Selected Poems* have been maintained by Radice in his subsequent books of Tagore translations. According to Radice, the first three books of Tagore translations --- *Selected Poems*, *Selected Short Stories* and *Particles, Jottings, Sparks*--- which form a 'trilogy' of sorts have "a three part structure : Introduction, Translation, Appendices / Notes followed by a glossary of Indian or Bengali words" (Radice133). This 'three part structure' seems to have summed up the rest of Tagore translations done by Radice, with a few minor exceptions. An exponent of creative translation, Radice brings to bear in his Tagore translations the creative and imaginative elements with a 'scholarly' and intellectual effort giving it a distinction of its own.

Another remarkable aspect of Radice's Tagore translation is his well-considered strategy to render Tagore's poetry into poetry --- a strategy that stands in sharp contrast to the poet's decision to translate his poetry into prose. In this respect, Radice may have been influenced by his mother Betty Radice who, as the editor of Penguin Classics, advocated the translation of poetry into poetry in a marked departure from E. V. Rieu's principle of translating poetry into prose. Regarding the verse translation of Tagore's poems Radice says, "I never considered anything other than a verse translation of his poems; for all the agonies and

compromises that verse translation imposes, no prose translation could begin to approach Tagore” (Radice 36). What Radice seems to imply here is that the ‘elusive’ nature of his poems can only be captured through a verse translation. In his long creative career as a writer Tagore made his distinguishing mark as ‘a perpetual innovator, constantly creating new forms and styles in his poetry’. The infinite range of verse forms and structural devices that form an integral part of his poems presented a formidable challenge for Radice to rehabilitate them in the Target Language (hereafter TL). The questions that perturbed him constantly are: “How to do justice to the verse form? To Tagore’s incredible range of metres and rhyme schemes, his effortless technical virtuosity?” (Ibid 231) The translation of his brief poems made him virtually stupefied by the incredible technical range that Tagore had at his disposal. Of the 198 poems comprising the posthumous *Sphulinga* not even two poems are written in the same verse form. In order to do justice to his genius a translator of Tagore ought to represent his incredible range of verse-forms, metres and structural devices because much of the meaning and power of his poetry, Radice believes, derives from its forms. Very few translators before him did ever try to represent both the content and the form of Tagore’s poetry in English translation. Even Tagore himself did not attempt to convey them in his own translations of his poetry simply because he preferred prose translation of his poems to their poetic rendering. The infinitely varied verse forms used by Tagore in his poems in different phases of his poetic career demand a corresponding technical virtuosity and ‘inventiveness’ from the translator to represent them in translation.

Dissatisfied with the existing Tagore translations Pierre Fallon s.j. looked forward to the advent of a new translator who would bring about a transformation in Tagore translation with ‘textual notes or explanatory prefaces’ to revive international interest in his poetry (Fallon³²⁰). Buddhadev Bose, almost prophetically, talked of the re-emergence of Tagore in the international field as and when a Bengali-knowing British or American translator -- someone like a Roy Campbell or a Michael Hamburger -- who would come forward to translate Tagore for the English-speaking readers (Bose130-131). Radice seems to be the long-awaited Tagore translator who had been translating Tagore since the late seventies to represent, in a credible way, the ‘poetic talent’ and ‘technical virtuosity’ of Rabindranath highlighting ‘the range and variety’ of his creative works (Radice230). He was aware of

Tagore's 'iconic status in Bengali literature that was not reflected in the translations of his works done by himself or others. Speaking of the aim of his Tagore translation Radice says, "My aim in translating Tagore in a new and fresh way ... is gradually to make him internationally credible and interesting as a writer, not just a sage" (Ibid77). This attempt to free Tagore from the 'politics of translation' to which he was once subjected is directed to a fresh literary appreciation. It was Radice who perhaps for the first time made a bold attempt to turn the course of Tagore appreciation in the West by translating anew his non-mystic, classical and humanistic poems.

A poet-translator, Radice combines in him the dual career of a poet and a translator and his rendering of Tagore poems is essentially a 'creative' endeavour as his writing of poetry is. Though he is at heart a poet, he has so far achieved more success and recognition as a translator than as a poet. Commenting on Radice's 'hyphenated identity' as a Poet-Translator Chandanashis Laha observes that his 'dual vocation' as poet and translator can well be seen as a case of 'perfect' creative 'symbiosis'(Laha xi). He is a fine translator only because he is first of all a fine poet. According to Dryden, "To be a thorough translator he [one] must be a thorough poet" otherwise one cannot translate poetry (Roy 102). It is Radice's poetic sensibility which enables him to capture and re-create the poetic beauty and elusive charms of Tagore's poetry and to interpret it in English as imaginatively as possible. In other words, his poems and translations are the two facets of the same creative power. In his "Confessions of a Poet-Translator"⁽²⁰⁰³⁾ Radice tells us that his translations and books of original poems proceed from the same intuition and groping process of creativity (Radice135). According to Renato Poggiolio, a translator should combine in himself humility and pride to perform his job successfully: "His two greatest virtues or assets are *the reverence he feels toward the author or work he translates, and the sense of his own integrity as an interpreter*, which is based on both *modesty and self-respect*" (emphasis added) (Brower 145). As a translator of Tagore, Radice also combines in himself the 'reverence' for Tagore's versatile genius and the deep insight into his works as an interpreter. These twin 'virtues' make him one of the finest Tagore translators of the present times.

Radice's Tagore translations have evoked from the beginning a warm and enthusiastic response from the reviewers as well as critics at home and abroad. The few critical comments that have been made, from time to time, by translators, critics and reviewers on his role and contribution as a Tagore translator are worth mentioning here. In a review article on his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore in *Chaturanga* (December 1985) Jyoti Bhattacharya commends the 'scholarly dedication and sincere efforts' of this young British translator for the fresh reception of Tagore in the Western world (Bhattacharya 200-208). In the introduction to *I Won't Let You Go: Selected Poems* (1992) of Rabindranath Tagore Ketaki Kushari Dyson eulogistically refers to Radice as follows: "The first serious literary translator from Bengal to emerge in Britain is William Radice whose translations of selected poems from Tagore appeared in 1985, and of his stories in 1991, both from Penguin" (Dyson 36). Subsequently, in her Bengali article 'Inrejte Rabindrakabita --- Sampratik Bitarka' published in Bengali weekly *Desh* (4 May 1996) she describes Radice as "a remarkable pioneer in Tagore translation" (my translation) (Ghosh 48). "Although Radice's translation is sometimes handicapped by his ignorance of certain delicate nuances of the Bengali language, especially in the context of intimate household expressions", Subhas Sarkar discovers in Radice "a commendable honesty and fidelity to the original" (Chatterjee 114). Welcoming Radice's 'meticulous translations' Shymasree Lal, in her review article in *The Statesman*, spoke highly of his 'dedication and scholarship' as a Tagore translator (December 8 1995). In *Rabindranath Tagore: The Myriad-Minded Man* (1995) Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson made only a passing reference to Radice as 'the British translator, who in the 1980s gave some of Tagore's poetry a new lease of life in English' (Dutta and Robinson 12). In the introduction to the first-ever translation of *The Gitanjali* (1998) from the Bengali original Joe Winter is all praise for Radice's novel approach to Tagore translation in *Selected Poems*, "It is for its approach that I recommend it; and the Notes at the end of the Volume are scholarly and clear" (Winter 11). Reviewing Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore Jyotirmoy Dutta calls him 'one of the bright luminaries in Tagore translation' (my translation) but at the same time criticizes him for his failure to capture the poetic beauty of the original in certain cases (*Desh* 2 May 1998). Cathleen Raine, in her review of *Particles, Jottings, Sparks* (2000) has spoken of how Radice has projected Tagore's stature as a multi-faceted writer in the West: "He himself (Rabindranath) was aware that his own translations

were inadequate, as have been several others by Indians, and not until Dr. Radice's impeccable and loving translations have we been able to discern Tagore's stature" (Autumn 2002). According to Kaiser Haq, "He [Radice] is unquestionably the finest translator of Tagore into English to date" (Haq 1 Chapman99, Edinburgh 2001). In a letter to the Editor of *Desh* (2 December 2004) Sukanta Chaudhuri sums up Radice's contributions as a Tagore translator very succinctly: "As a Tagore translator, Radice's role is undisputed in projecting Rabindranath before the international readership through new translations of his works" (my translation).

It may therefore be said (from Chapter 1) that Radice played a very prominent role for the fresh reception of Tagore in the Western world through new translation of his works underlining his versatile creative power. But his translations have not yet been taken up for an in-depth study to assess his achievement as a Tagore translator. The objective of the present study is to locate Radice in the history of Tagore translations and to evaluate his translations in the light of translation theories. In Chapter 11 a review of the history of Tagore translations has been made to ascertain Radice's position in it. In Chapter III an overview of the history of translation theories has been made to show how interpretation down the ages has accompanied translation theories. The succeeding chapters (Chapter IV to VIII) of the present study have been devoted to the evaluation of Radice's translations from an interpretative point of view. Three Chapters (IV – VI) have been allotted to the examination of Radice's translations of Rabindranath's poetry (poems, brief poems and 'song-poems') and one chapter each to his short stories and drama. Chapter IX sums up Radice's contribution to Tagore translations highlighting the role played by him in the creation of what Harish Trivedi calls a 'third Tagore' (Radice 76). The concluding chapter is followed by an alphabetical arrangement of the bilingual works of authors cited in the present study.

CHAPTER II

TAGORE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS: A REVIEW

At least it is never the function of a poet to personally help in the transportation of his poems to an alien form and atmosphere ... To the end of my days I should have felt happy and contented to think that the translations I did were merely for private recreation and never for public display if you did not bring them before your readers.

Letter from Rabindranath Tagore to William Rothenstein,
26 November 1932.

Notwithstanding his belated realization of the 'great injustice' he had done to his own works, the fact remains that Tagore translated his Bengali poems into English not merely for 'private recreation,' as he confessed in his letter to Mr. Rothenstein. He seemed to have in mind some foreign readers who were genuinely eager to have an acquaintance with his poetical works but were unable to access them in the original for linguistic barriers. He set himself translating his own poems in English in order to give them an idea about his poems and not to launch an 'English career' for himself. It needs to be mentioned in this context that both Beckett and Nabokov in the Western world translated their works in foreign tongues as Tagore did, but nobody ever did the job before him only to reach out to the foreign readers. But that does not mean that he wanted to float a separate career for himself in English. According to Buddhadev Bose, he was not "a translator by temperament; for his translation was not a part of the poetic vocation" (Bose 540-41). Unlike many writers of the world literature he did not turn to translation to regain the loss of original inspiration or creative power. He was too great a poet for the humble and laborious task of translation, which involves an act of self-denial (Ibid 541). Nevertheless, he had to undertake the task of translating his own works into English under the exigency of circumstances. In a letter to his

niece Indira Devi, Tagore gives a most fascinating account of the genesis of his translation, during his convalescing period at Shilaidaha in 1912:

You have alluded to the English translation of *Gitanjali*. I cannot imagine to the day how people came to like it so much. That I cannot write English is such a patent fact that I never had even the vanity to feel ashamed of it. If anybody wrote an English note asking me to tea, I did not feel equal to answering it. Perhaps you think that by now I have got over that delusion. By no means. That I have written in English seems to be the delusion. On the day I was to board the ship, I fainted due to my frantic efforts at leave-taking and the journey itself was postponed. Then I went to Shelaidah to take rest. But unless the brain is fully active, one does not feel strong enough to relax completely; so the only way to keep myself calm was to take up some light work.

It was then the month of Chaitra (March-April), the air was thick with the fragrance of mango- blossoms and all hours of the day were delirious with the song of birds. When a child is full of vigour, he does not think of his mother. It is only when he is tired that he wants to nestle in her lap. That was exactly my position. With all my heart and with all my holiday I seemed to have settled comfortably in the arms of Chaitra, without missing a particle of light, its air, its scene and its song. In such a state one cannot remain idle... Yet I had not the energy to gird up my loins and sit down to write. So I took up the poems of *Gitanjali* and set myself to translate them one by one. You may wonder why such a crazy ambition should possess one in such a weak state of health. But believe me, I did not undertake this task in a spirit of reckless bravado. I felt an urge to recapture through the medium of another language the feelings and sentiments which had created such a feast of joy within me in the days gone by.

The pages of a small exercise-book came to be filled gradually, and with it in my pocket I boarded the ship. The idea of keeping it in my pocket was that when my mind became restless on the high seas, I would recline on a deck-chair and set myself to translate one or two poems from time to time. And this is what actually happened. From one exercise-book I passed on to another. Rothenstein already had an inkling of my reputation as a poet from another Indian friend. Therefore, when in the course of conversation he expressed a desire to see some of my poems, I handed him my manuscript with some diffidence. I could hardly believe the opinion he expressed after going through

it. He then made over the manuscript to Yeats. The story of what followed is known to you. From this explanation of mine you will see that I was not responsible for the offence, which was due mainly to the force of circumstances.

(Chakravarty 20- 21)

Whatever may be the psychological value of the above account, this letter fails to give us any concrete idea about the genesis of Tagore's own translations. The rendering of the *Gitanjali* poems that he began in the seclusion of Shilaidaha is not his maiden work. He had to undertake the translation of his poems 'under the force of circumstances', as he confesses in his letter to Indira Devi. The 'force of 'circumstances' impacted him in two ways. He has mentioned only the inspirational impact that the natural ambience of Shilaidaha in Spring had on his mind. But he seems to be silent on the psychological exigency that made him undertake the most controversial job. Somendrachandra, who accompanied Tagore on his third visit to England in 1912, seems to have drawn our attention to this exigency that made him the translator of his poems:

Dissatisfied with those renderings, Tagore himself began to translate into English some of his poems from the Bengali *Gitanjali*. On the way I saw him absorbed in rendering his poems in the train and aboard the ship.... He hesitated to show or read them out to anyone. Incidentally, he said, "I am, as it were, being carried away by a flood of creative joy of a new kind. But I do not know if they would satisfy anybody.(my translation)

(Pal 308).

The above-mentioned 'renderings' were probably done by Roby Dutt, Ajit Chakravarty, Lokendranath Palit and a few others in order to promote Tagore's 'English career' in the West. A brief account of 'those renderings' will help us understand why in 1912 Tagore took the apparently unusual decision of translating the poems of the Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910). Chanchal Kumar Brahma's penetrating study of those 'renderings' in his *ইংলন্ডের দিকপ্রান্তে রবির উদয় রবির অস্ত* (2000) confirms Sisir Kumar Das's view that Tagore's decision to translate his own poems was, in fact, 'the culmination of efforts started at least a decade

earlier' (Das10). It is, at the same time, the culmination of the intermittent translation activities that Tagore had been carrying on since 1911 at the request of someone or other.

Translations of Tagore's works in the pre-*Gitanjali* period may be classified into three phases: I. First phase 1890. 2. Second phase-1900-1901.3. Third phase 1909-1912 (Chakravarty 93). The history of Tagore translation in English began in the 1890s when Tagore translated two passages of 'নিষ্ফল কামনা' (Fruitless Desire) from a poem of মানসী (1890) and became the first translator of his own poems in English. According to Krishna Kripalani, this is perhaps 'the first English translation made by the poet of one of his Bengali poems' (Kripalani 222). This 'maiden attempt' at translation went without any follow-up exercise. Surprisingly, Tagore's rendering of 'Fruitless Desire' is in verse and the full text is given below:

All fruitless is the cry,
All vain this burning fire of desire.
The sun goes down to his rest.
There is gloom in the forest and glamour in the sky.
With downcast look and lingering steps
The evening star comes in the wake of departing day
And the breath of the twilight is deep with the fullness of a farewell
feeling.

I clasp both thine hands in mine,
And keep thine eyes prisoner with my hungry eyes;
Seeking and crying, Where art thou,
Where, O, where !
Where is the immortal flame hidden in the depth of thee!

(Kripalani15)

It was at the beginning of the twentieth century that some of his friends and admirers took the initiative of translating his works for his reception outside Bengal and India as a whole. Surprisingly, most of them were interested in translating his short stories rather than his poems or dramas. In 1901-02 English translations of at least five short stories of Tagore

appeared in *New India: A Weekly Record and Review of Modern Thought and Life* edited by Bipin Chandra Pal from Calcutta.

In England, around the same time Tagore's scientist-friend Jagadishchandra Bose tried his best to get his stories translated into English and published in the English magazines. He himself translated three stories of Tagore and got "The Kabuliwala" (1901) rendered into English by Sister Nivedita. But the translations were not accepted for publication in any British journal because of the Western readers' lack of interest in Oriental life. Translators of this period showed a tendency to concentrate more on the translations of his stories rather than his poems. In a letter written to Tagore from London towards the end of 1900 Bose throws light on this topic:

I shall not let you languish in obscurity for long in the countryside. Why do you use such an idiom in your poems that they cannot be translated? I shall get your stories published in this country so that people here should have some idea about your creative writings" (my translation).

(Bose & Tagore 44)

Here he seems to have suggested that there is something elusive about the idioms of Tagore's poems and that the translators of the time were unable to capture the subtle nuance of his poems.

Two important literary developments of the time seem to have a direct bearing on Tagore's emergence as a translator of his own poems. One of them is the launching of *The Modern Review* in 1907 by his friend Ramananda Chatterjee (1865-1943). It may be recalled here that *The Modern Review* was a literary journal published from Calcutta that was well-known in both England and America. This journal played a pioneering role in promoting translations of Tagore's works to the Western people. It was between December 1909 and June 1912 (the month of Tagore's third visit to England) that English translations of some fifteen short stories, nine poems and three essays of Tagore appeared in *The Modern Review*. Among the translators were such distinguished persons as Jadunath Sarkar, Sister Nivedita, Ajitkumar Chakraborty, Lokendranath Palit, Pannalal Basu, Debendranath Mitra, and, of course, Tagore

himself (Chakravarty 3-4). It was in the *The Modern Review* that William Rothenstein read Tagore's *The Post Master* (1911) translated by Debendranath Mitra and got an idea of Tagore's creative power. "It was in the Postmaster", he writes to Tagore, "I first saw mirrored a corner of the world of your creation ..." (Lago 163).

Most of the translations of his works that had appeared so far were of his stories and translation of his poems did not receive the attention it deserved from the translators. They considered it a most challenging job and Tagore himself discouraged translation of his poems into English. In a letter he writes to his friend Jagadish Chandra Bose:

But are you sure that stripped of the dress of Bengali language she [his poems] will not Be like Draupadi publicly humiliated? That is the big difficulty with literature --- she expresses herself in a certain manner to her near and dear ones inside a private area marked by language but loses that expression the moment she is dragged outside.

(Sarkar 69).

Though Tagore was not until then aware of the creative potentialities of translation, he tended to overlook the fact that it [translation] causes a 'change of dress' rather than any 'disrobing altogether' (Mukherjee 115).

Though Tagore was initially skeptical about translation of poetry, he changed his mind later, encouraging some of his friends and admirers for this job. With the arrival of A.K. Coomarswamy in Santiniketan in February 1911 the problematic issue of poetry translation began to take a concrete shape. Ajit Kumar Chakravarty, a teacher at Santiniketan school of the early days, was his first translator [of some poems from *Sonar Tari*, *Chitra*, *Chaitali*, *Naibedya* and *Kheya* that he read out to his English friends] and was responsible for the first published translation of a Tagore poem ['The Country of the "Found-Everything" '] in a well-known weekly in England, *The Nation*, on 15th June, 1912, exactly a day before Tagore reached London (Chakravarty 6). Ajit Kumar's translation was historically important as being the first published work by an Indian in a British journal. But unfortunately his name as the translator of the poem first published in an English journal was not mentioned. This

poem was later reprinted in *The Modern Review* in September 1912 with the name of Ajit Kumar Chakravarty as its translator (Pal 321). He also translated two poems from Tagore's *Sisu* ["Birth story and Farewell"] in collaboration with A.K.Coomarswamy that appeared in *The Modern Review* in 1911. He played a pioneering role in the history of Tagore translation but he did not receive the proper recognition he deserved as a Tagore translator in his lifetime or even after his death. Tagore's friend Lokendranath Palit rendered two of his poems "Fruitless Cry" and "The Death of A Star" of which "Fruitless Cry" appeared in *The Modern Review* in 1911(Brahma 18).

As Coomarswamy did not know Bengali, he urged Tagore to make rough paraphrases of some of his poems in English so that he could give them poetic shape in English. Thus, Tagore Englished some of his poems hastily and handed them over to him for this purpose. The rendering of ^{'বিদায়'} ~~Biday~~ (Farewell) was published in April number of *The Modern Review* in 1911 with the names of Tagore and Coomarswamy as its joint translators. Tagore made paraphrases of some more of his poems to be given to Coomarswamy so that he could translate them into English. Thus, Tagore's experiment in collaborative translation with Coomarswamy might have taught him the importance of paraphrase-based prose translation which reached an artistic perfection in his rendering of the *Gitanjali* poems. According to Prasanta Kumar Pal, Tagore's noted biographer, the rough translations that Tagore handed over to Coomarswamy were of such poems as 'The Touchstone', 'Renunciation', 'The Creation of Women' and 'Is it True'. Subsequently, he made some alterations in the texts of these renderings and included them in *The Gardener* in 1913 (Pal 19).

It was sometime in 1911 that Ramananda Chatterjee requested Tagore to do some translations of his poems into English to be published in his journal. In spite of his initial reluctance he agreed in the long run to render some of his poems for the journal. Ramananda's request might have ignited in him the desire to translate them probably as models for rendering his poems. He seems to have felt that the translators of the time were not doing justice to his poems in their renderings. It was from an inner sense of dissatisfaction that he made translations of some of his poems and handed them over to Ramananda Chatterjee. According to him, these are "the first English translations by him

[Tagore] of his poems [that] appeared in the February, April and September numbers of *The Modern Review* in 1912....These are, to my knowledge, his earliest published English compositions. Their manuscripts are with me” (Chatterjee.X). These translations seem to have prepared him psychologically for the greater job of rendering the *Gitanjali* poems that would fetch him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. Hence, the view that no English translations of Rabindranath was published anywhere before the *Gitanjali* is totally unfounded.

Another important manifestation of this sudden spurt in Tagore translations was that a group of young Bengali scholars, then in England, joined the exercise launched at home to project the many-sided genius of Tagore to readers outside Bengal and India (Das 12). The second important literary event of this period was the publication in England of Roby Dutt’s translations of ten Tagore poems included in *Echoes from East and West* (1909). Roby Dutt’s renderings were historically important as being the first published translations of Tagore’s poems in rhymed verse. He presented a copy of this book to Tagore obviously for his views about his rendering. Roby Dutt’s translation of his poems in rhymed verse did not satisfy Rabindranath and in a letter (dated 14 May 1912) to his friend Pramathalal Sen he made, for the first time, some comments on the translations of his poems.

I don’t think that my poems can be rendered properly into English. ...Certainly not in rhymed verse. Maybe it can be done in plain prose. When I go to England I shall try my hand at it.

(Mukherjee116).

In fact, Tagore was strongly opposed to the idea of metrical translation of his poems and wanted them to be translated in lucid prose. Though he was not satisfied with the translations of Ajit Kumar Chakravarty and Lokendranath Palit, he did not express his views publicly except rewriting some of the poems rendered by them (Brahma 30). But Roby Dutt’s translations of his poems evoked such a strong resentment in him that he gave up his reservations about translation and took the unprecedented decision to translate his own poems into English. According to Sisir Kumar Das, the editor of *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, two factors contributed to Tagore’s emergence as a translator of his



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own poems --- increasing pressures from his admirers for more translations of his writings and his growing unhappiness with the translations of his poems done by others. "It was a kind of creative impulse", adds Mr. Das, "that had been simmering within him for a long time and finally burst into the open. For about three years a preparation had been going on, silently, which culminated in his momentous decision to be his own translator" (Das14). Mr. Das here speaks of a 'preparation' for about three years and a simmering 'creative impulse' that account for Tagore's emergence as the translator of his own works. Mr. Das's views need to be examined critically in the light of available historical facts.

As a matter of fact, the 'preparation' that Tagore actually had to go through for his translation was ^{for} much less than three years, if one takes the following two historical facts into consideration. Ananda Coomarswamy, who had been among Tagore's first translators, arrived in Santiniketan in February 1911 and expressed his desire to translate his poems in English. As Coomarswamy did not know Bengali, Tagore began to make rough paraphrases of his own poems from February 1912 onwards to help him translate his poems in English. Secondly, Tagore had announced his decision to translate his own poems while commenting on Roby Dutta's translation of his poems in his letter to his friend Pramathalal Sen on 14 May 1912. It may be mentioned here that Roby Dutta gave Tagore a copy of his *Echoes from East and West* (1909) in May 1912. Thus his 'preparation', for all practical purposes, was ^{for} a little more than a year, if one takes into account the letter to Indira Devi in which he mentions the month of Chaitra (from mid-March to mid-April) as the beginning of his translation. As he went on translating his Bengali poems, he came to be gradually possessed by what Mr. Das called a 'creative impulse' and he passed from one exercise book to another in a spirit of creative joy. What was actually simmering in Tagore was not a 'creative impulse', as suggested by Mr. Das, but an intense desire to 'recapture' in a foreign tongue the creative ecstasy or the 'feast of joy', in Tagore's own words, that gave birth to his *Gitanjali* poems.

When Tagore started translating his own poems into English at Shilaidaha during March-April 1912, he had before him two models of translation --- one followed by Ajit Kumar Chakravarty and the other by Lokendranath Palit. Ajit Kumar Chakravarty's translation is in

prose and literal, purported to be faithful to the poem as well as to the poet. Though Tagore had some fascination for Ajit Chakravarty's word-for-word, literal method, he was well aware that this method was incapable of 'reincarnating' the soul and spirit of his poem. Lokendranath Palit's model aimed at capturing the significance and beauty of the original poem in the conventional form of English poetry. Though he could not fully approve of Lokendranath's method that allowed the shadow of English poetry fall over his translation, he preferred the transference of a poem's beauty and significance to its word-for-word, literal translation. And he seemed to have drawn this lesson from his friend Loken's translation practice (Ibid 15)

While translating the Bengali poems for his English *Gitanjali*, Tagore adopted a novel method of translation to capture the essence and beauty of the original poems in 'a rhythmically free' [and] 'slightly biblical style of prose-poetry' (Radice 282). In a letter to Dinesh Chandra Sen Tagore clarifies his strategy of translation:

I feel translation can never be satisfactory unless done by myself . Since the melody of of Bengali language and Bengali rhythm cannot be transferred to English, the rendering of ideas in simple English can only bring out its inner beauty. I can easily do this work without any mistake (my translation) .

(Pal354).

In his attempt to re-capture, through the medium of the English language, the creative impulse of his Bengali poems, the poet rewrote them creatively in simple English prose drawing on the feelings and emotions of the original. And the *Gitanjali* (1912) poems underwent such a 'miraculous transformation' in English that they were "re-born in the process, the flowers bloom(ed) anew on a foreign soil" (Bose15). This makes the *Gitanjali* poems "a miracle of translation" (Ibid 15) and the best of Tagore's works in English. Ironically enough, the *Gitanjali* poems were lauded extravagantly in the West only for their 'mystical' qualities and he was regarded as a 'mystic', 'a seer from the East, or 'a saint' rather than a poet or a creative writer (Sengupta 62).

But unlike *Gitanjali* (1912), *The Gardener* (1913) is a collection of secular 'lyrics of love and life' that Tagore prepared as a counter-measure to the effect of *Gitanjali*, and also as an avowal that "he was a poet and not a guru" (Aronson 127). But even in his translation of non-devotional, secular verses in post-*Gitanjali* phase, he showed an unconscious tilt towards mystical connotation in his choice of words and phrases (Ibid 124). Thus, Tagore came to be recognized as a mystic poet in the West and he could not get rid of that label in his lifetime. The publication of *Complete Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* (1936) from Macmillan only consolidated his identity as a 'mystic' in the West, let alone dispel it. Eventually, Tagore had to pay dearly for this valorization of a secondary element of his poems at the cost of their creative qualities. Consequently, his international fame suffered a steep decline and by 1920 he became more or less discredited as a writer in the West (Ibid 127).

Broadly speaking, the English translations of Tagore's Bengali writings fall into two distinct categories, one done by the author himself, and the other by different translators. According to Sisir Kumar Das, there exists 'an intermediary group' between these two categories which appeared around 1912 following the publication of the English *Gitanjali* and ended with the death of Tagore in 1941 (Das11). Translations of this group were done by close associates of Tagore very often under his direct supervision, and sometimes with his active collaboration. For a long time the translations of this group were supposed to have been done by Tagore himself. The *Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* (1936) contained, for example, two plays , *The Post Office* (tr. Devabrata Mukherjea, 1914) and *The Cycle of Spring*,(tr. C.F. Andrews & Nishi Kanta Sen, 1917) translated by others. His publisher Macmillan & Co. maintained a mysterious silence about it and did nothing to dispel the wrong impression about their authorship (Ibid).

To this 'intermediary' group belong the foreign helpers at his school and University at Santinikatan, especially C.F.Andrews and W.W. Pearson, who translated some of his short stories for Macmillan "with the author's help". Marjorie Sykes, who translated his *Three Plays* (1950) and also his book of reminiscences, *My Boyhood Days* (1928) is to be included in this group. Tagore's autobiography, *My Reminiscences* (*Jibansmriti*,(1912) was

translated(1917) by Surendranath Tagore, the poet's nephew, who also translated short stories and the novel *Ghare-Baire* (1914); *The Home and the World*, (1919). Tagore's longest and most ambitious novel *Gora* (1910) was translated by W.W.Pearson. Krishna Kripalani claims the credit of having translated three novels of Tagore --- *Two Sisters* (1945), *Farewell, My Friend*,(1949) and *Binodini* (1959) apart from the best biography of the poet in English (Chattapadhaya 114-120).The translations of this group suffered from some defects that would eventually pave the way for the emergence of 'a third' Tagore in the time to come.

Edward Thompson was the first Tagore critic who felt the need for the representation of the myriad aspects of his versatile genius in English translation to exorcise his reputation from the spectre of mysticism. Since he knew Bengali, he was well aware that Tagore was a much greater and more varied writer in Bengali than in English. Accordingly, he set out to validate Tagore's reputation by writing in English a critical appraisal of his Bengali works. A writer of poetry himself, he translated many poems representing the various aspects of Tagore's genius and included them in *Augustan Books of Modern Poetry* (1925) edited by him (Radice 1368-1371). But his maiden attempt to exorcise Tagore failed to produce the desired impact in the West. In the Introduction to this anthology he makes an observation that sums up the crying need of Tagore's own translations:

Tagore is known to the West almost solely as a mystical poet. I have tried to present sides of his versatile efforts that are unrepresented in his own translation.

(Mukherjee137-38).

What Mr. Thompson meant to say here is that the diverse aspects of Tagore's creative works would have to be represented in English translation so that the Western people might be aware of his true greatness. Again, in the obituary column of *The Listener* (14 August 1941) Mr. Thompson called for a drastic retranslation of his works:

His poems will have to be drastically retranslated some day, and only then will his greatness and range be understood.

(Kundu *et al* 581).

In his Bengali essay “Inrejte Rabindranath” Buddhadeva Bose also, after having pointed out the deficiencies of Tagore’s own translations, proposed that his poems should be translated afresh in English for his proper evaluation as a poet in the West (Bose127-28).

It is gratifying to note that there appeared a new category of translations after a decade and a half of Tagore’s death. It was totally free from intervention of any kind. Compared to the existing translations this new kind of translation represented the rendering of complete books rather than ‘mixed anthologies’. Sheila Chatterjee’s translation of Tagore’s *Syamali* [1936, tr.1955] belongs to this category and is one of the most successful translations of a complete book of his verse. She seems to have captured, for the first time, Tagore’s characteristic technique of writing *vers libre* with varying line-length.,or what Radice would famously call Tagore’s ‘sari-poem’ style. An extract from *Syamali* is given below:

Suddenly throwing away her newspaper
She greeted me with folded palms,
The path of social intercourse was opened,
I started the conversation---
How are you? How goes the world?
And so on.
She remained looking out of the window
With a look as of avoiding contact with the
days of our closer acquaintance.
She gave one or two very brief replies,
Some questions she never replied at all.
She communicated with the impatience of her hands ---
Why all this talk ?
It would be far better to remain silent.

[Accidental Meeting] (Chatterjee1955).

The visual effect of the arrangement of lines together with their interpretative rendering makes *Syamali* a distinctive book of Tagore’s verse. Aurobindo Bose is another noted Tagore translator of this category who was aware that selections of his poems would produce an incomplete and ‘patchy’ impression about Tagore. Hence he had translated three complete books in free verse in order to ‘provide an alternative to Tagore’s own sub-biblical prose-poetry’ (Radice 1368-71). These three books of poems are *Flight of the Swans* (1955), *The Herald of Spring* (1957) and *Wings of Death* (1960). His purpose, as he tells us in the Translator’s Preface (1955), is to make as literal a translation as possible of the original

verses, even at the cost of sounding a little strange to English ears. He has purposely retained many Indian words in the English text explaining their exact meaning in the notes.

The Tagore Centenary in 1961 provided a renewed impetus to Tagore scholarship and fresh translations of Tagore to highlight his many-sided genius that had hitherto remained obscure under the so-called 'mystic' image so fondly nurtured and promoted by the West. *Rabindranath Tagore : A Centenary Volume* (1961) published by Sahitya Akademi is unquestionably a monumental testament to Tagore scholarship--- a testament that brings into critical focus his infinite range, fabulous variety and incredible creative opulence. Tagore translations also needed a corresponding shift in focus to attune itself to the changing demands of the times. Pierre Fallon s.j., like Thompson and Bose before him, stressed the need for fresh translations of Tagore for a proper evaluation of his creative genius in the West:

New translations should be attempted, more exacting and thorough, not diluted and simplified, with textual notes or explanatory prefaces. These translations should give the foreign reader the whole of Rabindranath in the order of their artistic creation....(Fallon 320).

It was with the demand for new translation that Mr. Fallon gave a much-needed call for exorcising Tagore's reputation as a 'mystic' poet:

Tagore's reputation as a predominantly 'mystic' poet should be exorcised....The West knows Tagore only as the author of *Gitanjali* and believes this to be his greatest work: it is great indeed but representative of only one aspect of Tagore's poetical greatness. Till the other aspects are revealed to them Western readers will not know the real greatness of Rabindranath.

(Ibid 320).

Exorcising Tagore's reputation as a 'mystic' poet and revelation of his versatile creative efforts became the main focus of post-centenary Tagore translations in English, a focus that gave rise to a new breed of Tagore translators in the 1980s creating the 'third Tagore'.

Interestingly, Amiya Chakraborty (1901-1985), who acted for many years as the Secretary to Rabindranath Tagore, was perhaps the first to have felt the need for editing and presenting Tagore's own translations in the modern age to counter the damage caused to his international reputation by Macmillan & Co. publishing *Complete Collected Poems and Plays* of Rabindranath Tagore (1936) in a most unprofessional way. In the introduction to *A Tagore Reader* (2003) he says:

Tagore's creative power, and the impact of his spiritual personality, however, had been dimly assessed outside Bengal and India. Primarily this is owing to the linguistic barrier, but one of the major reasons is that his writings, even in Bengal, and *especially in English translations, were not brought into focus by any clear arrangement of materials or by the careful editing needed for an expression of his many-sided genius in a single frame of reference* (emphasis added).

(Chakravarty.N. pag.).

The outcome of this realization is the publication of *A Tagore Reader* (1961) edited by Amiya Chakraborty himself on the occasion of Tagore centenary. It is basically a selection of translations done by Tagore and others that intends to give a fairly comprehensive view of Tagore's versatile creative power. The individual introduction given to each section includes relevant information about the context, a brief discussion of the contents of each section and necessary facts concerning translations and ^{their} publications. The Notes and Glossary included in this volume are exclusively meant for the foreign readers. Despite the charge of haphazard arrangement of materials that Alokaranjan DasGupta brought against him (Ghosh108), this volume stands out as an ideal model for future editors of translations in general and Tagore translations in particular.

It was for the first time in 1961 that the need for translating and promoting the representative works of Tagore to a wider readership outside Bengal was felt to dispel the wrong impression about him. The Tagore Commemorative Volume Society was formed for this purpose, ^rThe Society brought out an anthology of eighteen essays of Tagore in a volume entitled *Towards Universal Man* (1961). Encouraged by the warm reception of this anthology, the Society took the decision of bringing out a companion volume in English

comprising some of the best poems of Tagore .Consequently, an outstanding anthology of *One Hundred and One: Poems by Rabindranath Tagore* edited by Humayun Kabir was brought out in 1966 . It represented, to quote the words of the editor, the ‘best of Tagore’ poems covering his entire creative career from 1881 to 1941~~8~~ (Kabir xiii) .The poems of this volume were translated by some of the most distinguished scholars of the time in the field of English scholarship in Bengal. The translators tried their best to make the poems accurate and readable; but the lack of a uniform translation style and the scholarly background necessary for understanding Tagore’s poems is conspicuously absent here.

Tagore’s *Last Poems* (1972) transcreated by P.Lal and Shymasree Devi is another landmark addition to Tagore translation.It contains all the fifteen poems that comprise Tagore’s posthumous volume ^{"শেষ কথা"} ~~*Shesh Lekha*~~. Some of the poems were earlier translated by Humayun Kabir (poem nos.11,13), Amalendu DasGupta (poem nos.14,15) and Amiya Chakraborty(poem nos.4,14,15).But the credit of translating the whole book of poems goes to P.Lal and Shymasree Devi. Their transcreations are faithful to the original to an extreme degree. They have tried to follow, in their rendering, ‘the line-structures, stanza-patterns and, wherever possible, even the inversions’ of the original. Nowhere have they made any attempt to ‘interpret’ and the ‘stark brevity’ of the original has been scrupulously retained.

“The first Sun asked
The world’s first Life:
“Who are you?”
No answer.

Years passed.
The last Sun
asked
the last question
from the western ocean
on a soundless evening :
“Who are you?
No answer (Lal & Devi, Poem 13).

The four-page long introduction to the volume is an excellent piece of criticism relating to the last phase of Tagore's creative life. The notes and interpretations of unknown words and myth-contents have been explained in the introduction instead of the customary 'Notes' section added to a book of translation. This new approach to Tagore translation as found in the *Last Poems* seems to have anticipated Radice's strategy of translation in the *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore.

The 1980s and 1990s that witnessed a new wave of Tagore translations may well be described as the golden period of Tagore translations. William Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore and Ananda Lal's *Three Plays* (1987) ushered in an era of 'new' Tagore translations as envisaged by Piere Fallon, Buddhadeva Bose and Edward Thompson. Hence, the years 1985 and 1987 may both claim to be the "annus mirabilis" in the history of Tagore translation. Radice's *Rabindranath Tagore: Selected Poems* (1985) stemmed from an awareness that existing Tagore translations--- especially the Macmillan volume (1936) of Tagore's *Collected Poems and Plays*--- offered no information or annotation, nor did they give the readers any idea of Tagore's place in the literary history of Bengal, or of how the translations relate to the Bengali originals (Radice, 230). He emerged as a pioneer of ~~the~~ translations of a new kind introducing, for the first time, a sensible introduction to Tagore, scholarly notes to each poem explaining difficulties in meaning, and a glossary of unfamiliar names and words to Tagore translation (Lal, 35). In the Introduction to *Selected Poems* (1985), Radice states that he had tried to be faithful to the spirit of Tagore's verse and had chosen 48 poems that would represent his entire career and that would also reflect his formal inventiveness. A poet himself, Radice had tried to poetically recreate Tagore's Bengali verse in English and won unprecedented fame as an authentic interpreter of Tagore. In the Introduction to his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore, he explains his "internal principles of selection", confessing that they are intuitive and hard to define, the most important being "contrast, balance, novelty and rhythm" (Radice 36). His avowed aim in the *Selected Poems* (1985) is to represent the infinite diversity and "the spirit of perpetual progress in Tagore" (Radice 36) in order to make him "internationally credible and interesting as a writer, not just as a sage" (Radice 77).

Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath, thus, remains an outstanding pioneering work in the history of Tagore translations.

Ananda Lal's *Three Plays* (1987) of Rabindranath Tagore is also an invaluable contribution to Tagore translation for its extensive background information on Tagore the dramatist, its elaborate notes, its relevant appendices and exhaustive bibliography. Fidelity to the original remains the basic principle of his rendering in these plays. He strives to maintain "a scrupulously close correspondence between Bengali and English", sentence for sentence, and in many instances, even word for word. Again, he tries to preserve, in his translation, the "speech-rhythms" of Tagore's characters and that is why he has to sacrifice "the restraint and economy of English in favour of the more luxuriant Bengali" (Lal 112). He is more concerned with the stage potentiality of the plays and their translations are to be considered not as definitive texts but as 'performance scripts' for producers and actors. His *Three Plays* (1987), he claims, ought to be given a special position in the history of Tagore translation as 'the first full-length study in English of Tagorean drama' (Ibid35).

The publication of Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) and A. Lal's *Three Plays* (1987) seems to have opened the flood gate of Tagore translations in the 1990s. With the arrival of Tagore's 50th death anniversary in 1991 there began a new wave of Tagore translations: notably Radice's *Selected Short Stories* and *Selected Short Stories* translated by Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago. Radice's *Selected ^{Short} Stories* (1991) is a companion volume to his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath and gives the Western readers, in Kaiser Haq's words, 'the surest proof of Tagore's achievement in fiction' (Haq 1). Radice chooses 30 stories from the most prolific period (1890s) of Tagore's creative life arranging them under three headings: sthale ('on land'), jalpathe (by water), and ghate (at the ghat). The selection here is made by only subjective considerations. *Selected Short Stories* (1991) of Rabindranath by Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago is a remarkable attempt to show Tagore's versatility of mood and milieu, his ironic sense of humour, and the modernity of his appeal. This is a selection of 14 stories representing both early and late, both shorter works as well as Tagore's mature novellas. Both the volumes contain an introduction providing the socio-cultural perspective of Tagore's short stories, elaborate notes and glossary of Indian words. Sujit Mukherjee's *Three*

Companions (Orient Longman, 1992) is an anthology of translations into English of the last three long stories of Tagore (*Teen Sangi*1940).

Ketaki Kushari Dyson's anthology *I Won't Let You Go: Selected Poems* (1992) containing 140 poems is a much more comprehensive effort than Radice's in representing Tagore's verse in English. However, Dyson unequivocally refers to her choice as 'personal', governed neither by academic nor representative criteria. Her volume is intended to give contemporary readers at least some idea of the range and variety of his achievement as a poet. Starting with poems written by the twenty-one year old Tagore and ending with the very last poem he dictated from his deathbed in 1941, Dyson includes poems from every phase of his career. They are competent and faithful to the original as far as the meaning and the movement of thought is concerned. Her collection is remarkable because of its excellent Introduction, detailed notes, and useful glossary. It is the most complete representation of Tagore's achievement as a poet in English translation.

Kaiser Haq's *Chaturanga*(*Quartet*) that appeared in London in 1993 seeks to project Rabindranath as an 'Asian' writer in Heinemann Educational Publisher's 'Asian Writers Series. It is the first full length translation of a Tagore novel by a Bangladeshi translator. It is the third translation of the novel within a span of 76 years. The translation done by Kaiser Haq is excellent – certainly better than the earlier attempts. His Introduction does not add to our understanding of the novel –but he handles the challenging sections of the novel with the confidence of a poet. Haq's English version is as eerie as the original (Mukherjee103-107).

Sahitya Akademi undertook a commendable project of bringing out a three-volume authoritative set of Tagore translations in the 1990s titling them as *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore* :

1. Vol. 1 *Poems* (1994) 669 pages.
2. Vol. 11 *Plays, Stories, Essays* (1996) 780 pages.
3. Vol. 111 *A Miscellany* (1996) 1099 pages.

translate the original afresh. Devabrata Mukerjee, the first translator of *The Post Office*, made some glaring errors in his translation and those errors have crept into Dutta-Robinson's rendering, giving one the impression that they simply lifted those words .

Gora (1997) translated by Sujit Mukherjee represents the first-ever 'complete and unabridged' translation of the original text as it appears now in *Rabindrarachanabali*. The first translation of *Gora* which was published in 1924 by Macmillan & Co from London was reprinted many times for 73 years, without providing any editorial aid or introductory matter. This new translation of *Gora* (Sahitya Akademi) in 1997 breaks resoundingly with this practice . It carries a one-page Translator's Preface, a 15-page Introduction to the novel by Meenakshi Mukherjee and 20 pages of Translators Notes. This new translation of *Gora* (1997) has already had three reprints in less than five years (Mukherjee 99-103).

Joe Winter's *The Gitanjali* (1998) of Rabindranath Tagore is historically important as the first ever translation in English of the original *Gitanjali* (1910) in Bengali. Rabindranath himself translated 53 songs and included them in his English *Gitanjali* or *Song Offerings* (1912). Radice did not dare translate the songs from *Gitanjali* (1910) except "Agaman", simply because he considered songs untranslatable (Radice 31). Winter's avowed aim is to render 157 poems as they 'appear on the Bengali page, each musically, intellectually and spiritually of a piece' (Winter 9). He intends to make the poems as musical as they could be in English by using rhyme and metre. Let us compare Tagore's translation of poem no. 14 from his *Gitanjali* with Winter's rendering of the same to examine how the latter succeeds:

If the day is done, if birds sing no more, if the wind has flagged tired, then draw
the veil of darkness thick upon me, even as thou has wrapt the earth with the
coverlet of sleep and tenderly closed the petals of the drooping lotus at dusk
(Tagore14).

(Das, Vol. I.50)

And here is Joe Winter's rendering of the above prose extract:

If the day goes, if birds will no more sing,
 And if the wind is spent and no more blows,
Then dear one, bring that deepest covering,
 And in the all-dense darkness me enclose ...
As when the Earth with dreams around
 Is secretly and slowly wound;
 The lotus settles in night's offering;
 And, as eyes entering sleep, you cover those (Winter, 193).

Tagore translates the first verse simply but eloquently. Although his translation is in prose, there is a musical element in this version. Winter adheres very closely to the formal elements of the Bengali version. He also strives to convey something of the music of the original, not only through his use of rhyme, but also through skillful repetition, as in the use of the "s" sounds in the following line "and in the all-dense darkness me enclose ...". At times his rhymes seem forced and lifeless.

Particles, Jottings, Sparks (2000) is a collection of the brief poems which remains another feather in Radice's cap. He was inspired to translate Tagore's brief poems by Martin Kampchen's German translations of a hundred poems in *Auf des Funkens Spitzen* (1989). Radice has not only translated the brief poems of Tagore's *Kanika* (1899), *Lekhan* (1927) and *Sphulinga* (1945) but also, in the appendices, translated some prose pieces that shed light on the poems' method and underlying thought. He has tried to keep as close as possible to the rhythm of the original poems. But in quite a few cases, the poems have lost their spirit, their true import. Take, for example, the well-known poem in *Kanika*: "Uttam nischintey choley..." which Radice translates as follows:

The finest are happy to walk with the lowly,
Those in between are not so friendly (Radice, 54).

The point here is, after all, not unfriendliness but the snobbishness of the middle class. He tries to make up by naming the poem "Prudent Mediocrity" but the essence is still lost. The

poems of *Particles, Jottings, Sparks* are, on the whole, true to the essence of the original poems.

The work is enriched by a detailed introduction, in which Radice has explored the concept of these short poems. Both the introduction and the appendices are helpful for foreign readers to grasp the context and background of these poems.

Rabindranath Tagore: Final Poems (2001) is the unique product of collaboration between the American poet Wendy Barkar and Saranindranath Tagore, a Bengali associate professor of philosophy who also happens to be a descendant of the Bengali bard. It is the second Tagore verse translation of the 21st century (Radice's *Particles, Jottings, Sparks*, 2000, being the first) The translators of the volume concentrate on translating the poems written by Tagore in the final year of his life when he was too ill to write and when he had to dictate them to others as they came to him.

In fact, these final poems are, “extraordinarily compact,” “austere” and “direct” (XIII). Representing a radical departure from all previous collections of his verse in their anguished meditation on the “unpresentability of Being”, the poems are also unique in that they manage to be musical and yet are mostly written in free verse . What distinguishes this volume is the excellent use of “ordinary American colloquial diction” (XIV) and “fresh language in English” (Barkar and Tagore 2001). Here is an example of the superb quality of translations produced by the two translators from two different hemispheres of the globe:

I dozed off,
Woke, and saw
By my feet
A basket of oranges
Someone had brought.
The mind sends
Gusses that return
One by one, gentle names.
I know--- or maybe I don't---
That with the one unknown,
Many names meet

From many directions.
In one name all become true---
Giving brings
Utter content.

(Barkar & Tagore, Poem 29)

Tagore: Final Poems (2001) is a slim volume that has attained excellence by concentrating only on some of the final poems.

Critics who were opposed to the lapse of Tagore copyright in 2001, are now reasonably convinced that the removal of the copyright had triggered a spate of innovative and exciting anthologies of fresh Tagore translations. The Oxford University Press (Delhi) in collaboration with Visva-Bharati had undertaken probably the most ambitious project of presenting the poet in competent English translations, with comprehensive introductions and notes, in separate anthologies, on thematic basis. Under Sukanta Chaudhuri's able leadership, Oxford University Press had already published the following Tagore Translations series earning a well-deserved reputation:

1. *Selected Short Stories: Rabindranath Tagore* (2000).
2. *Selected Writings on Literature and Language* (2001)
3. *Selected Poems: Rabindranath Tagore* (2004)
4. *Relationship (Jogajog)* 2005.
5. *Selected Writings on Education and Nationalism* (2009).
6. *Oxford Tagore Translations of Writings on children* (1).

The above volumes represent the work of many translators, overseen by an editor or two besides the general editor. *The Oxford Tagore Translations* clearly demonstrate that Tagore's works are translation-friendly. In this connection, Amit Chowdhury comments, *The OTT* is "a fresh attempt to assuage the anxiety that Tagore has seldom been well translated, least of all by himself, and to allay the fear that he cannot be" (Chowdhury, 2006). Again, the *OTT* seems to follow and continue the new translation approach initiated by Radice and Lal in *Tagore Translations*.

In 2008 Visva-Bharati published the translations of *Tasher Desh (Card Country)* and *Dakghar (The Post Office)* by the noted British Tagore scholar, William Radice. After his HarperCollins collection of *Particles, Jottings, Sparks* (2000) he continues his translation work with this double-set. Rabindranath's original hand-written texts are reproduced in facsimile and the translation is set on the opposite page. Radice's translation is vigorous and subtle at the same time; one finds here the careful hand of a poet and opera librettist.

Harish Trivedi complimented Radice on having created 'a third Tagore' in and through his Tagore translations. Concurring with Mr. Trivedi, Radice describes his own Tagore translations and those by others as follows: "As well as the Bengali Rabindranath and the English Tagore, *a third Tagore was being revealed by me and by other translators*" (Radice 76). The revelation of this 'third Tagore', he feels, continues to be the main focus of Tagore translations at the present stage. The process of constructing the 'third Tagore' has only begun and much work in this direction remains to be done. As he says, "It's a slow and difficult task. We're only at the beginning" (Ibid 77). This 'slow and difficult' task of projecting Tagore in the light of the subjective appreciation and understanding of the translators remains the agenda of Tagore translation in the post-modern age.

Translators such as Radice, Dyson, Joe Winter, and Wendy Barker and Saranindranath Tagore, and Sukanta Chaudhuri and his team, have been trying their best in recent times to usher in a revival of interest in Tagore's verse and to lift his international reputation out of the moribund state it had fallen into even in the poet's lifetime. Many more translations of his works are expected to have been undertaken on the occasion of his sesquicentenary birth anniversary to represent his poetic oeuvre in elegant and readable English of the time. Of the books of Tagore translations that appeared on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary the following three deserves special mention for different reasons. The first one is Tagore's *Three Novellas: Nasthanid, Dui Bon, and Malancha* translated by Sukhendu Roy who had already made his mark as a Tagore translator in making some of the excellent translations of poems for *The Oxford Tagore Translations for ^{Writings} ~~Poems~~ on Children*. This volume of Tagore translations published from Oxford University Press contains a valuable introduction written by Bharati Roy. The rendering of the stories is faithful to the original, and at the same time

fluent and readable. What is striking about his translations is his bold use of Bengali words in place of their poor English equivalents. His language is a bit more formal than is expected. He could have used less formal and more colloquial English in his rendering of the dialogues of the stories. The *Essential Tagore* published from Visva-Bharati seeks to acquaint the present generation of readers with the multifaceted aspects of Tagore's creative genius. It is basically a selection of works on various categories rendered by thirty translators. This volume edited jointly by Fakrul Alam and Radha Chakravarty is much like Amiya Chakravarty's *A Tagore Reader* in its aims and scope. But the translators of this volume fail to make their renderings faithful to the spirit of the original. No uniform translation policy has been followed in this selection. *The Essential Tagore* (2011?) fails to fulfill the expectation it raised among the readers of the present generation.

The appearance of *Gitanjali* (2011) translated by William Radice is a remarkable literary event that coincided with the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Tagore's birth. This new volume, commissioned by Penguin India, contains an entirely new translation of all the poems that formed Tagore's English book *Gitanjali*, which was a different book from his Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910). The English *Gitanjali* takes 53 poems from the Bengali book and the remaining poems of the collection come from a number of other Bengali books of verses by Tagore. Radice rewrites *Gitanjali* drawing on the manuscript, popularly known as the Rothenstein manuscript which is preserved among the William Rothenstein papers at Harvard. Between the two covers of the same book Radice has the guts to publish, for the first time, his own translation side by side with Tagore's iconic translation. He did it, obviously, not to devalue Tagore and upstage himself, but rather to enable his readers to have a taste of the original poems and at the same time, to show how the published text moved from the Rothenstein manuscript. The Rothenstein manuscript was the one Tagore's British artist friend William Rothenstein submitted to Yeats and from which Yeats effected his alterations.

Radice's book combines an 84-page Introduction and several Appendices, running into 113 pages, which minutely show how Yeats altered the original English *Gitanjali* --- the 'real *Gitanjali*, as he prefers to call it, and thus twisted the original intentions, the mood and the

literary quality of the book. According to Radice, Yeats did not merely correct or change the wording and the punctuation of the text. He also deleted the paragraphing of many poems and disrupted their sequences. Radice feels that by deleting the paragraphs of the poems Yeats altered the original rhythm of Tagore's English *Gitanjali*. Although the book contains a motley of songs and poems from different books, a subterranean rhythm holds them together and gives them coherence. Yeats misunderstood or disregarded it and tried to improve on it. Radice examined in five appendices the extensive differences between the manuscript and the published text as edited by W.B. Yeats. His book is a quest for "the real *Gitanjali*", and he also describes it as a "restitution", an attempt to give back to Tagore what was taken away from him by W.B. Yeats and other Western admirers (Radice lxxx). His purpose of rendering *Gitanjali* afresh is to give the Western readers the taste of the 'real *Gitanjali*' and 'real Tagore' (Ibid). In spite of his best efforts Radice fails to give us the taste of the 'real *Gitanjali*' and ends up giving us a shadow of the original. Radice does not, as in his earlier poetry translations, add annotations for each poem which had been a distinguishing feature of his *Selected Poems of Rabindranath Tagore*. His method of repeating lines in the song-texts is far from satisfactory.

Translation is dated and time-bound whereas creative literature is not. P.Lal elaborates the point in his *Transcreation* (1996):

Every age gets the translation it deserves ...It is trivial and irrelevant to condemn earlier translations for not sounding satisfactory to us. As best one should compare only contemporary versions of the same text; even that is not always desirable, because different translators aim at different groups of readers with different tastes. One does one's job as best as one can, and moves on. Some translate; some transcreate; some, with the best of intentions, transcorrupt. By the time Time passes an evaluating judgment, new and fresh versions are again needed --- and the cycle starts again (Lal 46-47).

What Lal here seems to imply is that a great literary work of the past is timeless in its appeal but its interpretation changes from age to age. Translations of a creative work represent and

reflect its changing interpretations in age after age. This is how a creative work of the past continues to be live and true to its time in every age. In the অনুবাদের বক্তব্য (1957) to Kalidas's মেঘদূত Buddhadev Basu says that translation plays the role of a ঘটক, 'catalyst' in making a literary work of the past live as well as contemporaneous. Hence the need for new translations of a literary work arises in age after age (Basu72). Sujit Mukherjee's observations, though made in a different context on the fresh translations of Tagore, are relevant even to-day and deserve mention here:

The time has come ...for fresh translations, not only in English, of whatever of Rabindranath that has been translated earlier, also of whatever that has not. *He is simultaneously one of our comfortingly great as well as perpetually modern writers... and he can withstand any amount of translation into any language of the world.*

(emphasis added) (Cited in Lal, 3).

It must be admitted then that the process of translating Tagore will go on against the changing scenario of time and place. Even after the sesquicentenary celebrations of Tagore, there is still much scope for fresh translations of his works in the time to come to highlight the infinite range, fabulous variety and wide range of his poetic creativity so that the people might re-discover him as "one of the world's greatest literary artists and ...perhaps the greatest since Shakespeare" (Bose 85).

Note:

Buddhadeva Bose and Buddhadeva Basu are not two different persons as the two surnames are supposed to indicate. The surname 'Bose' figures in his English writings and that of 'Basu' in his Bengali works, but the person remains the same.

CHAPTER III

TRANSLATION AS INTERPRETATION: AN OVERVIEW OF TRANSLATION THEORIES DOWN THE AGES.

Translation – Its Etymology and Definitions

Etymologically, the English word 'translate' is derived from the Latin *Translatus*, (*trans* + *latus*) which means 'carried across' (Graham 33). *Translatus* is the Latin past participle of *transferre*: the Latin *translatio* being derived from *transferre* (*trans* means 'across' + *ferre*, ' to carry' or "to bring")(Gentzler168) . According to Christopher Kasparek, the ancient Greek term for translation (*metaphrasis*, " a speaking across") has supplied English with *metaphrase* (a literal , or " word-for-word" translation) – as contrasted with *paraphrase* (" a saying in other words", from *paraphrasis*). *Metaphrase* corresponds, in one of the more recent terminologies, to 'formal equivalence', and *paraphrase*, to 'dynamic equivalence'. (Kasparek 84). The German equivalent to the English word " translate" is "*uber-setzen*" which means "to carry something from one side of the river to the other side of the river".

Translation, as defined by Catford, is "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (Catford 20). What Catford here seems to stress is the linguistic transfer of the 'message' from one language to another. Since every creative work contains something 'unfathomable', 'mysterious' and 'poetic' (Benzamin71), a linguistic rendering can not bring out the soul and spirit of a literary work. A literal or 'word-for-word' translation turns the translator into a traitor: *traduttore traditore*. Catford's definition of translation conforms to the Latin *Translatio* or word-for- word rendering which is universally recognised as 'the ideal of 'faithful translation' (Lefevere 17-20). *Translatio*, thus, concentrates on the linguistic aspects of the translation process, without giving much thought to anything else and is best suited for the rendering of scholarly or non-literary text from one language to another.

The Latin word *translatio* stands in polar opposite to another word *traductio* which is concerned with the sense-for-sense translation of a creative work. According to Lefevere, *traductio* deals with the “linguistic and the cultural / ideological components of the translation process” (Ibid18). Roman Jakobson might have something similar in mind when he famously defined translation proper or “interlingual translation” as “an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language” (Kelly 1). The keyword in Jakobson’s definition is ‘interpretation’ which seems to be somewhat equivalent to the French word *interpréter* which is used, *inter alia*, to ‘interpret, elucidate and recreate’ a poem or a metaphysical passage (Steiner 252). In his definition of translation Jakobson lays emphasis on the ‘sense-for-sense’ or ‘free’ translation as opposed to the ‘word-for-word’ or ‘faithful translation’. When the translator interprets the original instead of making a word-for-word rendering, his role metaphorically corresponds, to some extent, to the function of the German word *übersetzen*. Unlike the traditional translator, he [the translator, as conceived by Jakobson] does not turn out to be a traitor but comes to be recognized as what L. G. Kelley excellently calls “the true interpreter” of the original”and translation becomes “a reported speech” (Kelley 146). Not only does he carry the message from one language to another, he also transports with it, its landscape and ambience both linguistically and culturally. The connotations and associations of both the Latin word *traductio* and the German word *übersetzen* might have given Jakobson an intuitive impression of ‘free’ or ‘sense-for-sense’ translation which he defined as ‘interpretation’ or ‘reported speech’. According to Kelley, the common focus of attention, from the prologues of the dramatist Terence (190? – 159 B.C) to Jiri-Levy, has been “the creative aspect of translation” (Kelley 2). Jakobson seems to have included ‘the creative aspect of translation’ in his definition of translation as ‘interpretation’.

This debate between faithful and free translation has dominated much of the translation theory for two thousand years without any solution. One, therefore, cannot but agree with Eugene A. Nida when he writes: “Despite major shifts of viewpoint on translation during different epochs and in different countries, two basic conflicts, expressing themselves in varying degrees of tension, have remained. These fundamental differences in translation theory may be stated in terms of two sets of conflicting “poles”: (1) literal vs. free translating,

and (2) emphasis on form vs. content. These two sets of differences are closely related, but not identical, for the tension between literal and free can apply equally well to both form and content” (Nida 22).

Nida’s views seem to have been shared and echoed by George Steiner, “Over two thousand years of argument and precept, the beliefs and disagreements voiced about the nature of translation have been almost the same. Identical theses, familiar moves and refutations in debate recur, nearly without exception, from Cicero and Quintilian to the present-day.” (Steiner 239).

In her attempt to identify the root cause of the age-old debate behind translating Mary Snell-Hornby observes: “For 2000 years translation theory was primarily concerned with outstanding works of art. The focus was therefore on literary translation, and at the centre of the debate was that age-old dichotomy of word and sense, of ‘faithful’ versus ‘free’ translation.” (Bassnett and Lefevere 79) According to Susan Bassnett, the debate between the *word-for-word* and *sense-for-sense* translating can be seen as “emerging again and again with different degrees of emphasis in accordance with differing concepts of language and communication” (Bassnett 42). A diachronic study of the translation theory will be made in this chapter to show how the debate between the word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation has continued down the ages, and how translation eventually has tended to be synonymous with interpretation.

Theory: From Rome to the Renaissance

The distinction between ‘word-for-word’ (i.e. ‘literal’) and ‘sense-for-sense’ (i.e. ‘free’) translation goes back to Cicero(first century BCE—Before Common Era) and St. Jerome (late fourth century CE) and forms the basis of seminal writings on translations in centuries nearer to our own. In ancient Rome, translation was equated with slavish literalism and any liberties taken with the source text was considered something beyond the limits of translation (Robinson 15). In *De optimo genere oratorum* Cicero nicely makes this distinction: “What men like you ...call fidelity in translation, the learned term pestilent minuteness ... it is hard to preserve in a translation the charm of expressions which in another language are most

felicitous... *If I render word for word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity I alter anything in the order or wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator*". (emphasis added) (Nida 13). Nevertheless, he is the first Roman writer who opposed this narrow 'delimitation of translation' and pleaded for its creative use to expand his oratorical skills. In *De optimo genere oratorum* (46 BCE, The Best Kind of Orator) , while describing the orations of Aeschines and Demosthenes, he outlines the specific innovation that would eventually become, in Jerome's letter to Pammachius (395 CE), 'sense-for-sense' translation or what Roman Jakobson would later call 'interpretation'.

Cicero's views on translation is to be found in the following speech : " And I did not translate them as an interpreter, but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and Forms, or as one might say ,the 'figures' of thought, but in language which conforms to our usage. And in so doing, *I did not hold it necessary to render word for word, but I preserved the general style and force of language.*" (emphasis added) (Munday19). Cicero here makes a distinction between the 'interpreter' and the 'orator'; the former is the literal ('word-for-word') translator, while the latter is the one that moves the listeners through a stirring speech. In his translation practice Cicero himself followed his own precepts closely. Over the time Cicero's concept of the 'interpreter' has underwent a complete change, implying now a 'free' ('sense-for-sense') translator rather than a literal ('word-for-word') one. In his *Ars Poetica* (c.20 CE, *The Art of Poetry*), Horace also follows Cicero in urging the aspiring writer not to render the source text *word for word like a slavish translator* but to produce an aesthetically pleasing and creative text in the target language. Thus both Cicero and Horace plead for a judicious and creative " interpretation of the SL text so as to produce a TL version based on the principle *non verbum de verbo, sed sensum experimere de sensu* (of expressing not word for word, but sense for sense), and his responsibility was to the TL readers"(Bassnett 45).

St. Jerome, one of the most famous Roman translators, was commissioned in 384 A.D. by Pope Damasus to translate the *New Testament* in Latin. Jerome's translation strategy is formulated in *De optimo genere interpretandi* , a letter addressed to the senator Pammachius in 395 CE. In his famous statement ever on the translation process, St. Jerome defends himself against the criticisms of 'incorrect' translation and at the same time enunciates his

translation strategy as follows : “ Now I not only admit but freely announce that in translating from the Greek --- except of course in the case of the Holy Scripture, where even the syntax contains a mystery --- *I render not word for word, but sense for sense*” (Emphasis added) (Kelly 44). Jerome’s translation strategy is definitely reminiscent of Cicero’s . In his translation of Origen St. Jerome did the same sort of thing as Cicero did three hundred years ago in his translation of Greek authors (Kelly 44). According to Nida, “His [Jerome’s] approach to translation was one of the most systematic and disciplined of any of the ancient translators. He followed well-conceived principles, which he freely proclaimed, defended, and stated quite frankly that he rendered “ sense for sense”, not word for word”(Nida 13). Jerome’s statement about translation subsequently came to be known as ‘literal’ (‘word-for-word’) and ‘free’ (‘sense-for-sense’) translation. It is in these poles that one can trace the origin of both the ‘literal vs. free’ and ‘form vs. content’ debate that has continued until the modern times. He further confirmed his principle by citing the manner in which the New Testament writers freely quoted or adapted the Hebrew original or the Septuagint translation (Ibid 13). In a translation the TL takes over the sense of the ST and in order to explain this process Jerome uses the military image of the original text being marched into the TL like a prisoner by its conqueror (Steiner 267). Jerome’s use of the military image finds an echo in Tagore when he regrets how it saddens him [বাংলা কবিতাকে শিকলি বেঁধে পরের হাটে নিয়ে যেতে দুঃখ হয়] to take the [translated] Bengali poems like a chained prisoner to a foreign market (Letter no.90,1937).

The debate between ‘literal’ and ‘free’ translation that has continued since the time of Cicero and Horace surfaced once again in the rich translation tradition of the Arab world with Bagdad as its epicenter. It was during the Abbasid period (750-1250) that an extensive translation programme was undertaken for the transmission into Arabic of Greek scientific and philosophic texts , often with Syriac as an intermediary language.²² In *Introducing Translation Studies* Jeremy Munday quotes the Egyptian-born translation scholar Mona Baker’s description of the two translation methods adopted there :

1. “The first [method] ... was highly literal and consisted of translating each Greek word with an equivalent Arabic word and, where none existed, borrowing Greek word into Arabic”.

2. “The second method ... consisted of translating sense-for-sense, creating fluent target texts which conveyed the meaning of the original without distorting the target language” (Baker 320-21).

The terminology quoted above seems to have been strongly influenced by the Classical Western European discourse on translation. But this does not negate the presence in the Arab Culture of the two poles of translation which were identified long before by Cicero and St. Jerome.

The Renaissance opened the floodgate of translations and Western Europe was virtually inundated with a deluge of translations, mostly from Greek, for it was the rediscovery of the ancient world which had produced the “rebirth” in Western Europe. It was during this period that translations were being produced for a much wider audience than the select ecclesiastically oriented audience and that the translations were being made into the language of the people (Nida14). But the translators of the Renaissance period found themselves torn, in the words of L.G. Kelly, “ between the ideals of creation and transmission”(Kelly 4) Many of them so far misunderstood their adored classics as to think that translation was imitation. And what they called ‘imitation’ was , in fact, equivalent to Ciceronian concept of ‘*aemulatio*’ , the art of “ bending another author to one’s own subject and language” (Kelly44). Even though these translators were under the impression that their task was essentially one of transmission, many of them did not hesitate to take liberties with their original texts. Consequently, what they achieved was the ‘recreation’ rather than the ‘reproduction’ of the Greek text.

During the 16 th century the most dominant figure in the field of translation was undoubtedly Martin Luther. He follows St. Jerome in rejecting word-for-word translation which is incapable of conveying the spirit of the original Source Text (ST). The charge of taking liberty with the Holy Scripture was also brought against him when he translated into East Middle German *The New Testament* (1522) and *The Old Testament* (1534). In his *Sendbrief (Circular Letter) on Translation* (1530) Luther boldly defends his strategy of translating the Bible in an accessible and aesthetically satisfying vernacular style using *uebersetzen* (to

translate) synonymously with *verdeutschen* (to Germanize).(Niranjana 53). Luther also made a bold and systematic attempt to describe the principles of translation so as to ensure his [translator's] freedom regarding : (1) shifts of word order; (2) employment of modal auxiliaries ; (3) introduction of connectives when these are required ; (4) suppression of Greek or Hebrew terms which had no acceptable equivalent in German ; (5) use of phrases where necessary to translate single words in the original ; (6) shifts of metaphors to non-metaphors and vice versa ; (7) careful attention to exegetical accuracy and textual variants.(Nida15). His lasting contribution to the Bible translation is his 'infusion of the Bible with the language of the ordinary people' (Munday 23).

Despite the dominant importance of Luther in the field of translation, the credit for the first formulation of a theory of translation goes to the French humanist Etienne Dolet (1509 -46) who was tried and executed for taking liberty with one of Plato's dialogues. In 1540 he published an essay on the principles of translation. He spoke of being faithful to the 'intention' of the work, while his contemporary Joachim du Bellay focused on the "spirit". His emphasis on the avoidance of 'word-for-word' renderings and the use of vernaculars is strikingly relevant even to-day for all types of translation. He died a martyr to the noble cause of creative freedom for which the translators have been striving since the time of Cicero and Horace. Dolet's views were later upheld and supported by George Chapman (1559-1634) who has been described as " the self-conscious poetic translator in English" (Steiner11). He called for a somewhat restrained freedom for the translators in advocating a middle path between *sensum-sensu* and *verbum-verbo*, between "overfree" and "overliteral", a path governed by decorum.

Theory in The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

In contrast with the minimal freedom adopted by the translators of the Scriptures, the translators of the secular works in the 17th and 18th centuries displayed an almost unrestrained freedom. They produced beautiful and elegant translations that gave utmost priority to the TL text, with faithfulness to the original of secondary importance. This period has been appropriately called by Mounin " an age of *Les Belles Infidiles*" (Nida 17) But the man who

was eloquent in his demand for a conscious freedom in translation was the poet Abraham Cowley (1618-67) who defended his translations of *Pindarique Odes* by saying :

If a man should undertake to translate Pindar word for word, it would be thought *One Mad man* had translated another; as may appear, when a person who understands not the original, reads the verbal translation of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving.....I have in these two odes of Pindar taken, left out, and added what I please ; nor made it so much my aim to let the reader know precisely what he spoke, as what was his way and manner of speaking. (Barnett 59).

Cowley here declared that his objective was to be faithful not to the letter of the original but to its “way and manner of speaking” (Steiner66) while his contemporary Denham, too, condemned the “servile path” and the vulgarity of being *fidus interpres* in translation. Cowley and Denham’s concept of translation conforms to the interpretative tradition of Horace and Cicero. Thus, the fundamental issues of translation do not change and the ‘translator’s dilemma’ continues: should a translator be literal or free, faithful or unfaithful? (Niranjana 53-54) George Steiner puts forward the ‘translator’s dilemma’ in the changed scenario of the age:

All that happens is that the dichotomy between ‘letter’ and ‘spirit’ is transposed into the image of the appropriate distance a translation should achieve between its own tongue and the original. Should a good translation edge its own language towards that of the original, thus creating a deliberate aura of strangeness, of peripheral opaqueness ? or should it naturalize the character of the linguistic import so as to make it at home in the speech of the translator and his readers ? (Steiner266)

According to Herder, translations tend either to ‘*Uebersetzung*’, intending as intimate a fusion with the original as is possible, or to ‘*Uebersetzung*’ where the emphasis falls on recreation(*setzen*) in the home tongue. (Ibid)

An “exemplary neoclassicist”, John Dryden(1631- 1700) expounds his own theory of translation, in his *Preface to Ovid’s Epistles* (1680) , by dwelling on three basic types of translation :

- (1) *metaphrase*, or turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language into another ;
- (2) *paraphrase* , or translation with latitude, the Ciceroian ‘sense-for-sense’ view of translation ;
- (3) *imitation*, where the translator can abandon the text of the original as he sees fit. ~~(ES)~~ (Baronett 60).

Dryden’s main objective is to find out a *via media* between the word-for-word approach demanded by the purists and the unlimited freedom displayed by Cowley in his *Pindarique Odes* (1656). His classification of translation into three categories call for a brief discussion in order to understand the nature of the kind he is actually advocating. He defines *metaphrase* as the process of converting an author word for word, line by line, from one language to another. And Horace’s *Art of Poetry* (1640) translated by Ben Jonson is a classic example of ‘*metaphrase*’ or word-for-word translation. At the opposite end is found *imitation* “where the translator assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion”. To this category belongs Cowley’s extravagant transformation of Pindar and Horace. Dryden does not approve of the ‘libertine’ freedom that is ‘the greatest wrong ...done to the memory and reputation of the dead’ authors like Pindar and Horace. Despite its negative implications in Platonic theory, *mimesis* or ‘imitation’ has ever enjoyed a positive aesthetic value in Aristotle and in Latin poetics. But it is Dryden who gives the word a pejorative twist in his theory of translation. According to Dryden, the true road for the translator lies neither through *metaphrase* nor *imitation*. It is through *paraphrase* or “translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but *his words are not so strictly followed as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered*”.(emphasis added) (Steiner 254-256)

Thus, fidelity to the original coupled with moderate freedom is the very foundation on which Dryden’s *paraphrase* is based . Even though he considers ‘*metaphrase*’ and ‘*imitation*’ ‘the

two extremes which ought to be avoided', '*paraphrase*' the 'mean betwixt them' remains, for him, the golden mean, i.e. the 'sense-for-sense' translation that he can turn to. He believes that it is through '*paraphrase*' that 'the spirit of an author may be transfused, and yet not lost" (Ibid256). He himself follows this approach in rendering the works of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, and Chaucer. '*Paraphrase*', thus, gives him the freedom to 'interpret and create' which is the *sine quo non* for a creative translator. Further, in the introduction to *Sylvae* Dryden says:

For, after all, a translator is to make his author appear as charming as he possibly can, provided he maintains his character, and makes him not unlike himself. Translation is a type of drawing after life; where everyone will acknowledge that there is a double sort of likeness, a good one and a bad.

(Kelly 47)

Regarding his rendering of Virgil Dryden rightly says : "[...] taking all the materials of this divine author, I have endeavoured to make Virgil speak such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age." (Steiner 256) And this is equally true of most of the literary translation of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The debate between 'letter' and 'spirit' that has ever haunted the translation theories assumes a new shape in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The translator finds himself now in the role of a 'painter or imitator with a moral duty both to his original subject and to his receiver' (Bassnett 62). Dryden, for instance, separates spirit from words in the preface to the *Sylvae* when he distinguishes 'drawing the outlines true', and 'making it graceful...by the spirit which animates the whole'. (Kelly209) Further, his description of translation as 'a type of drawing after life' turns a translator metaphorically into a 'portrait-painter'. Accordingly, he uses the metaphor of the translator / portrait-painter, that was to reappear so frequently in the eighteenth century. He also emphasizes the fact that the painter has the duty of making his portrait resemble the original (Bassnett 60) It is against this cultural and critical scenario that Gottlieb Herder (1744-1803) describes the translator's duty and mission. Interestingly,

he begins from the idea of transfer: the translator's mission is to make foreign books comprehensible to the unilingual reader, and this task is summed up by the word *Erklärung* (explanation). Semantically, *Erklärung* carries the sense of *klar* (clear, lucid). A good translator is required to take the reader to a 'clear' and 'intuitive understanding' of the foreign texts and finally to an 'insight' into its socio-cultural background. (Kelly47-48) And this process involves the intuition and freedom of the translator to explore and 'clarify' the 'essential spirit' of the source text.

Goethe's (1749-1832) lifelong engagement with translation is widely known. He discovers in the transfer of meaning and music between languages a characteristic aspect of universality. His best-known theoretical statement on translation occurs in the lengthy prose addenda to the *West-Ostlicher Divan* (1819). He postulates that every literature must pass through three phases of translation. But, as these phases are recurrent, all may be found taking place in the same literature at the same time. The first phase of translation that 'acquaints us with foreign cultures' is done in 'plain, modest prose'. The second phase is that of 'appropriation through substitution and reproduction, where the translator absorbs the sense of a foreign work but reproduces it in his own terms'. The third mode, which he considers the highest, aims at 'perfect identity between the original text and that of the translation'. This 'identity' signifies that the target text does not exist 'instead of the other but in its place' (Steiner 256-258). In the second mode of translation the translator takes liberty with the original and transforms it into the current idiom of the target language. This explains why Steiner calls it "surely one of the primary modes and indeed ideals of the interpreter's art" (Steiner 258). The 'metamorphic' approach that Goethe follows in the third mode of translation seems to 'compete with the original' and make it closer to Dryden's 'imitation'. Goethe's translation of Kalidas's *Sakuntala* is an excellent example of the third mode of translation and testifies to his 'metamorphic' approach. His third type of translation seems to foreshadow the creative-interpretative translation that flourished in the Romantic era.

George Campbell, who influenced the Romantics, described the criteria of good translation under three principles:

- (1) To give a just representation of the sense of the original.
- (2) To convey into his version, as much as possible, ...the author's spirit and manner.
- (3) To take care that the version have, "at least so far the quality of an original performance ,as to appear natural and easy (Nida 9).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century Alexander Fraser Tytler published a volume entitled *The Principles of Translation* (1791) which is considered as 'the first systematic study in English of the translation processes' (Bassnett 63). He lays down the following three basic principles of translation: (1) The translation should give a complete transcript of the idea of the original work. (2) The style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original. (3) The translation should have all the ease of the original composition (*Ibid* 63).

Tytler's approach to translation is refreshingly modern. He makes allowance for additions if they are demanded by the context. In other words, the additions may be allowed if they have the most necessary connection with the original and increases its force and impact. Similarly, he is willing to allow omissions if they are absolutely redundant and do not impair or weaken the original thought. Tytler expresses the translator's function as a process in which ... "He [the translator] is not allowed to copy the touches of the original, yet is required, by touches of his own, to produce a perfect resemblance....He must adopt the very soul of his author, which must speak through his organs." (Nida10) Regarding the problems of obscurities in the original he observes that translator should exercise judgment and choose the meaning which agrees best with the immediate context or with the author's mode of thinking. Tytler, thus, leaves much scope for the translator to exercise his freedom and judgment in tackling the problems of translations.

To sum up, translation was considered as 'copying' in the seventeenth century and Tytler's definition of translation as "a complete transcript of the ideas of the original" goes to re-affirm it. Though the word 'copy' begins to appear in the literature from the beginning of the seventeenth century, it is later replaced by the word 'portrait'. Theoretically, the

translators of the time had no right to 'comment' or 'interpret' but their practice actually shows a fair degree of creative freedom (Kelly35). Obviously, the tendency to 'interpretation' in translation has been opposed since the time of the Septuagint translators. George Campbell denounced Theodore de Beze for attacking the Roman Catholic law of clerical celibacy using the expression *cum uxoribus suis* (with their wives) about the clergymen, in his translation. He could not approve of any commentary that is foreign to the spirit of the original. Campbell, thus, tied the controversy of the 'literal' and 'free' translation to the question of 'interpretation'. His views on the role of commentary in translation found a sympathetic chord among the Romantics. According to Kelly, "Campbell's attitude was shared by the Romantics: by 'commentary' they obviously mean reading into the text what was not there in either tone or meaning" (Kelly 36). In other words, Campbell's 'commentary' would become equivalent to 'interpretation' in the Romantic period.

Theory: From The Romantic Period To The Present Time

The Romantic's rejection of rationalism led to the exaltation of 'the imagination as an independent sovereign activity centred in the poetic genius'. With this Romantic affirmation of individualism came the freedom of the creative power, making the poet a 'quasi-mystical' creator, a seer and a visionary. In the Romantic period, the age-old debate between 'literal' and 'free' rendering is transformed into an "overwhelming question" of whether translation is to be considered as a creative act or as a mechanical exercise. In *Translation Studies* Susan Bassnett identifies "two conflicting tendencies" that characterize translations in the Romantic period. The first one views translation as the work of a creative genius who takes upon himself the task of enriching the literature and language into which he is translating from the originals of different literatures and languages (Bassnett 65) In *The True Interpreter* L.G. Kelly gives an excellent description of this tendency : " What the Romantics sought through translation was to transfer the creative power of great writers of other languages into their own. Thus translation was not primarily production of a text, but *interpretation and contemplation* of Language at work." (emphasis added)(Kelly 3) It is, therefore, evident that translation came to be known as a creative and interpretative act in the Romantic age, instead of being the mere reproduction of foreign texts or authors. The eighteenth-century translators tried to produce 'a French Virgil', 'an English Homer' by translating their works. In contrast,

the Romantics tried to reproduce Virgil and Homer creatively in their own languages, to show the foreign poets as they were, or rather, as they related to the basic energy of the 'pure speech'. Thus, the Romantics succeeded in reincarnating the original in a way the eighteenth century had found impossible. To this category of creative and interpretative translation belong the Sclegel-Tieck translations of Shakespeare, Schlegel's version and Cary's version of the *Divina Commedia*, Morris' renderings of Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*.

The second one considers translation as a 'mechanical' exercise of making available a foreign text or author in the target language. Nida finds a kind of 'sophistication' in this type of translation. He refers to some translations of the Arabian Nights which, even though accurate than their predecessor, were stripped of their 'eastern atmosphere'.

The dilemma between 'letter' and 'spirit' that has confronted the translators all along continues even in the Victorian era. D.G. Rossetti (1828-1882) never considered himself a theorist, but he made some basic pronouncements on translations in his preface to *The Early Italian Poets* (1861): "The life-blood of rhymed verse", he writes, "is this – that a good poem shall not be turned into a bad one." (Cited in *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* 1189). His first concern, therefore, is for aesthetic quality, which must take precedence over "literality", although fidelity to the original must be preserved. When the aesthetic and the literal can be combined, "the translator is fortunate, and must strive his utmost to unite them" [ibid]. Despite his plea for a blend of the literal and the aesthetic, translation finally remains, for him, synonymous with 'commentary' or 'interpretation'. In *Dante and his Circle* (1861) Rossetti declares that translation "remains *the most direct form of commentary*" (emphasis added) (Kelly 510). In this respect, he foreshadows Holmes and Buhler who consider translation identical with interpretation.

In *On Translating Homer* Matthew Arnold (1822-1868) advises the would-be translator to focus on the SLT primarily and to produce the same effect as the original. Accordingly, he stresses the need for a word-for-word translation rather than a sense-for-sense one. H.W. Longfellow (1807-1881) gave a new direction to the role of the translator restricting his

function even more than Arnold's dictum. Discussing his translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia* he declared

I have endeavoured to make it ...as literal as a prose translation....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 (Bassnett 70).

Longfellow takes the literalist position to extremes relegating the translator to the position of a technician.

In contrast to Longfellow's views, Edward Fitzgerald (1809-1863), who is best known for *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1858) famously declared that it were better to have *a live sparrow than a stuffed eagle*. Accordingly, he does not hesitate to take liberty with the original in order to re-create it in the target language. "It is an amusement to me", he observes in defence of his translation strategy with regard to Persian poetry in 1851, " to take what liberties I like with these Persians, who, (as I think) are not Poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do want a little Art to shape them" (Bassnett 3) Thus, Fitzgerald's mode of translation is creative as well as interpretative. He was in the throes of an emotional crisis when he chanced upon *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. He was very much fascinated by the poem, and by the poet who seemed to anticipate his own sorrows, doubts, frustrations and his own fondness for Epicurism. He re-creates the poems of Omar on the basis of his intuitive feelings of the original. His translation is not, therefore, literal; it grows, like an original poem, with his own mood and experience. It is, in fact, an excellent feat of poetic creation rather than a word-for-word rendering.

According to George Steiner, the twentieth century has witnessed a 'revolution' in translation theory and practice (Steiner274). In *Toward a Science of Translating* Prof. E. A. Nida lists five developments that seem to have a tremendous effect on the theory and practice of translation of the present century in various parts of the world. These developments are as follows:

- (1) the rapidly expanding field of structural linguistics pioneered by Ferdinand de Saussure and his followers.
- (2) the application of the methods in structural linguistics to the special problems of the Bible translation.
- (3) the publication by the United Bible Societies of a quarterly journal called *The Bible Translator* since 1950.
- (4) the publication since 1955 of *Babel*, under the auspices of UNESCO.
- (5) machine translation.

(Nida 21).

Much of the discussion in English on the theory and practice of translation in the first half of the twentieth century is, in fact, the continuation of the Victorian concepts of translation. But that does not mean that the first half of the twentieth century is to be considered as “the Waste Land of English translation theory”(Bassnett 73-74) Ezra Pound (1885- 1974) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1961) are the two famous translators of this period who left their individual marks on the discussion of many problems of translation. Ezra Pound’s theory of translation is of immense importance in the history of translation. In one of his essays, “ Guido’s Relations” he articulates the basic principles that seem to have governed his translation practice. Pound expresses here two basic views on translation. Firstly, the translation must have fidelity to the original. Secondly, the translation should have a good deal of autonomy. The freedom that goes with this autonomy makes Pound define it as ‘interpretive translation’:

This refers to ‘interpretive translation’. The ‘other sort’ I mean in cases where the ‘translator’ is definitely making a new poem, falls simply in the domain of original writing, or if it does not it must be censured according to equal standards, and praised with some sort of just deduction, assessable only in the particular case (Pound 200).

Pound’s theory of translation, as enunciated above, distinguishes between faithful translation and ‘interpretive translation’. Though he practices both as a translator, his preference is always for the ‘interpretive’ kind. Commenting on his translation of Chinese poetry, George Kennedy, a famous Sinologist, says that his rendering is fine as poetry but bad as translation.

Rabindranath Tagore gives a new orientation to the debate between literal and free translation by enunciating his own concept of creative translation. In his letter to Rothenstein dated 31 Dec. 1915 he articulates his views on the issue, from his experience as a translator of his own poems:

Macmillans are urging me to send them some translations of my short stories...They require *rewriting* in English, not *translating*. That can only be done by the author himself.

(Lago216)

Tagore here makes a distinction between 'translating' and 'rewriting', the former implying 'word-for-word' transference from one language to another, and the latter, 'sense-for-sense' transference leading to the 'rebirth' or 're-incarnation' of the original in the target language. In his letter to Ajit Kumar Chakravarty [dated 13 March 1913] he distinguishes, again, between literal or word-for-word translation and what may be called 'rewriting' or creative translation. He speaks of the aesthetic joy that he derives from 'rewriting' or creative translation, a joy that literal or 'word-for-word' translation cannot give. Translation, as viewed by Tagore, is therefore a creative act which is capable of reincarnating the original in the target language. In an interview to the *Evening Post* in New York on 9 December 1916 he explained this point a bit elaborately:

The English versions of my poems are not literal translations. When poems are changed from one language to another, they acquire *a new quality and a new spirit, ideas get new birth and are re-incarnated*. (emphasis added)

Tagore's *Gitanjali* poems are creatively re-incarnated in English from Bengali and the volume has been rightly hailed as 'the miracle of translation'. [Bose, *An Acre of Grass*] And the credit of coining the term 'rewriting' for 'creative translation' definitely goes to Tagore. Translators since Cicero and Horace have emphasized the freedom for 'interpretation' in translation ; but no one before Tagore has ever termed it as 'rewriting' to identify its true nature.

In his epoch-making essay “The Task of the Translator” (1923) Walter Benjamin virtually echoes Tagore’s views on ‘rewriting’ or creative translation. But he differs with Tagore on the question of his idea of the “kinship of languages”. According to him, every creative work has something ‘unfathomable’, ‘poetic’ and ‘mysterious’ about it that can only be re-captured through creative or ‘free’ translation. A literal translation cannot bring out its creative essence except disseminating some unnecessary information: “any translation which intends to perform a transmitting function cannot transmit anything but information---hence, something inessential. This is the hallmark of bad translations.” Here by “bad translations” Benjamin seems to refer to the traditional concept of ‘literal’ translation and by ‘free’ translation he implies a creative and imaginative process to express “the central reciprocal relationship between languages”.(Schulte and Biguenet 71-72). Hence the ‘task of the translator’ is to re-create or ‘re-enact’ the creative process of a literary work that eludes the grasp of a literal translator. A ‘creative’ translator is, in the words of Jean Paris, a co-creator of the original and his work becomes “an equivalent of a genuine creation” (Arrowsmith and Shattuck 62-63).

Thus, the debate between ‘literal’ and ‘free’ translations continued even in the twentieth century. In 1924 Hilaire Belloc tried to sum up almost the whole history of discussion on this point with his distinction between spirit and letter:

Good translation must...consciously attempt the spirit of the original at the expense of the letter. Now this is much the same as saying that the translator must be of original talent ; he must himself create ; he must have power of his own.

(Kelly211)

More than three decades had passed since Mr. Belloc’s attempts to clinch the issue once and for all. Again, some of the essays included in Reuben Brower’s *On Translation* (1959) revert to the old, vexed issue of ‘literal’ and ‘free’ translation. In his famous essay “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation” Roman Jakobson defines translation as ‘interpretation’ and distinguishes three types of translation :

- (1) Intra-lingual translation, or *rewording* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language).
- (2) Inter-lingual translation or translation proper (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language).
- (3) Inter-semiotic translation or *transmutation* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems). (Bassnett14)

Having enumerated the three types, Jakobson goes on to mention the central problem in all types: that there is ordinarily no full equivalence through translation. Thus he demolishes the myth of literal or word-for-word translation and eventually declares that poetry is technically untranslatable. According to Jakobson, the only possible option for a translator is ‘creative transposition’, from one poetic form into another in the same language, from one language into another, or from one verbal medium into another nonverbal medium. Since messages may serve as adequate interpretations of code-units, translation finally turns out to be ‘a reported speech’ in Jakobson’s reckoning. The translator recodes and transmits a message received from another source. Thus, translation involves ‘two equivalent messages in two different codes’ (Steiner 261).

In his essay “ Translating Greek Poetry” included in Reuben Brower’s *On Translation*(1959) Lattimore lays stress on ‘recreation’ rather than ‘reproduction’ of the original (Brower 55) while Dudley Fitts insists on producing a ‘comparable experience’ rather than exact ‘representation’ (Ibid34) of the original. What Mr. Lattimore and Mr. Fitts here seek to emphasize is the interpretative [sense for sense ‘recreation’] rather than the literal [‘word for word’] re-production of the original. In essays contained in another collection entitled *The Craft and Context of Translation* (1961), William Arrowsmith speaks of the extremes of “intolerable literalism” and “spurious freedom”(Arrowsmith and Shattuck 124) and Jean Paris of “extreme freedom” and “extreme slavery” (Ibid 60).

In *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) Prof. Eugene A. Nida discarded the old terms such as ‘literal’ and ‘free’ translations in favour of ‘two basic orientations’ or ‘types of equivalence : (1) ‘formal equivalence’ and (2) ‘dynamic equivalence’. According to Nida, the focus in ‘formal equivalence’ is always on “the message itself, in both form and

content". Formal equivalence is, thus, source-text oriented; it insists on the reproduction of the form and contents of the message itself. In such a translation the translator concentrates on such correspondences as 'poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence, and concept to concept'. Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, is based on what Nida calls 'the principle of equivalent effect', where 'the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message'. (Nida 159) The message has to be adapted to the receptor's linguistic needs and cultural expectations and 'aims at complete naturalness of expression'. E.V.Rieu's decision to translate Homer into English prose on the ground that the significance of the epic form in Ancient Greece is very likely to be considered equivalent to the significance of prose in modern Europe, is an example of dynamic equivalence. It is, thus, very much target-text and target-culture oriented. Formal equivalence implies literalness of form, whereas dynamic equivalence involves varying degrees of freedom in translation. Formal and dynamic equivalences are, thus, related to the debate of literal vs. free translation, a debate from which the modern translation theorists are struggling in vain to come out.

In *The Forked Tongue* (1971) Burton Raffel takes the age-old fight between 'literal' and 'free' translations to indicate the two different ways of addressing the same problem. There appears to be two opposing 'camps' --- the 'literalists', and 'those favouring 'free' renditions --- but the differences do not pertain to matters of theory. According to Raffel, the "literalist assumes that his job is to act as a kind of inverse mirror' and his 'translation is intended to take one through the looking glass back into the original poem ...The 'free' translator assumes that his job is to take the poem out through the mirror, bring it from its original environment into the world of those who read whatever language he is translating into (Raffel 11)." Thus the basic theory in both cases, in Raffel's words, is to 'recreate ... a pre-existing poetic experience' for someone unable to do the job for linguistic barriers. The literalist emphasizes the idioms and constructions, the sounds and the rhythms of the original language whereas the 'free' translator stresses on ensuring those of the receptor or target language (*Ibid* 11).

Following Nida, André Lefevere, too, presented the debate between literal and free translation in a novel way. He considers translation as a 'refraction' and not a 'reflection' of the source text. Translation has traditionally been considered as a reflection of the source text and reflection refers to a mirror image of the original text, while the term 'refraction' implies 'a change of perspective and perception', not the exact reproduction of the original. This has been exemplified not only in the written tradition but in the oral as well. Lefevere's concept of 'refraction' can be explained in terms of his definition of translation as a "rewriting of an original text" (Cited in Munday 127-28). Like all 'rewritings', translation seems to reflect 'a certain ideology and poetics' and 'manipulate' the source text in a target society. By 'refraction' Lefevere seems to indicate the translated text that has been manipulated by the 'ideology' and 'poetics' of the time as well as of the translator. Interestingly, Lefevere's concept of translation as 'refraction' seems to have been foreshadowed by Tagore's when he characterized creative translation as 'rewriting' in a letter to Rothenstein (Lago 216).

The legendary Indian translator A.K. Ramanujan (1929-1993) addressed the controversial issue of letter vs. spirit in his pronouncements on translation and provided a new insight into the task of translating. For Ramanujan, the translator is subjected to a set of 'freedoms and constraints' when he is actually engaged in translation. He is expected to carry over a text from its original language into a second one as 'literally' and 'accurately' as possible. But Ramanujan is quite convinced that even the most scrupulous translator cannot solve the problems of what Dryden, in 1680, had called *metaphrase*, the method of 'turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language into another.' According to Ramanujan, two principal difficulties stand in the way of a translator producing a perfect metaphrase, especially of a poem. Firstly, the words of the text are 'always figurative' and therefore cannot be rendered literally. Secondly, a truly literal version can never capture the poetry of the original, for 'only poems can translate poems' [Cited in Bassnett & Trivedi, 116-17] and that, too, by a poet only. In his essay "On Translating a Tamil Poem" Ramanujan categorically says that "no translation can be 'literal', or 'word-for-word'.... The only possible translation is a 'free' one" (Ramanujan 222). A 'free' translation is capable of re-creating the original with the shaping spirit of the translator's imagination.

Another translator-turned theorist of Indian origin is Purushottam Lal (1929-2010), popularly known as P. Lal, who gives a new dimension to the whole debate centring round literal and free translation. His scheme, like Dryden's or Jakobson's, is tripartite: translation, transcreation and transcorruption : " Some translate ; some transcreate; some, with the best of intentions through his tripartite division of translation, transcreation and transcorruption(Lal, 97). The credit of using the word in Translation studies goes to P. Lal, the founder-editor of Writers Workshop in India. But the word 'transcreation' does not appear in any standard dictionary of the English language until 1996. The *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* (first pub. 1948; 5 th edn. 1996), in its fifth edition published that year, carries a list of Indian words prepared by Indira Chowdhury Sengupta. The word *transcreation* figures in this list and is explained as an unaccountable noun standing for "creative translation seen as producing a new version of the original work" (Mukherjee 43). Even though the word has not gained wide currency as a substitute for *translation*, Lal has for many years been using *transcreation* in the sense that has now been authorized by the *O A L D*. The credit of applying the word 'transcreation' to creative translation definitely goes to Prof. Lal who has written extensively on the art of transcreation from his first-hand experience of rendering from Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and Bangla. His *Transcreation* (1996), consisting of prefaces, introductions and essays written over the period 1964 to 1983, has already become a sort of classic in the history of Translation Studies.

According to Lal, translation is very often synonymous with literal translation. In spite of the proverbial Italian saying, *traduttori traditori*, [translator is a traitor] literal translation is absurdly easier: "Translation is often easy, *traduttori traditori* notwithstanding, and literal translation absurdly so...." (Lal34) But 'translation' / or 'literal translation', whatever we call it, is incapable of capturing the aesthetic beauty and creative vision of a literary work and of re-incarnating the same in the target culture. A literal translator has to face 'perplexing problems' in order to make the creative works of one culture available and 'comprehensible' to the people of another culture. As Lal says, "... perplexing problems arise when a perfectly orderly set of conventions and values of one way of life has to be made perfectly orderly and comprehensible to readers accustomed to values often slightly, and sometimes totally, different(Ibid). In order to address the problems arising out of such a situation Lal feels the

need for creative translation, or 'transcreation' of the original in the target language. According to Lal, a translator will have to rely on 'his intuitions and insights' to make his or her translation creative (Lal 49).

Sometimes the controversy between 'letter' and 'spirit' turns out to be a translator's dilemma, a dilemma that has been rephrased again and again since the Roman times ('faithfulness' against 'beauty', the literary against the literal, sense-for-sense against word-for-word). Peter France suggests a way out of the translator's dilemma: "Any translator is faced with the competing demands of the desire, on the one hand, to be as faithful as possible to the original and, on the other, to produce a version which communicates well and is a pleasure to read"^{S-b}(France_^). In other words, fidelity to the original and readability in the receptor tongue, together with the communicative intention of the original author, are, for him, the *sine qua non* of a good translation. But Mr. France here is almost silent on the question of 'interpretation' or 'creation' that is the 'prerogative' of a translator. It has often been argued that translation and interpretation are two separate activities and that the translator's duty is to translate the original and not to 'interpret' it. But Susan Bassnett refutes this argument, by declaring that since "every reading is an interpretation, the activities cannot be separated" (Bassnett100). Again in his famous essay "Forms of Verse Translation and Translation of Verse Form"⁽¹⁹⁷⁶⁾_^ James Holmes also shows how translation results in a critical interpretation of the original. It is the interrelationship of translation and interpretation that makes him declare almost dogmatically: "...all translation is an act of critical interpretation" (Holmes 93). Translation and interpretation are, thus, so inextricably bound up with each other that one cannot be separated from the other.

The German translation theorist Axel Buhler is perhaps the one who, for the first time, delved deeper into this interrelationship in some greater detail than any translation theorists before or since. In his famous essay "Translation as interpretation"⁽²⁰⁰²⁾_^ he makes a critical attempt to examine the popular concept that translation is basically an interpretation. Quoting Koller's view that "...every translation is a certain type of interpretation", he asserts that the word 'interpretation' is so ambiguous that it means many 'heterogeneous things'. Then he goes on to show which kind of interpretations is involved in translation, and which is not.

While dwelling on the relation between translation and interpretation, he draws our attention to the difference between 'the activity itself and the resulting product of the activity' (Riccardi58). Drawing on the line of his argument one can consider interpretation as the activity of interpreting and as a finished object resulting from the interpreting activity. Similarly, one can describe translation as an activity and as a finished product emanating from the activity of translating.

Identifying the 'communicative intentions' of the source text as the basic aims of translating, Buhler goes on to discuss the question 'which activities of interpreting can also be considered activities of translating?' or 'which activities of interpretation are involved in the activity of translating?' For translations as products of the activity of translating must have the following traits:

1. Normally a translation is a mere interpretation assignment --- not an argued interpretation.
2. A translation puts forth the perspective of the author of the source text; a translation does not merely report about it.

Many interpretations may not have these two properties whereas translations must exhibit them.

"Translating as an activity must have the following aims which are also aims of interpreting:

- (1) the identification of the communicative intentions of the author of the source text ;
- (2) the identification of his or her thoughts ;
- (3) the identification of conventional meanings of elements of the source language ;
- (4) the adaptation of the source text for groups of speakers of the target language."

(Riccardi72)

Translation, like interpreting, strives to identify the 'communicative intentions' and 'thoughts' of the original author, along with the language-specific conventional 'meanings' of the source language , adapt and re-mould them to the linguistic demands and cultural expectations of the people of the target text. According to Nida, the translator plays a very crucial role in this process of adaptation or re-moulding of the message (Nida145-155)

Consequently, the message of the original is interpretatively transposed or 'manipulated' in the target language. In *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* (1985) Theo Hermans says, "From the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose" (Hermans 11). This 'manipulation' or adaptation of the source text to the linguistic claims and aesthetic ideals of the target text is tantamount to interpretation. This explains why translation has appropriately been equated with and treated as interpretation.

CHAPTER IV

RABINDRANATH TAGORE: *SELECTED POEMS*

"A translation may be a *re-incarnation* but it cannot be *identical*". – Tagore.

(emphasis added)

In theory, only poets should translate poetry; in practice, poets are rarely good translators. They almost invariably use the foreign poem as a point of departure toward their own. A good translator moves in the opposite direction: his intended destination is a *poem analogous although not identical to the original poem*. (emphasis added)

Octavio Paz. "Translation: Literature and Letters". *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida* (1992).

The publication of William Radice's *Rabindranath Tagore: Selected Poems* (1985) marks the beginning of a new phase in the history of Tagore translations. This anthology of Tagore poems in translation, originally published in 1985, is reprinted with revisions in 1987, and revised again in 1993. This latest reprint has a new preface and an additional appendix, incorporated in 1994. This volume of poems contains a list of salient dates from Rabindranath's life followed by a fascinating introduction of 20 pages. Radice has selected 48 poems, arranging them in three sections, with 16 poems in each. The first group includes those poems dating from 1882 to 1913, the second consists of those written from 1914 to 1936, and the final section covers poems written during Rabindranath's last years, 1937-1941. Radice explains his 'internal principles of selection', confessing that they are intuitive and hard to define, the most important being 'contrast, balance, novelty and rhythm' (Radice.36). The *Glossary* of Indian words, at the end of the volume, is also detailed and informative for enabling the Western readers to appreciate Tagore's poems. His translation of his own works leads his Western admirers to regard him as 'a purely mystical and religious poet who always looks beyond the world of the senses for communion with the Infinite and the Eternal' (SenGupta 80). But this view presents a one-sided picture of Tagore's genius

rather than his versatility. It has been Radice's endeavour in *Selected Poems* to represent the wide diversity, the incredible range, the extraordinary 'poetic intellect' and the fabulous 'technical virtuosity' of Tagore rather than portray him as a 'mystic' poet (Radice 230). Naturally, this volume has been widely appreciated as a landmark publication in the history of Tagore translation in particular and poetry translation in general.

Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) seems to have revived once again the controversy about the translation of poetry --- a controversy that is as old as the Tower of Babel. Though poetry has ever been considered untranslatable, the history of world literature is surprisingly replete with examples of excellent translations of poetry done by the poets down the ages. As Octavio Paz says, "[...] many of the best poems in every Western language are translations, and many of those translations were written by great poets" (Schulte and Biguenet 155). Nevertheless, there remains a sharp difference of opinions among the poets, translators and translation critics as to how poetry should be translated from one language to another.

According to Sir John Denham, the business of the translator is not just to "translate Language into Language, but Poesie into Poesie" (Savoury 79). Rossetti's famous dictum -- "a good poem shall not be turned into a bad one"--- only confirms and reinforces what Denham claims (Lefevere 67). The Indian translation theorist A.K.Ramanujan concurs with the views of the Western translation theorists when he says that "nothing less than a poem can translate another" (Ramanujan 121). Goethe favours prose rather than verse rendering when it involves the translation of foreign literatures into the mother tongue: "a plain prose translation is best for this purpose" (Brower 60). Well aware of the limitations of verse translations Victor Hugo emphasizes the impossibility of a verse translation, "a good translation in verse seems to me something absurd, impossible" (Ibid 271). Hilaire Belloc seems to have echoed Hugo when he states that "translation of verse is nearly always better rendered in prose" (Savoury79). Thus, the age-old controversy surrounding the translation of poetry finally gets bogged down to the intractable problem of whether poetry should be translated in verse or in prose. But in *Translation and Translations* Postgate seems to have clinched the issue by declaring dogmatically that 'prose should be translated by prose and verse by verse' (Savoury79).

Disapproving of the verse translation of his poetical works Rabindranath Tagore pleads for their prose translation for the foreigners. Accordingly, he defends prose translations of his poetical works for the West, “My translations are frankly prose, --- my aim is to make them simple with a suggestion of rhythm to give them a touch of the lyric...” (Lago195). Like Matthew Arnold, he believes that prose translation of a poet is more poetical than the poetical renderings of his works (DasGupta 107). His translation of *Gitanjali* (1912) poems in poetic prose wins him universal acclaim leading to the award of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. Radice’s translation of his poems into verse in *Selected Poems* (1985) followed by his defence of verse translation in his essay “Ten Rules for Translating Tagore” (1986) --- his “poetry should be translated into poetry”--- whips up the age-old controversy once again in recent times (Rao 35). Explaining why he favours verse translation of Rabindranath’s poems Radice says, “...I never considered anything other than a verse translation of his poems,... no prose translation could begin to approach Tagore” (Radice36). What he seems to imply is that Tagore’s verse is so imaginative and creative that nothing but poetic translation can successfully capture its elusive poetic essence.

Faced with the problem of translating poetry, professional translators, poet- translators and translation critics, down the ages, have evolved diverse strategies for the translation of poetry. Before we make an evaluation of Radice’s translation of Tagore poems, let us consider some of the views including Tagore’s own for rendering poetry from one language to another. Even though Tagore is fully aware that poetry is essentially untranslatable, he has expressed, from time to time, his well-considered views on this contentious issue. One can form an idea about his views by gleaning his utterances scattered here and there, especially in his letters, interviews, introductions or prefaces written by him to others’ books and private conversations with friends or acquaintances. In Tagore alone one finds an exquisite poetic exposition of the intricate problems of poetry translation and their imaginative solutions. In his essay “কবিতার অনুবাদ ও রবীন্দ্রনাথ” (2007) Alokeranjan DasGupta makes some insightful comments on some of those solutions. According to DasGupta, with Tagore poetry translation does not involve mere transmission of ideas, but the creation of an independent poem or what he calls elsewhere the ‘aesthetic transformation’ of the original into a separate poem. Drawing on the essential ideas of the original the translator creates a new poem in the

target language. For Tagore, translation of poetry, thus, becomes a creative act in which the ideas of the original are 'reincarnated' in the target language. While expressing his opinion on Surendranath Maitra's excellent translations of Browning's poems into Bengali Tagore emphasizes, by implication, that poetry translation is essentially a creative enterprise:

ব্রাউনিঙের কবিতাগুলিকে তুমি যে বাংলা রূপ দিয়েছ তা অপরূপ হয়েছে।
তাতে অনুবাদের ক্লিষ্টতা লেশ^স নেই, তাতে যেন নবজন্মের স্ত্রী প্রকাশ
পেয়েছে। সত্যেন্দ্র দত্তের অনুবাদে ছন্দোমৈপুণ্যের সহজ লীলা দেখা যায়, কিন্তু
তুমি অসাধ্য সাধন করেছ। বিদেশী রসপণ্যের ভার নিয়ে তুমি এক ঘাট
থেকে অন্য ঘাটে খেয়া দিয়েছ দুর্গমতম উজান পথে, দুঃসাহসিক
নাবিকবৃত্তিতে এরকম কৃতিত্ব দেখা যায় না।

Your rendering of Browning's poems into Bengali has been so marvellous that they have acquired the beauty of a new birth, having no strain of translation about them. Satyendranath Dutta's translation shows a spontaneous expression of rhythmic excellences, but you have done something impossible having ferried across artistic cargo [read 'creation'] of an alien origin successfully, negotiating the fiercest stream of the river. And the success you have achieved in such a daring act of navigability is unprecedented (my translation) .

(DasGupta208).

Tagore's idea of translation as an act of 'navigability' is equivalent to the German word *ubersetzen* which means to 'carry something from one bank of the river to its other bank'. A successful translation, as envisioned by Tagore, creates a new and independent poem in the TL, a poem that is re-incarnated with the 'beauty' and 'glory' of 'a new birth' in the receptor language. In order to bring about this 'new birth' the translator needs to have what DasGupta calls *প্রবণতার সাধন*, 'a kindred temperament' or 'a temperamental affinity'[my translation] with the original poet (Ibid 209).

Again, in connection with Kanti Chandra Ghosh's translation of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* Tagore takes up the problematic issue of poetry translation, underscoring its creative and poetic aspects:

এ-রকম কবিতা এক ভাষা থেকে অন্য ভাষার ছাঁচে ঢেলে দেওয়া কঠিন। কারণ এর প্রধান জিনিসটা বস্তু নয়, গতি। ফিট্জ জেডাল্ড ও তাই ঠিকমত তর্জমা করেননি – মূলের ভাবটা দিয়ে সেটাকে নূতন করে সৃষ্টি করা দরকার।কবিতা লাজুক বধূর মত এক ভাষার অন্তঃপুর থেকে অন্য ভাষার অন্তঃপুরে আসতে গেলে আড়ষ্ট হয়ে যায়। তোমার তর্জমায় তুমি তার লজ্জা ভেঙ্গেছো, তার ঘোমটার ভিতর থেকে হাসি দেখা যাচ্ছে।

It is difficult to cast the poetry of one language into the mould of another, for, its main focus is on dynamism rather than matter. Even Fitzgerald has failed to translate Khayyam accurately – one needs to re-create the whole thing with the feeling of the original...

Poetry, like a shy bride hesitates and falters to enter the inner world of one language from that of another. You have broken her shyness in your translation. The smile from within her veil is being seen.

(Tagore's Foreword to Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat translated
by Kanti Chandra Ghose.)

The poet Tagore here conjures up a vision of the elusive beauty of poetry that can only be captured in translation by a kindred poetic mind. According to him, a translated poem is a re-creation of the original, having a new life of its own. This implies that the translator must be a poet and his translation must also be a poetic interpretation of the original. Tagore's views on translating poetry have been echoed by two modern translation critics like Jackson Mathews and O.F.Babler. According to Mathews, "... to translate a poem whole is to compose another poem.... And it will have a life of its own, which is the voice of the translator" (Brower 67). Regarding poetry translation Babler goes one step further in declaring that, "...the translator ought to be a poet as well as an interpreter, and his interpretation ought to be an act of poetry"(Ibid 195). This raises the inevitable question of whether translation of poetry is identical to the original. The answer to this question may be found in Rabindranath's comment on Nirendranath's translation of Shelley's poem "One Word is too Often Profaned":

মূলের ভাবটাকে বাংলায় যথাসাধ্য বোধগম্য করতে গেলে একেবারে ঠিক তার মাপসই করে আঁট করা চলে না। তাই প্রতিরূপ না হয়ে কতকটা অনুরূপ হয়েছে।

If one attempts to make the translation as far comprehensible as possible, it is really difficult to cast it strictly in the mould of the original. It [your translation] has been somewhat *analogous rather than identical* to the original [emphasis added & translated] (DasGupta & Ghose 1369, 1962).

Thus, translation of a poem can never be identical to the original; it can at best be its interpretation or re-creation according to the poetics of translation. In an interview with *Musical America* Tagore clarifies as to what he has written to Nirendranath earlier: “A translation may be a re-incarnation but it cannot be identical” to the original (Cited in Lal 110).

In “Translating Greek Poetry” (1959) Richmond Lattimore holds almost the same view about translating poetry. Among the many objects which the translator of Greek poetry must strive to achieve, the chief one is “to make from the Greek poem a poem in English which, while giving a high minimum of the meaning of the Greek, is still a new English poem” (Brower 56). In order to compose such a poem in English the translator is required to interpret the original in the light of his subjective impression. Naturally, the ‘new English poem’ is created out of the union of the original “author plus [the] translator” (Ibid 49). Finally, the translator makes no attempt to reproduce original Greek metre and rhyme in his translation; for what he strives to achieve in his translation is a “re-creation’ rather than ‘reproduction’ of the original Greek poetry (Ibid 55).

Robert Frost’s definition of poetry as that which is lost in translation seems to have inspired and impelled Susan Bassnett to devote an entire chapter in defence of poetry translation in *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation* (1998) jointly written by Lefevere and Bassnett herself. In Chapter IV entitled “Transplanting the Seed: Poetry and Translation” Bassnett begins her discussion of the topic referring to Shelley’s famous comment on poetry translation in his “Defence of Poetry”:

it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as to seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower – and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel. (Bassnett & Lefevere 58).

According to Bassnett, Shelley here speaks of the difficulties of the translation process rather than the ‘impossibility of translation’ (Ibid 58). Moreover, the imagery he uses is that of ‘change and new growth’ (Ibid 58). What Shelley seems to emphasize here is that though a poem cannot be transfused from one language to another, it can nevertheless be transplanted or created anew in the receptor language. “The task of the translator”, Bassnett continues, “must then be to determine and locate that seed and to set about its transplantation” (Ibid 58). And for this purpose the seed of the poem is to be located and then creatively sown on a new soil to enable a new plant to sprout out in a new ambience. In other words, the translator is required to play a creative role to bring about its ‘transplantation’ in the target language. When he succeeds in transplanting the seed, he emerges as what Jean Paris calls the “co-creator” of the original (Arrowsmith and Shattuck 62). This raises the question about the relation between the creative role of the translator and that of the original poet. In this connection, Bassnett quotes Octavio Paz who makes a vital distinction between the task of the poet and the task of the translator in his essay on translating poetry:

The poet, immersed in the movement of language, in constant verbal pre-occupation, chooses a few words --- or is chosen by them. As he combines them, he constructs his poem : a verbal object made of irreplaceable and immovable characters. The translator’s starting point is not the language in movement that provides the poet’s raw material, but the fixed language of the poem. A language congealed, yet living. His procedure is the inverse of the poet’s : he is not constructing an unalterable text from mobile characters; instead he is dismantling the elements of the text, freeing the signs into circulation, then returning them to language.

(Bassnett and Lefevere 66)

The poet moulds and adapts the language in order to embody his vision and to give it an 'unalterable status' by creating an independent poem. But the translator has a completely different task to perform. The translator starts with the 'unalterable' language of the original poem and sets about 'dismantling' it and 'reassembling' the parts in order to re-create a new poem in the receptor language. Paz argues that this process of freeing the 'signs' and investing them with a new meaning in a different language parallels and, in a sense, 're-enacts' the original creative process 'invertedly'. But that does not mean that a translation is a replica of the original. What the translator strives to create is not an identical text but 'an analogous text' in the target language. This implies that 'the translator is therefore not firstly a writer and then a reader, but firstly a reader who becomes a writer' afterwards (Bassnett 66). What happens as a result, says Paz, is that the original poem undergoes a change and comes to exist 'inside' another poem, being 'less a copy than a transmutation' (Ibid 66).

Theoretically, this liberating process is related to Walter Benjamin's idea of the translation providing the 'afterlife' of a text or to Tagore's idea of the 're-incarnation' of the original text. But this liberating view of translating never enters into the vexed question of whether a 'meta-text' is or is not an inferior copy of the original. The task of the translator is simply a different kind of 'writerly task', a task involving fidelity to the original and to his creative imagination. The translator is required to possess creative sensibility to compensate what the text loses in the process of its transfer from one language to another. According to Bassnett, poetry is, therefore, not what is lost in translation, as claimed by Frost, but what is gained or re-created through the shaping spirit of the translators' creative imagination (Ibid 74). Shelley's views of translation, as elucidated by Bassnett here, confirm and vindicate Tagore's concept of translation as 're-creation' or 'rewriting'.

Translation of poetry, in the light of the aforesaid views, requires that the translator should preferably be a poet in order to translate poetry into poetry. Secondly, the translator should be as much faithful to the spirit of the original as to his creative self that goes on clamouring within him for expression. Thirdly, the translator needs to be an interpreter and his interpretation of the original must be an act of poetry. Fourthly, the translation of a poem must be an independent work having a life of its own. A translated poem should have a

spontaneity of its own and must not look like a translation. Fifthly, the translation of a poem is very likely to be coloured by the time of the translator, for, a translation can never exist in a vacuum, without being shaped by the spirit of the time.

Even though William Radice agrees with most of the arguments of the apologists for the translation of poetry into poetry, he cannot accept Nida's views regarding 'the reproduction of the message rather than the conservation of the form' in a work of translation (Nida¹²). In the Introduction to *Selected Poems* he lays stress on maintaining metre, rhyme and verse-forms in his Tagore translations in order to get as close to the original text as possible. He believes that the greatness of a poet like Rabindranath lies as much in his verse-forms as in his contents. A translation of his poems cannot be 'credible' unless the qualities of Tagore's greatness are "carried across' to the target readers in both form and content. As a creative writer, Tagore has distinguished himself as "a perpetual innovator, constantly creating new forms and styles in poetry" and much of the meaning and power of his poetry, Radice believes, derives from its metre and form. As the translator of his poetry, Radice likewise tries to 'create equivalents for Tagore's wonderful range of verse-forms, metres and structural devices' to represent him in the TL (Rao 35) and to give the target readers an idea of his technical virtuosity. According to Radice, translation of Tagore's poems can never be 'credible' without fusing organically the wonderful range of his technical innovations into the poetic structure of the verses.

Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore marks the beginning of a new kind of Tagore translations. Unlike the renderings of his predecessors including Tagore, his selections turn out to be something more than conventional Tagore translations. It is intended to give a new and credible impression of Tagore's range and power as a poet. It also provides the readers with an extensive introduction and detailed annotation in order to help them understand the poems. Let us now examine the translations of some of the poems from *Selected Poems* of Tagore and see how Radice 'transcreates' them creating 'analogous' verse-forms in English and explores the versatility of his creative power.

Agaman is the only poem that Radice chooses from Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) and this is the first Tagore poem translated by him. Captivated by the driving rhythm of *Agaman* Radice intends to 'carry' it across in translation. Since the English language does not have this sort of compelling rhythm, he makes a commendable attempt to transplant this rhythm in his English translation with the help of some 'prop-words'. Let us look at the first verse of *Agaman*, or "Arrival" to drive home the point under discussion:

তখন রাত্রি আঁধার হল, সাজ হল কাজ—
আমরা মনে ভেবেছিলেম আসবে না কেউ আজ।
মোদের গ্রামে দুয়ার যত রুদ্ধ হল রাতের মতো--
দুয়েক জনে বলেছিল, 'আসবে মহারাজ'।
আমরা হেসে বলেছিলেম, 'আসবে না কেউ আজ'।

Our work was over for the day, and now the light was fading;
We did not think that anyone would come before morning.
All the houses round about
Dark and shuttered for the night –
One or two amongst us said, 'The King of Night is coming'.
We just laughed at them and said, 'No one will come till morning'.

Radice uses such additional words as 'dark', 'amongst us', 'of Night', to prop up the rhythm of the original in his translation. His verse achieves a semblance of the original's rhythm retaining its arrangement of lines and verse structure. But the resonance of the original rhythm that strikes a deeper chord in the native speakers eludes Radice's grip and he ends up creating an 'analogous' rather than 'identical' rhythm in his translation. The 'prop-words', used in this poem, seem to have played an interpretative role in bringing out much of the inner significance of the poem.

Radice's use of 'The King of Night' to signify 'রাজাধিরাজ', in the first verse, is definitely more meaningful than Tagore's use of the phrase 'the king' because the person expected to come is more than an ordinary king in dignity and stature. The expression 'The King of Night'

evokes the stature and importance of the would-be visitor more than the monosyllabic word 'king' that Tagore uses in his rendering. In the second verse, expressions like 'outer door' for the mere 'দ্বার' and 'they rattle when it blows' for 'বাতাস' are simply interpretative props for producing the desired effect. But the last verse of the poem seems to have deviated much from the original because of his excessive use of 'prop' or interpretative words. By contrast, Tagore's prose rendering of this verse in his *Gitanjali* (1912) is more faithful to the original than Radice's:

ওরে, দুয়ার খুলে দে রে, বাজা শঙ্খ বাজা—
 গভীর রাতে এসেছে আজ আঁধার ঘরের রাজা ।
 ঝড় ডাকে শূন্যতলে, বিদ্যুতেরই ঝিলিক ঝলে,
 ছিন্ন শয়ন টেনে এনে আঙিনা তোর সাজা—
 বড়ের সাথে হঠাৎ এল দুঃখরাতের রাজা ॥

Fling wide the doors and let him in to the lowly conch's boom;
 In deepest dark the King of Night has come with wind and storm.
 Thunder crashing across the skies,
 Lightening setting the clouds ablaze –
 Drag your tattered blankets, let the yard be spread with them:
 The King of Grief and Night has come to our land with wind and storm.

[Arrival – *Selected Poems*]

Open the doors, let the conch-shells be sounded! In the depth of the night has come the king of our dark, dreary house. The thunder roars in the sky. The darkness shudders with lightening. Bring out thy tattered piece of mat and spread it in the courtyard. With the storm has come of a sudden our king of the fearful night.

[Poem LI— Tagore's *Gitanjali*]

Radice's rendering of the last line, though interpretative to an excess, seems a bit off the mark whereas Tagore's is more precise and true to the spirit of the poem. But Radice succeeds in investing his translation with a poetic charm and beauty that exercises a hypnotic spell on the readers. On the other hand, Tagore's translation of the last verse has an

undercurrent of poetic grandeur that does not escape the attention of genuine lovers of poetry.

Another magnificent poem from Tagore's মানসী (1890) is মেঘদূত that he composes to commemorate Kalidasa's immortal masterpiece. Although this poem is written in Bengali rhymed couplet, with shifting caesura and constant enjambement, Radice uses quasi blank verse in his translation to capture the imaginative exuberance and majestic sonority of the original. The translation of such a poem poses certain problems for a translator and Radice solves them by adopting an interpretative rather than a word-for-word translation.

With all his great admiration for Kalidasa, Rabindranath cannot but give a creative twist to any theme he takes from him and that makes his treatment relevant to the modern times. For him, মেঘদূত symbolizes a message not from a love-lorn individual of yore to his beloved, but an expression of the yearning of all human lovers of all ages and climes (SenGupta). He begins the poem with a tribute to Kalidasa who has immortalized in his poem the sighs and pangs of the separated lovers down the ages. He then tries to visualize the atmosphere of the hallowed first day of Asadh on which the 'supreme poet' composed his timeless poem. In "The Meghdut" Radice follows the original with as much fidelity as possible for a poet-translator whose translation is no less creative than his own poetry. This seems to explain why Radice calls Kalidasa a 'supreme poet' while rendering Tagore's expression 'কবিবর'. Kalidasa is no ordinary poet for Tagore; he is a 'poets' poet' adored and venerated by the Indian poets of succeeding generations in every language. In order to express Tagore's reverence for Kalidasa and to convey his poetic stature among the Indian poets, Radice's rendering of 'কবিবর' as 'supreme poet' helps him to emphasize Tagore's respect for Kalidasa and his towering stature in Indian literature. The 'মেঘমন্ত্র শ্লোক' that Kalidasa employs for his poem presents a baffling problem for the translator. Radice tackles it very deftly by rendering the term interpretatively ["stanzas like sonorous clouds"] rather than literally ["cloud-sonorous stanzas"]. In his "মেঘদূত" Rabindranath, with his poetic imagination, conjures up a vision of the first day of আষাঢ় and his verse resounds with the resonance of the clouds, thunders and winds. It is with the sensibility and vision of a poet that Radice re-creates the

atmosphere of the first day of আষাঢ় and his verse reverberates with the sounds of clouds, thunders and stormy winds that normally characterize the first day every year:

সেদিন সে উজ্জয়িনীপ্রাসাদশিখরে
কী না জানি ঘনঘটা, বিদ্যুৎ -উৎসব,
উদ্দাম পবনবেগ, গুরুগুরু রব!
গভীর নির্ঘোষ সেই মেঘসংঘর্ষের
জাগায়ে তুলিয়াছিল সহস্র বর্ষের
অন্তরগূঢ় বাষ্পাকুল বিচ্ছেদক্রন্দন
এক দিনে ।

Who can say what thickness of cloud that day,
What festiveness of lightning, what wildness of wind
Shook with their roar the turrets of Ujjayini?
As the thunderclouds clashed, their booming released
In a single day the heart-held grief of thousands of years
Of pining.

Radice here departs from the original only to re-create it imaginatively and this departure is the prerogative of a creative translator that he is. But the rendering of 'বিচ্ছেদক্রন্দন' as 'grief of ... pining' in the above extract brings into focus the lack of correspondence between the two languages --- English and Bengali. It is because of this lack of correspondence between the two languages that Radice has to interpret some words, as and when necessary, according to their contextual meaning or significance.

The theme of Kalidasa's poem is 'বিরহ' or বিচ্ছেদ and the sending of a message by the 'pinning' lover to his faraway beloved through cloud. Consequently, Rabindranath's poem abounds in words or expressions such as 'বিরহ', বিরহী, 'বিরহিণী', 'বিরহের গাথা', 'প্রবাসী, 'অভিসার ' etc that defy word-for-word rendering. This is why Radice attempts to interpret them following the spirit of the original poem. The idea of 'বিরহ' associated with the love of

Radha-Krishna is one of the key concepts of Vaishnavite culture and literature; but this concept is totally foreign to Western culture and ethos. Since there is no appropriate word in the English language to convey the concept of 'বিরহ', 'বিরহী', 'বিরহিণী' etc. , Radice interprets them in accordance with the contextual meaning of the poem. His translations of 'বিশ্বের বিরহী' as 'separated lovers throughout the world', 'বিরহের গাথা' as 'Song of yearning', 'প্রেম অভিসার' as love 'trysts' and 'বিরহের স্বর্গলোক' as 'heaven of yearning' are interpretative in character. He finds no alternative but to convey the sense of those words in an interpretative manner while carrying them across in the TL.

Sometimes he tries to give his rendering an interpretative twist but fails to produce the desired effect. One may mention here the lines "শ্রাবণে জাহ্নবী যথা যায় প্রবাহিয়া" and "পাষাণের শৃংখলে যথা বন্দী হিমাচল" and Radice's translation thereof " *Compare* the Ganges in full monsoon flood" and "*Compare* the vapour that mountains, / Prisoners of their own stone" respectively. The use of the word in italics as the rendering of the word 'jatha' is far from appropriate. Radice could have used the conjunction "as" in the manner Amalendu Bose has done ["as in the month of শ্রাবণ the river গঙ্গা..." and "as the হিমাচল chained to its rocks ..."] in his translation of the poem included in *101 Poems of Rabindranath Tagore* (Kabir18). Radice's rendering of 'শ্যামবঙ্গদেশে' as 'verdurous Bengal' is reminiscent of Keats's poetry. But he might have owed his translation of 'শ্যামবঙ্গদেশে' ['verdurous Bengal'] to Amalendu Bose who first rendered it as 'verdurous Bengal' way back in 1966.

The highly Sanskritic language of Rabindranath's "মেঘদূত" with all its compound words and mixed metaphors poses a great problem for a translator. Radice solves the problem in a unique way; in some cases, he makes compound words after the original but, in most cases, interprets them for "carrying across" in the target language. Let us consider the following verse from Rabindranath's "মেঘদূত" which abounds in 'compound words' and 'mixed metaphors':

All this time, companionless people have sat in loveless rooms
 Through the long, rain-weary, starless evenings of Asarh.
 In faint lamplight, they have slowly read aloud that verse
 And drowned their own loneliness.
 Their voices come to me from your poem;
 They sound in my ear like waves on the sea-shore.

In the above verse Radice makes use of the following compound words: 'companionless' ('সঙ্গীহীন'), 'loveless' ('প্রিয়াহীন'), 'rain-weary' ('বৃষ্টিক্লান্ত') etc. The first two compound words such as 'companionless' and 'loveless' are very much in use in the English language. But Radice may be credited with coining the word 'rain-weary' after the original. In the case of the remaining compound words and mixed metaphors he simply undertakes the interpretative technique to convey their intended message or meaning in the TL.

সোনার তরী (*The Golden Boat*) is the famous title poem from Rabindranath's সোনার তরী published in 1894. This poem, translated by the poet himself, is included in *The Fugitive* that appeared from London in 1921 (Lago 1972: 150). In his translation Tagore turns a magnificent lyric poem into a lifeless skeleton and the text of *The Golden Boat* rendered by Tagore is given below:

The rain fell past. The river rushed and hissed. It licked up and swallowed the island, while I waited alone on the lessening bank with my sheaves of corn in a heap. From the shadow of the opposite shore the boat crosses with a woman at the helm. I cry to her, 'Come to my island coiled round with hungry water, and take away my year's harvest.' She comes, and takes all that I have to the last grain; I ask her to take me.
 But she says, 'No' – the boat is laden with my gift and no room is left for me.

(Das 252).

In his rendering Radice's endeavour is to make an independent poem on the basis of the original সোনার তরী. In *The Golden Boat* he strives to capture the content, structure and rhyme pattern of the original poem and to infuse poetic life into it with his creative imagination. Consequently, he succeeds in capturing the keynote of the original as well as the atmosphere

of Bengal's riverine landscape during the monsoon and that, too, in a verse form conforming to Tagore's own:

One small paddy-field, no one but me --
Flood-waters twisting and swirling everywhere.
Trees on the far bank smear shadows like ink
On a village painted on deep morning grey,
On this side a paddy-field, no one but me.

It is with the vision of a poet that Radice here re-creates the rural landscape and the loneliness of the reaper on a rainy day. But his re-creation of this landscape is marked by a translation shift-- a shift that is essentially interpretative rather than literal. This translation shift occurs in the following lines --- "পরপারে দেখি আঁকা/ তরুছায়ামসীমাখা/ গ্রামখানি মেঘে ঢাকা প্রভাতবেলা" as "Trees on the far bank / smear shadows like ink / On a village painted on deep morning grew." Despite his fidelity to the original Radice's rendering of these lines are creative as well as interpretative. By contrast, Tagore's fidelity to the original --- be it in form or content--- is tenuous. He fails to 'carry across' much of the details of the rural landscape and the verse form of the original poem in his translation. As a result, the lyrical cadence and rhythmic movement of his original eludes the non-Bengali readers; and they do not have the faintest idea about the magnificence of the original poem. But in *The Golden Boat* Radice strives to give the target readers an intimation of the original poem which deals with the loneliness and alienation of man against the backdrop of a rural ambience during monsoon. The poem ends on a tragic note for the reaper's failure to get a berth in the boat along with his harvest, "ঠাই নাই, ঠাই নাই, ছোটো সে তরী,/ আমারি সোনার ধানে গিয়েছে ভরি". The boatwoman proceeds with her boat leaving him sad and 'alone' on the river-bank. Radice re-creates the concluding part of the poem with the passionate feeling and imagination of a poet, in a verse form resembling that of the original:

No room, no room, the boat is too small.
Loaded with my gold paddy, the boat is full.
Across the rain-sky clouds heave to and fro,
On the bare river-bank, I remain alone --
What I had has gone: the golden boat took all.

In his desire to represent the original accurately Radice transplants Tagore's verse form in English with as much dexterity as possible. Rabindranath's সোনার তরী consists of six five-line verses with a distinct gap in the third line of each verse and Radice has preserved this gap in his translation. Interestingly, Tagore himself has not maintained in his translation the verse form of the original, for it is totally alien to his concept of translation.

'The Hero' is the rendering of Rabindranath's বীরপুরুষ from শিশু (1903). It is basically a poem of fantasy that carries the poet away into an imaginary world where the desires and dreams of the children come true. In his rendering Radice tries to capture this world of fantasy in an equivalently tight verse form to make the poem 'credible'. And his translation method is, as usual, interpretative and creative in this poem.

In 'The Hero' Radice captures the imaginary excursion into a world of make-believe ---the mother in a palanquin and the child on the horse-back – in a verse form used by Tagore in the original. But his rendering suffers from translation loss when he interprets 'বিদেশ ঘুরে' as 'Roaming far and wide together'. There is no denying the fact that he fails to convey the sense of 'বিদেশ ঘুরে' through his interpretative line. Both Rabindranath Tagore (Das 149) and J.C. Ghosh (Kabir121) succeed in transmitting this sense of 'বিদেশ' which is an inalienable part of the child- turned- hero's imaginary sojourn. At sunset, the child and his mother seem to have come to a জোড়াদিঘি a pair of ponds believed to be 'a good haunt of bandits in folklore' (Kabir121). Radice's interpretation of the line 'এলাম যেন জোড়াদিঘির মাঠে' ['Suddenly we are blocked by water'] fails to produce the desired effect on the target readers unless they have an idea of what 'জোড়াদিঘি' symbolizes in the poem. In the note to the poem Radice explains the word 'জোড়াদিঘি' as 'an area of open land adjoining a pair of ponds' (Radice140). Tagore prefers to retain the Bengali word 'জোড়াদিঘি' in his rendering whereas Ghosh decides to use 'two large ponds'. In his attempt to 'domesticate' the idea of 'জোড়াদিঘি' in the target language Radice may have used the line, 'Suddenly we are blocked by water', knowing well that the Western people are not acquainted with what is called 'জোড়াদিঘি' in Bengal. But

unless the idea of ‘জোড়াদিঘি’ as a favourite ‘haunt of bandits’ is communicated to the target readers, the mystery of the light by the pond followed by the subsequent storming of its bank by the dacoits remains unresolved. Radice’s interpretation of the last line ‘মরা নদীর সোঁতা’ as ‘dried-up river’ is really excellent. Both Tagore and Ghosh left this part of the last line of the verse untranslated. His rendering of ‘দিঘির ধারে ওই-যে কিসের আলো?’ as ‘Near the water, what’s that lantern?’ is an evidence of his imaginative and re-creative faculty. Then follows his interpretation of Bengali specific expression ‘হাঁরে রে রে রে রে’ [uttered by the dacoits] as ‘shouts and yells’. Ghosh translates it as ‘yo-ho-ho-ho’ (Kabir 122) whereas Tagore rewrites it as ‘there bursts out a fearful yell’ (Das 149).

In the rest of the poem Radice conveys the imaginary exploits of the child, in a unique verse form in which the first line rhymes with the second and both the first two lines with the seventh. He also follows, as far as possible, the arrangement of lines of the original and the total number of words in each line. In order to preserve the tight verse form of the original he has sometimes had to ‘compress or re-order the lines’. Let us look at the description of the dacoits in the following lines of the original:

হাতে লাঠি, মাথায় ঝাঁকড়া ছুল—

কানে তাদের গোঁজা জবার ফুল

Radice ‘re-orders’ the above two lines making them three in his translation that follows:

Just imagine, *lathi*-wielding

Long-haired desperate villains wearing

Jaba-flowers behind their ears –

Again, his interpretation and re-ordering of the lines in the last verse of the poem is excellent. The persona of the poem wonders why such a fantasy does not come true instead of umpteen day-to-day happenings: ‘রোজ কত কি ঘটে যাহা তাহা-/ এমন কেন সত্যি হয় না আহা?’ Radice’s rendering of the line is creative and interpretative: “Life is such a boring matter, / Why are the exciting stories never / True?” And because of his re-ordering of the lines, the last eight-

line verse of the original is transformed into a seven-line one which contributes to the interpretative re-structuring of the verse.

The first World War (1914-1918) made a tremendous impact on Tagore's sensitive mind. Ahead of the outbreak of the war Rabindranath seemed to have sounded the 'trumpet of a prophecy' about the shape of things in the coming days. "The Trumpet", he writes to Rothenstein in December 29, 1914, "was written a fortnight before the war broke out" (Lago 175). Radice renders Rabindranath's শঙ্খ as *The Conch* which can well be identified with Panchajanya, Krisna's conch in the Mahabharata. Radice adopts the interpretative mode of translation which helps him to interpret and convey the profound symbolical words or expressions of the original.

Rabindranath's শঙ্খ is a passionate lament over God's conch lying down in the dust that augurs an impending catastrophe for the world. In his translation of the poem Radice tries to capture the sense of this 'catastrophe' in the following line: 'The tragedy of it cuts off air and blocks out light'. But this line cannot convey the catastrophic sense of 'বাতাস আলো গেলো নরে, একি রে দুর্দিন' of the original. Tagore's *Fruit-Gathering* contains a translation of the poem শঙ্খ (The Trumpet) done by the poet himself in which the foreboding of the catastrophe is beautifully captured, 'The wind is weary, the light is dead. / Ah the evil day!' It is the intimation of the impending catastrophe ['evil day'] that leads the poet to embrace the path of action rather than contemplation. Radice's rendering of 'শান্তিস্বর্গ' as 'heavenly quiet' is undoubtedly a shift in translation with an interpretative overtone. Again, the desire to be purified by washing off all dirty stains has been interpreted as 'my ablutions would purge me'. This interpretation brings to our mind the customary আচমন 'or ablution, which, according to *The COD*, is 'the ceremonial washing of parts of the body' before worshipping the deity.

The third verse of the poem that contains culture-specific objects and personal symbols poses a difficult problem for the translator. Radice is in favour of interpretative translation rather than the literal one. "Literal translation", he says in his "Translator's Diary" (1985), "is not

possible here, because the meaning lies between the phrases; and once again there is the problem of alien concepts and objects” (Radice 189). How can Radice convey the full meaning of ‘আরতিদীপ জ্বালা that is basically a culture-specific concept and ritual of the Hindus? How can he ‘carry across’ the symbol রক্তজবার মালা which is again associated with the কালি পূজা(?), Rabindranath makes no specific mention of war in the poem; he speaks only in images and metaphors of the impending dangers threatening the world: “আরতিদীপ এই কি জ্বালা, এই কি আমার সন্ধ্যা? / গাঁথবো রক্তজবার মালা? হয় রজনীগন্ধা!” Literally, the above two lines are almost untranslatable. Radice interprets them creatively in tune with the contextual meaning of the poem, with a direct reference to war, “What am I doing with this prayer-lamp, what do I mean by this prayer? / Must I drop my flowers of peace --- weave scarlet garlands of war?” In the original poem Rabindranath refers to ‘রক্তজবার মালা’ which may symbolize profuse bloodshed and loss of human life associated with war. This is how Radice ‘interprets’ the difficult lines making them clearer than they are in the original.

Then the poet appeals fervently to God to infuse into him youthful vigour so that he might hold aloft and sound God’s conch of victory, “যৌবনেরই পরশমণি করাও তবে স্পর্শ। / দীপক তানে উঠুক ধনি দীপ্ত প্রাণের হর্ষ।” In his interpretation of the lines, Radice seems to have taken too much liberty with the original: “O change me, touch me with youth, alchemize me! Let fiery melody / Blaze and twirl in my breast, life-fire leap into ecstasy!” Tagore’s rendering, by contrast, is better and closer to the original than Radice’s, “Strike my drowsy heart with thy spell of youth! / Let my joy in life blaze up in fire.” Rabindranath’s শঙ্খ sounds a note of hope and courage in the last verse of the poem. In *The Conch* Radice tries to capture this note of hope and courage. But his interpretation of a few lines of this verse is far from satisfactory: “ব্যাঘাত আসুক নব নব—আঘাত খেয়ে অচল রব, বক্ষে আমার দুঃখে তব বাজবে জয়ডঙ্ক” “Let new obstructions chafe and challenge me; / I shall take all blows and hurts unflinchingly; / My heart shall drum redress for your injuries;” The poet is determined to remain unmoved in the face of new blows and new obstructions ; even in the midst of sorrow his heart will reverberate with the drum of God’s victory. Radice fails to convey this sense of the original and its poetic beauty in his translation. In his rendering of the Bengali poem, Tagore

preserves something of the beauty and spontaneity of the original turning the above three lines into two lines, “ Let hard blows of trouble strike fire into my life, / Let my heart beat in pain, the drum of thy victory”. In his rendering Tagore gives the target readers an intimation of the original whereas Radice conveys only a confused impression about it.

Radice makes some alterations in the arrangement of lines, but makes no attempt to preserve the verse form of the original. In শঙ্খ each verse consists of five lines, with a distinct ‘gap’ in the third line; the first line rhyming with the second and the fourth, with the fifth. Radice transforms the five-line verse into the six-line one, altering the arrangement of lines. In his rendering the first line rhymes with the second, the second with the sixth whereas the third and fourth lines are divided into three short lines with end-rhymes. Thus, Radice takes much liberty with the original, transforming it into a new poem in his translation.

Rabindranath’s শা-জাহান from বলাকা is undoubtedly a great poem about Mogul emperor who commemorates his love for his wife by building the Taj Mahal on her grave. This Mogul mausoleum set Rabindranath’s creative imagination afire and he ends up composing this majestic poem of his বলাকা, an epoch-making book of verses. In the first poem of *Lover’s Gift* Tagore gives us a truncated translated version of this poem; but the translation fails to convey the impression of its ‘majestic original’. Radice’s objective in rendering শা-জাহান is to recapture the beauty and majesty of this great poem with the vision of a poet and that too in a verse form resembling the original one.

In শা-জাহান Rabindranath portrays the Taj Mahal as a timeless object of art against the backdrop of evanescence of mortal life and worldly possessions – “[...] এক বিন্দু নয়নের জলা / কালের কপোলতলে শুভ্র সমুজ্জ্বল/ এ তাজমহল ” It is with the imagination of a poet that Radice conveys in his translation the timelessness of the Taj-Mahal --- its lifeless chill and deathless beauty: “...one solitary tear / Would hang on the cheek of time/ In the form / Of this white and gleaming Taj Mahal”. Evidently, Radice here manipulates the original so as to suit it to his poetic imagination in order that he may write a poem of his own. Apparently, he deviates from the original in his arrangement of lines and ordering of thoughts but his fidelity to the

spirit of the poem is beyond question. In his rendering of the poem Radice follows, for the first time, the verse technique of varying line-lengths that came to be regarded as Tagore's characteristic verse-form from বলাকা onwards. This verse form resembling the French '*vers libre*' has been aptly characterized by Radice as 'sari-poems' that have something of 'the asymmetrical grace of a sari'(Radice11). Subsequently, in the Introduction to Rabindranath Tagore :*Selected Poems* (2004) ^{৪৫ ০৩৩ সমস} Sankha Ghosh has excellently described it as 'মুক্তবন্ধ' or 'free-bound' verse-form (Chaudhuri.29) which remains one of Rabindranath's distinguishing technical innovations. The original poem is generally rhymed in couplets and in his translation Radice has tried to convey the effect of the rhymes by using mostly half-rhymes. They do not always form couplets, but every end-word has another one echoing it in sound at the end of some other line.

In his effort to immortalize his beloved through the Taj- Mahal Rabindranath seems to have invested the formless death with deathless form consigning for ever his inconsolable cry to the timeless silence of the white tomb:

কণ্ঠে তার কি মালা দুলায়ে
 করিলে বরণ
 রূপহীন মরণেরে মৃত্যুহীন অপরূপ সাজে !
 রহে না যে
 বিলাপের অবকাশ
 বারো মাস,
 তাই তব অশান্ত ক্রন্দনে
 চিরমৌনজাল দিয়ে বেঁধে দিলে কঠিন বন্ধনে ।
 জ্যোৎস্নারাতে নিভৃত মন্দিরে
 প্রেয়সীরে
 যে নামে ডাকিতে ধীরে ধীরে
 সেই কানে-কানে ডাকা রেখে গেলে এইখানে

অনন্তের কানে।
. প্রেমের করুণ কোমলতা।
ফুটিল তা
সৌন্দর্যের পুষ্পপুঞ্জে প্রশান্ত পাষণে।।

Radice captures, with the feeling and imagination of a poet, the disconsolate cry that finds a spontaneous expression in exquisite poetry :

How wonderful the deathless clothing
With which you invested
Formless death – how it was garlanded!
You could not maintain
Your grief forever, and so you enmeshed
Your restless weeping
In bonds of silent perpetuity.
The names you softly
Whispered to your love
On moonlit nights in secret chambers live on
Here
As whispers in the ear of eternity.
The poignant gentleness of love
Flowered in the beauty of serene stone.

Thus, the Taj-Mahal, as visualized by the poet Rabindranath, appears to be a sculptural re-incarnation of the new *Meghaduta* journeying on, down the ages, carrying the wordless message of ‘eternal mourning’ --- “ I have not forgotten you, my love, I have not forgotten you” . Literal translation, however faithful, can never convey the lovely poetry that শী-জাহান throbs with from one language to another. It is only through ‘free’ or interpretative translation that one is capable of capturing the imaginative and elusive poetry pervading such a poem as শী-জাহান. Radice tries to re-create some of the beauty and majesty of শী-জাহান imaginatively drawing on the emotion and feeling of the original. It needs to be remembered that so much of the meaning of the original poem is to be found in its art --- music and

structure that the translator needs to convey it through its form, structure, music and art as through its meaning of words. He succeeds in his attempt to transmit some of the language/culture specific words from the Bengali originals to English language. He has no other option but to interpret them in the light of contextual meaning of the text. He translates ‘বিরহিনী’ as ‘loverless beloved’, ‘চিরবিরহীর বাণী’ as ‘continuous message of eternal mourning’ and ‘শান্তিক্রান্তিহীন’ as ‘tireless, incorruptible messenger’. In certain cases, he interprets a particular word or expression to convey its intended meaning; for example, he explains ‘স্মৃতির পিঞ্জরদ্বার’ as the ‘cage that holds memory’ and ‘অতীতের-চির-অস্ত-অন্ধকার’ as the ‘ever-falling darkness of history’. The Anglo-Saxon language which has a reservoir of loan words from many different languages does not have any compound word corresponding to ‘অতীতের-চির-অস্ত-অন্ধকার’. Radice adopts an interpretative mode of translation to bring home to his target readers the intended meaning of such Bengali compound words. So much of the meaning of the original poem is to be found in its art --- music and structure that the translator needs to convey it through its form, structure, music and art as through its meaning of words. Radice succeeds well in this task and the poem is reborn in his translation.

Grandfather's Holiday from পলাতকা (1918) is, in spirit, akin to Tagore's শিশু ভোলানাথ. It is apparently a simple poem but in spite of its simplicity, it is, in Radice's words, ‘the epitome of the untranslatable poem’ (Translator's Diary 194). This poem revolves round a word and concept (ছুটি), repeated in almost every line of the original – for which there is no real equivalent in English(Radice 194). *Samsad Bengali English Dictionary* gives a plethora of probable English words corresponding to the Bengali word ছুটি – “n. leisure, recess; break, break-up; a holiday, a vacation; a leave of absence; retirement; relief; release”(Tagore, however, uses the word ‘holiday’ as an equivalent for the word ‘ছুটি’ in his rendering of the poem which is to be found in *The Fugitive III*. But the connotations of the word ছুটি , as used in this poem, can hardly be covered by the word ‘holiday’ or by the words suggested by the Samsad lexicographer. The Bengali word ছুটি seems to have been used by Rabindranath in this poem in all its probable ramifications. Accordingly, Radice, in his note to the poem, defines ছুটি as ‘a state of mind – of delight, playfulness, freedom from restrictions – in which

there is no difference between work and play'. In this sense, the word 'ছুটি' is also a manifestation of the creative work pervading the universe (Radice149). Accordingly, he has translated this poem 'freely', using different English words for ছুটি so as to capture its multi-layered significance inherent in the poem.

In 'The Future Poetry' Aurobinda speaks of "two ways of translating poetry --- one is to keep strictly to the manner and turn of the original, the other to take its spirit, sense and imagery and reproduce them so as to suit the new language" (Ghose 431). In *Grandfather's Holiday* Radice makes a new poem of his own drawing imaginatively on the 'spirit', 'sense' and 'imagery' of the original. Obviously, his mode of translation here is interpretative rather than literal, for a literal translation cannot capture the varied connotations of this exquisitely elusive poem. In his rendering Radice re-creates the original transforming the favourite haunts of the grandchild --- blue sky, paddy fields, deep ponds, tree shades, barn corners --- into a romantic world of joy and freedom. The poet in Radice invests this world with a new freshness and beauty that is not to be found in the original. He is also at his interpretative best in rendering the predicament of the old grandfather as one 'trapped' in his worldly affairs as 'a spiderwebbed fly' ['বিষয়-কাজের মাকড়সার বিষম জালে বাঁধা']. The original contains no explicit reference to the 'fly' and Radice interpolates this image intuitively in his rendering. The image of the old grandfather as a 'spiderwebbed fly' conjures up in our mind, by contrast, the image of a free bird personified by the grandchild. The grandchild represents for the grandfather a world of freedom and 'proxy holiday'.

According to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "translation is the most intimate act of reading" (Mukherjee 99). Radice reads /'misreads' the original intimately in order to respond to 'the special call of the text' in his rendering. For him, the 'special call of the text' sometimes takes the shape of translation shift resulting in free interpretation of the text --- an interpretation which is the special prerogative of a translator. Here is an excerpt from the original and its translation by Radice:

আমার ছুটি সেজে বেড়ায় তোমার ছুটির সাজে;
তোমার কণ্ঠে আমার ছুটির মধুর বাঁশি বাজে।
আমার ছুটি তোমারই ওই চপল চোখের নাচে,
তোমার ছুটির মাঝখানেতেই আমার ছুটি আছে ॥

Your games are my games, my proxy holiday,
Your laugh the sweetest music I shall ever play.
Your joy is mine, my mischief in your eyes,
Your delight the country where my freedom lies.

(Grandfather's Holiday)

Even though Radice adopts the interpretative mode of translation, he remains faithful to the verse form and arrangement of lines in each verse. The original verse is composed in rhymed couplet (the rhyme pattern being aa bb) and the same rhyme pattern has been followed up in the translation as well.

Rabindranath's তালগাছ (Palm-tree) is an excellent poem from শিশু ভোলানাথ (1922). In the original poem the poet conceives of the palm-tree as a tall single-legged plant that peeps at the sky out-topping other trees. In his rendering Radice takes liberty with the original visualizing the palm-tree as a 'single-legged giant' that towers over other trees. The use of the word 'giant' here conjures up an image of the gigantic height and stature of the tree that the poet seeks to convey. The tree desires to soar higher and higher into the sky to pierce through the black clouds only if it had wings. In Radice's version the 'কালো মেঘ' is interpreted as 'black cloud-ceiling' with the explicit purpose of making it rhyme with 'if only it had wings' (emphasis added). Even though his translation mode is interpretative, he remains faithful to the verse form and the arrangement of lines throughout the poem. He tries to maintain a scrupulous fidelity to the form of the original simply to produce a palpable visual effect and to demonstrate Tagore's technical virtuosity. In the original the round-shaped leaves on the head of the tree appear to be its wings that express the desire to fly away from its nest. In Radice's translation, the tree expresses its desire to fly away through the tossing of its head and the heaving and swishing of its fronds. Finally, its wings take on

their flight and nothing can stop them. If we compare his rendering with the original, what strikes us is the addition of the ‘tossing of head’ and ‘heaving and swishing of its fronds’ that the ST lacks. Again, the idea of flying away leaving behind the nest has been conveyed with a poetic nuance in the last line of the second verse [‘nothing stops me from rising on their flutter’]. Far from being a mere linguistic transfer, Radice’s translation here becomes imaginative and poetic and that too at the cost of the ‘nest’ image of the original. This loss in translation has been compensated creatively by Radice in the TT.

The day-long activities of the palm-tree and its leaves have been conveyed through onomatopoeia in the original: সারাদিন ঝরঝর খড়্‌খড়/ কাঁপে পাতাপতর. But this onomatopoeic effect of poetry seems to be the despair of the translator. With all his poetic craftsmanship and technical skill, Radice fails to convey this onomatopoeic effect in his translation. He tries to interpret in verse what he cannot capture in alliterative sound and metre:

All day the fronds on the windblown tree
 soar and flap and shudder

Nevertheless, Radice succeeds in making Palm-tree an independent poem drawing on the imagination and feelings of the original.

“ঐশ্বর্য” is one of the few poems that were written under the direct impact of volatile social and political events of the time (1931-32). It was during this period that hundreds of Bengali youths were arrested and imprisoned for their alleged revolutionary sympathies. Two Bengali political prisoners were brutally murdered at Hijli jail. Gandhiji was arrested at that time after the failure of the second Round Table Conference in England. These two events made Rabindranath disillusioned with the Christian spirit of forgiveness and the British ideal of justice. The poet wrote this poem against the background of contemporary issues and succeeded in elevating it to the height of ‘genuine poetry’. In *Question* Radice tries to make an independent poem capturing the poetry of the original along with the imaginative vision of the original poet.

In 'প্রশ্ন' Rabindranath complains of how the messages of love and forgiveness propagated by divine messengers down the ages have been reduced to mockery in this world. Radice tries to capture the note of mockery and disillusionment in his translation. Of course his mode of translation is not literal, nor can it be so because the interpretative mode is always jostling with the generally required fidelity to the original. Take, for example, Radice's imperative 'Rid your hearts of evil' ('অস্তর হতে বিদেহ বিষ নাশো') which is definitely interpretative. Supriya Chaudhuri's rendering ('Destroy the poison of hate within') in *Selected Poems of OTT* is wholly literal, and therefore, far from interpretative; and so is Hiren Mukherji's version ('banish hate from all hearts') in *OHPR*. Incidentally, Tagore's own English version ('Cleanse your hearts from the blood-red stains of hatred') is interpolative in nature : we have here the interpolation "blood-red stains" which takes the translation away from the original, but paves the way for the interpretative mode. The interpolation here defines the nature of 'poison' with an oblique hint at the Hijli jail homicide. Radice's rendering – 'Rid your hearts of evil' – tries to tease interpretation out of the Christian / philosophical word 'evil' (The Christian Ghost in *Hamlet* says : "Taint not thy mind"; the Lord's Prayer has it : "... deliver us from evil" (King James Version Matthew 6: 5). Again, he may have in his mind Tagore's famous lecture 'The Problem of Evil' while translating this poem.

This poem is written in such an 'indignant protest' that the poet, in the heat of his anger, questions the value of the philosophy of forgiveness and asks if God has been able to pardon the men who are poisoning His air and blotting His light (SenGupta 116). He discovers 'Evil' so rampant in the world that the creed of non-violence and forgiveness preached by God's messengers seems for the moment to be a great mockery to God Himself. This ambivalent mood of the poem imposes a rather difficult task for its translator. For example, the agonized query of the poet, "তুমি কি তাদের ক্ষমা করিয়াছো, তুমি কি বেসেছো ভালো?" is a complex rhetorical question not unlike the ones we find in Blake's "The Tiger" ("Did He smile His work to see /Did He who made the lamb make thee?"). Now the point is that the Bengali interrogative 'Ki' has been rendered by Radice into 'Can it be' instead of the auxiliary verb['have'] used by the other translators of this great poem . 'Can it be' is a kind of interpretative interpolation which dilutes the ambivalence because the repetitive 'Can it

be' in the long run indicates the negative sense ['It can't be']. But this crucial Bengali phrase 'ki' has been rendered literally by different translators whereas Radice uses the interpretative interrogative 'can it be'.

Radice has taken meticulous care to preserve the verse form of the original in his translation. So far as the arrangement of lines and verse structure are concerned, he has followed the original verse structure and their lines with commendable fidelity. The original poem is written in rhymed couplet and Radice makes a feeble attempt to capture the 'rhymed couplet' in English by using 'half-rhyme'. But he does not seem to have achieved much of a success in this respect.

"Railway Station" (1940), the rendering of ইস্টেশন from নবজাতক, is a great poem in which Rabindranath's poetic imagination is at his best. While translating the poem Radice re-creates the original with the imaginative vision of a poet making an independent poem of his own.

In the first verse of the original the poet loves to watch the coming and going of up and down trains to and from the station. In his rendering Radice uses an interpolative image ---- 'Ebb and flow like an *estuarine river*' --- to interpret the arrival and departure of trains like the ebb and flow of a river (emphasis added). Admittedly, Tagore does not use any such image in the original; he uses only two evocative words 'ভাঁটির ট্রেন' and 'উজান ট্রেন' to describe the 'down-train' and 'up-train' in the poem. Radice seems to equate the station with the river- estuary, taking his cue from the two phrases 'ভাঁটি' and 'উজান' relating to the river, in keeping with the 'communicative intention' of the poet. Apparently, he deviates from the original in order to give his own interpretation of the station. His interpretative deviation from the original here transforms the station into a river-estuary from the symbolical point of view.

Radice's interpretative mode of translation finds its eloquent expression in the third verse of the poem. The spectacle of the station, like 'moving pictures' brings to one's mind the perpetual theatre of coming and going of passengers with their reactions writ large on their

faces. Rabindranath's apparently simple, yet deeply suggestive poetic idioms in this poem defy word-for-word rendering and call for 'interpretative transfer' from SLT to TLT. Both Buddhadeva Bose and William Radice interpret this verse in keeping with its inner spirit. Mr. Bose's rendering of the third verse is as follows:

This scene, like a motion -picture, makes me think of endless meetings and forgettings of ceaseless welcomes and farewells. Crowds gather every minute upon the stage, they wave their flags and disappear leaving no address. And behind all this is the strong pull of pleasure and of grief, of gain, and things gone wrong.

(Kabir 228).

Here is Radice's version of the verse under review:

The essence of all these moving pictures
Brings to my mind the image of language,
Forever forming, forever unforming,
Continuous coming, continuous going.
Crowds can fill the stage in an instant ---
The guard's flag waves the train's departure
And suddenly everyone disappears somewhere.
The hurry disguises their joys and sorrows,
Masks the pressure of gains and losses.

(Radice 114).

Radice's interpretation of 'চলচ্ছবির এই-যে মূর্তিখানি' as the 'essence of all these moving pictures' communicates the spirit of the original at the cost of its poetic effect. His use of the prosaic, interpretative word 'essence' as the equivalent of 'এই যে মূর্তিখানি' fails to convey the visual poetic impression of the original expression. Again, his rendering of the line 'নিত্য-মেলার-নিত্য-ভোলার ভাষা— as 'the image of language / For ever forming, forever unforming' is rather confusing. In the original Tagore seems to have used the word metaphorically whereas Radice complicates the issue by rendering the word 'ভাষা' literally. Buddhadeva Bose, on the other hand, succeeds in conveying the poetic spirit of the verse imaginatively and that too in

a prose translation. Radice tries to preserve the metre and rhyme in order to make his rendering equivalent to the original but sometimes his use of prosaic word produces a jarring effect.

The station is 'like a painting in perpetual making and unmaking'. It unfolds to Tagore an epiphanic vision in which the great world appears to be the work of an artist. Radice's handling of the epiphanic point is superb. The poet in him re-creates the epiphanic vision imaginatively and the ever-moving stream of passengers of the station is poetically transformed into an image or spectacle of life itself. His interpretation of the line, 'আঁকড়ে ধরার জিনিস এ নয়, দেখার জিনিস এটা' into 'Not a thing the hand can grip hold of, / But an insubstantial visual sequence' is excellent. Buddhadev Bose's interpretation of this verse cannot attain this poetic height. Radice's interpretation of the station as an 'insubstantial visual sequence' is, in a sense, the interpretation of life itself which resembles a station. Here the poet Radice surpasses the translator in him and his translation of this apparently simple, yet deeply significant poem is really excellent.

The poem যক্ষ from সানাই (1940) has a great thematic affinity to *The Meghaduta* and should be read in conjunction with Kalidas's famous masterpiece. Rabindranath here seems to have explored in যক্ষ the creative role of 'বিরহ', or yearning in an artist. The যক্ষ, as represented in the poem, seems to have been identified with the creative artist and his yearning with the artist's creative power. This poem is essentially 'paradoxical' and poses a difficult problem for its translator, as Radice confesses in the notes to the poem ---"It is peculiarly difficult to translate". In order to do justice to the 'paradoxical' nature of the poem Radice adopts an interpretative mode to capture its elusive spirit – a spirit that is bound to be the despair for a word-for-word translator.

In 'যক্ষ' Rabindranath's imagination takes wing following Yaksha's flight of yearning towards Aloka uniting a 'deep pain' and sublime beauty. Radice also strives to make a parallel poem exploring the role of yearning in a creative artist. In the original the message of yearning is carried to অলকা by the impatient chariot of the wind (পবনের ধৈর্যহীন রথে) whereas in Radice's

translation it is borne by the *impatient winds*. Here he fails to convey in his translation the *chariot* image from the original and his rendering suffers from a translation loss. This loss is continued in the remaining lines of the stanza such as ইঙ্গিত-আমন্ত্রণে ('beckoning'), গিরি হতে গিরিশীর্ষে ('From mountain to mountain') and সমুভ্ৰুক বলাকার ডানার আনন্দচঞ্চলতা ('A careering crane's – wing-flap of joy'). Radice suffers more often than not from this type of *translation loss* only when he fails to interpret a particular expression or part of a line creatively. But the poet in Radice makes up the above *translation losses* by fusing creatively the 'joy' of the flying crane with the inaudible 'music' of the shadow-cast rains and the yearning of love-lorn Yaksa.

The next stanza begins with a similar *translation loss* when Radice fails to conjure up the image of পথিক কাল in his rendering, through the use of his unimaginative expression 'onward time'. He interprets পথিক কাল as 'onward time' at the cost of a fine image in the original, the phrase 'onward time' being a poor equivalent of the image পথিক কাল. A similar 'loss' is, again, found in the following expressions, such as ভবিষ্যের তোরণে তোরণে ('door after future door') and নব নব জীবনে মরণে ('Life after future life'). Time, so poetically conceived by Tagore as পথিক কাল, is on an endless journey to bridge the wide gulf that exists between the attempt and the achieving of perfection (Do the lines echo the concluding lines of Eliot's "The Hollow Men"?). It is at this point that Tagore has an epiphanic vision in which the world appears to be a poem and the yearning of an artist seems to find its expression in his creative work. Yaksa, the archetypal বিরহী is here the blessed artist whose creative power is ignited by the fire of yearning, বিরহ:

এ বিশ্ব তো তারি কাব্য, মন্দাক্রান্তুরি তারি রচে টীকা -
 বিরাট দুঃখের পটে আনন্দের সুদূর ভূমিকা।
 ধন্য যক্ষ সেই ---
 সৃষ্টির-আগুন-জ্বালা এই বিরহেই ।

Radice recaptures this 'epiphanic vision' in his translation identifying the yearning of Yaksa with the creative imagination of an artist.

The world is its poem, a rolling sonorous poem
In which a remote presage of joy annotates vast sorrow.
O blessed Yaksa –
The fire of creation is in his yearning.

Rabindranath's imagination is at his exuberant best in his portrayal of the love-lorn lady and her mental states. But the impassioned imagination of the original finds a restrained and controlled expression in Radice's rendering, very often resulting in *translation loss*. The agonized mental state of the beloved awaiting at Alaka loses much of her emotional force and nuance in English. Radice's translation fails to produce the spell-binding effect of the line দল পল গণি গণি মনর দিবস তার যায়. The expression 'long days move' cannot convey the impression of *মনুর দিবস* of the original. The rendering of the line --- আগন্তক পান লাগি ক্রান্তিভারে ধূলিশায়ী আশা -- fails to carry across the idea of *আগন্তক পানু* in the target language: 'Her hope, / Worn out by waiting, lies in the dust'. The next line ---কবি তারে দেয় নাই বিরহের- তীর্থগামী ভাষা --- is an example of translation shift: 'The poet has given her pining no language, / Her love no pilgrimage'. Unable to find an adequate equivalent of the expression *তীর্থ-গামী ভাষা* Radice interprets the line through a 'dynamic equivalence' so that the target readers can understand it. Thus, Radice succeeds in capturing something of the exquisite poetic beauty of the original in his rendering. This poem, thus, testifies to some of the intricate problems that a translator faces in translating poetry from one language to another.

Bombshell (1940) is an outstanding poem about war that Rabindranath wrote following the outbreak of the World War II. It is a 'disturbing poem about the war', written against the natural backdrop of a rural landscape in Bengal. The poem breathes an ambience of peace and tranquillity prevailing all around. The harmonious bond between man and nature, as found in this poem indicates that 'All's well with the world'. But this atmosphere of apparent peace and harmony is shattered by the disquieting news of bombardment in Finland by Russia. This unhappy incident exposes the mockery of the so-called harmony existing between man and nature. The Soviet bombardment in Finland deals a rude shock to the peaceful ambience, a shock the nuance of which is conveyed by the word 'Bombshell'.

Radice is perhaps the first to have translated this extraordinary poem অপঘাত calling it 'Injury' in the 1985 and ^{the} 1987 editions of *Selected Poems* of Rabindranath Tagore. The word অপঘাত is indeed hard to translate in English; for there is no English equivalent of this Bengali word. But Radice was not happy with the title of the poem translated by him, and finally chose the title *Bombshell* as the nearest approximation to the original title অপঘাত. He interprets the word 'অপঘাত' in the light of the theme of the original and the word 'Bombshell' seems to be an interpretative equivalent of the word 'অপঘাত'. The very title *Bombshell* speaks of Radice's interpretative mode of translation, a mode that is at once imaginative as well as communicative. The poem is written in rhymed couplet of unequal length and Radice retains the verse form of the original but fails to maintain the arrangement of lines in his rendering.

Like the title, the first two lines of the poem defy literal translation and present a challenge for its translator.

সূর্যার্শের পথ হতে বিকালের রৌদ্র এল নেমে।
বাতাস ঝিমিয়ে গেছে থেমে।

Radice interprets imaginatively the first two lines which seem to throb with pure poetry:

The sinking sun extends its late after-noon glow.
The wind has dozed away.

In the rest of the poem he re-creates, with the imagination of a poet, (in the words of Keats) 'the poetry of the earth' that Rabindranath discovers in the midst of the casual and inconsequential objects of nature. Radice's interpretative mode of translation is found when he renders রাজবংশী পাড়া as 'Rajbansi quarter'. The concept of *para* which is ubiquitous in India is something unknown in the West. This explains why Radice domesticates the Indian concept of পাড়া as 'Rajbansi quarter' in order to enable his target readers to understand it.

His rendering of চৈত্রের ছড়ানো নেশাখানি as the 'balm of Caitra' is really interpretative. Finally, his interpretation of এক্ষেপে শ্রলাপের সুরে as 'dull, demented melody' is excellent and also an example of alliteration. Thus, drawing on the essence of the original poem Radice rewrites an independent poem of his own and *Bombshell* shows his poetic talent at its best.

Recovery—10 (elsewhere titled as *They Work*) from আরোগ্য dictated by the poet on 13 February 1941, is a remarkable poem composed by him in the twilight of his life. It is, in fact, a "hymn of life" that re-affirms his unwavering belief in the toiling masses of the world. Radice re-creates the poem imaginatively drawing on Tagore's awareness of the vicissitudes of human civilizations and his deep reverence for the common people. In his rendering of the poem Radice retains the varying line-lengths of the original that became Tagore's characteristic way of writing *verse libre* since the বলাকা phase.

Journeying backward on Time's 'leisurely stream' the poet tries to visualize the panorama of India's past history. What flashes before his mind's eyes is a procession of shadowy pictures from the womb of a remote past. Radice's rendering begins with a translation shift in which drifting on Time's leisurely stream the poet's mind turns indolent as if under the burden of reminiscences. The translation shift, thus, takes an interpretative turn preserving the meditative character of the poem. What the shadowy pictures unfold before his eyes is procession of myriad peoples coming from countless ages of a long distant past. The procession includes the victorious people marching forward proudly, the empire-hungry Pathans followed by the Moghuls, raising storms of dusts and waving flags of triumph. Radice's interpretative rendering of জয়োদ্ধাত প্রবল গতি of victorious peoples as their hurtling forward 'Confident of victory' seems to have diluted the meaning of the original. The arrogance is evidently different from confidence. There is something pejorative about the former word whereas the latter one is free from any such blemish. Apart from Radice, this poem have been translated by Hiren Mukherjee and Supriya Chaudhuri. Hiren Mukherjee's 'victory's arrogant speed' (Kabir 1966:246) and Supriya Chaudhuri's 'furious space, arrogant in victory' (Chaudhuri 368) convey adequate representation of the original meaning. But time has wiped them off, leaving no trace in sky which once resounded with

the display of their power and pride. Tagore intuitively knows that the ‘mighty British’ and their empire, like their imperialist predecessors, would equally be swept away by time. And Radice’s rendering of ^{‘সম্রাজ্যের দেশ-ছোঁড়া জাল’} ‘samrajyer-deshbeda-jal’ as ‘land-encircling web of their empire’ is more poetic than Mukherjee’s or Chaudhuri’s. Both Mr. Mukherjee (‘empire’s enveloping nets’) and Ms. Chaudhuri (‘encircling fences of empire’) convey the literal meaning of the original. But Radice surpasses them in capturing the poetic nuance of Tagore’s words and his use of the ‘web’ image of the internet in suggesting the world wide empire of the British lends a contemporary relevance to his translation. The British too would pass leaving not a sign behind. What would remain is the ‘sky’s pure blue’ at dawn and dusk and the common folk who toil and labour to sustain life on earth.

Looking down on the earth the poet discovers a procession of ordinary people going down the paths of the world. In this context, Tagore use of the expression ‘কলকলরবে বিপুল জনতা চলে’ has been variously rendered by the translators. Hiren Mukherjee translates it as ‘multitudes moving with vibrant voices along many roads’ whereas Supriya Chaudhuri interprets it as ‘I see passing in constant clamour / A great rush of people/On many paths’. Radice’s interpretation --- ‘hubbub of a huge concourse/ Of ordinary people / Led along many paths’ ---- seems to be poetic and allusive. It seems to remind one of the meandering line of the ordinary folk in Langland’s *Piers Plowman*. Then the poet’s focus shifts on to the non-descript common men who have been performing their normal chores of day-to-day life from time immemorial. Combining an interpretative power with his poetic vision Radice gives an excellent account of how human civilization moves forward through the normal activities of the common people in age after age:

ওরা কাজ করে

নগরে প্রান্তরে

রাজহত্র ভেঙ্গে পড়ে; রণডঙ্কা শব্দ নাহি তোলে;

জয়স্তুম মূঢ়সম অর্থ তাঁর ভোলে;

রক্তমাখা অস্ত্র হাতে যত রক্ত-আঁখি

শিশুপাঠ্য কাহিনীতে থাকে মুখ ঢাকি।
ওরা কাজ করে
দেশে দেশান্তরে ...।।
দিনরাত্রে গাঁথা পড়ি দিনযাত্রা করিছে মুখর।
দুঃখ সুখ দিবসরজনী
মন্দিত করিয়া তোলে জীবনের মহা মন্ত্রধনি।

They work ---
In cities and in fields.
Imperial canopies collapses,
Battle-drums stop,
Victory-pillars, like idiots, forget what their own words mean ;
Battle-crazed eyes and blood-smearred weapons
Live on only in children's stories.
Their menace veiled.
But people work –
Here and in other regions, ...
Filling the passage of their lives with a rumbling and thundering
Woven by day and night –
The sonorous rhythm
Of Life's liturgy in all its pain and elation,
Gloom and light.

Radice's rendering of রক্তমাখা অস্ত্র হাতে যত রক্ত-আঁখি / শিশুপাঠ্য কাহিনীতে থাকে মুখ ঢাকি is interpretative. The sense of dread that was once aroused by 'রক্তমাখা অস্ত্র and 'রক্ত-আঁখি' is now alive only in children's story book. The use of the interpolative line --- 'Their menace veiled' --- throws light on his interpretative mode.

Note:

All citations from the Bengali poems in this chapter, unless otherwise stated, are from Tagore's সঞ্চয়িতা, a selection of his representative poems by himself.

CHAPTER -- V

PARTICLES, JOTTINGS, SPARK: **COLLECTED BRIEF POEMS OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE**

I

William Radice's *Particles, Jottings, Sparks: The Collected Brief Poems of Rabindranath Tagore* (2000) are the poetic translations of Rabindranath Tagore's कणिका (1899), लेखन (1927) and the posthumous स्फुलिङ्ग (1945). Critics have tried to label these short poems as 'epigrams' or 'aphorisms' but more or less failed to describe the true nature of these short poems. Tagore himself coined the term कवित्रिका ('poemlet'), a diminutive of कविता (poem), to characterize these poems but it has not gained currency in the literary circle. Moreover, as the term 'कवित्रिका' may sound a bit strange in English, Radice prefers to call them 'brief' rather than short poems in the Introduction to *PJS* (Radice 3). In fact, these poems express the macrocosm in the microcosm, the infinite in the finite or what Tagore calls "the big in the small" (Ibid3). In other words, they encapsulate a multiplicity of thoughts, ideas and feelings in the simplest possible way that remains the basic concerns of his poetic career. "They therefore", Radice rightly says, "take us right to the centre of his poetry" (Ibid3) Tagore began writing these 'brief' poems in the last years of the nineteenth century when his Bengali critics charged him with 'lack of substance' in his writings (Pal 255). The stream of the 'brief' poems that began to flow from his pen from the period of कणिका (1899) was continued almost for the rest of his creative life; the publications of लेखन (1927) and the posthumous collection of स्फुलिङ्ग (1945) confirm their uninterrupted flow. Tagore is indebted to the indigeneous tradition of short, didactic verses for the poems of कणिका and to the model of Japanese *haiku* forms for his brief poems of लेखन and स्फुलिङ्ग. According to Ketaki Kushari Dyson, the poems of कणिका are "affiliated to a native Indian tradition of aphoristic,

didactic verses, while the two other volumes also owe a debt to the spirit of Japanese haiku poetry” (Dyson I. 2).

During his long life Tagore visited different countries of the world and wrote these brief poems ‘on request’ for friends, hosts, autograph hunters, brides and bridegrooms, for children at their name-giving ceremonies, or as obituaries. The poems of লেখন (1927) which he began while resting by the Lake Balaton were continued and later associated with Japan and also with China (which he visited in 1924). Regarding the genesis of these poems Tagore dwells at length in the preface to লেখন and Radice cites it in the Introduction to *PJS*:

“These writings began in China and Japan. Their origin was in requests to write something on fans or pieces of paper or handkerchiefs. Thereafter I received demands in my own country and in other countries. In this way these piecemeal writings accumulated. Their chief value is to introduce myself through my own handwriting. But not only through my handwriting: through my swiftly written feelings too. In printed form this kind of personal contact is spoilt --- these writings would seem as pallid and futile as an extinguished Chinese lantern. So when news came that in Germany there was a way of printing handwriting, the verses in *Lekhan* were reproduced. They contain some spontaneous corrections and crossings-out. Even these convey the flavour of my personality.

(Radice 11)

The new-found German technology of printing handwriting gave Tagore a unique opportunity of getting his hand-written short poems printed and published in facsimile form. This gave the poems of লেখন its characteristic shape and nature distinguishing them from the rest of the short poems of *Particles, Jottings, Sparks*. Again, in an essay on লেখন published in the Kartik 1335 (October-November 1928) issue of প্রবাসী he elaborates on what he says in the preface quoted above:

When I went to China and Japan, almost every day I had to satisfy the claims of autograph-hunters. I had to write for them often, on paper or silk or on fans. They wanted me to write in Bengali, because a signature in Bengali was on the

one hand mine, on the other hand the whole Bengali nation's. I became in this way accustomed to writing two or four line poems [...] and I got pleasure from them. The concise expression achieved by concentrating one feeling or another into a few lines has often given me more satisfaction than my long compositions.... Among the Japanese, small poems are not at all despised. They like to see the big in the small, because they are born artists. They refuse to judge beauty by size or weight. So when anyone in Japan has asked me for a poem, I have had no compunction about giving them only two or four lines. When I went to Italy last time, I had to write a lot in autograph books. Those who wanted me to write often asked for it to be in English. At this time too, sometimes in their notebooks and sometimes in mine, lots of little poems of this sort accumulated. The writing often begins in this way –on request – but then the urge takes over and I don't need to be asked.

(Appendix A to *PJS* 161-163)

Evidently, the creative 'urge' of writing these short poems initially came from the 'requests' of the autograph-hunters and he became gradually so possessed by this 'urge' that he went on writing this type of brief poems in his notebooks even in his spare time. These poems, thus, got accumulated over the years in his notebooks and were finally published in an anthology called লেখন (Radice's *Jottings*) in 1926.

It is therefore obvious that though he began to write these short poems drawing on the indigenous tradition of aphoristic, didactic verses, Tagore found a congenial medium in the Japanese *haiku* poems to satisfy the requests of his overseas autograph-hunters or admirers. But it must be remembered that though Tagore's 'brief' poems resemble the imagist poems or the Japanese *haiku* in outward shape or size, they are basically different in their tone and temperament. Secondly, he began to write these brief poems much ahead of the appearance of the imagist poems in English literature. Thirdly, Tagore's third visit to England coincided with the launching of the Imagist movement by Pound and others but he showed, as Bikash Chakravarty observes in "Tagore's London 12-13"^(May 1982-April 1983) no interest at all in 'the experimental movements in English poetry' in general and Imagism in particular (Chakravarty 44). As a result, the imagist poems of T.E. Hulme, Ezra Pound and their school failed to evoke any

interest creative or otherwise in Tagore. But this was not the case with the Japanese *haiku* poems. He came in contact with these poems when he visited Japan during 1916 and 1917 respectively. In his জাপানযাত্রী “Traveller to Japan”, 1919) Tagore expresses his unstinted admiration for the *haiku* poems:

Nowhere else in the world does one find poems of only three lines. These three lines are enough for both poets and readers....All the poems that I have so far heard are pictorial; they are not poems that can be sung....Anyway, in these poems there is not just restraint in the words, but restraint in the feeling too. The stirrings of the heart nowhere disturb this restraint of feeling

(Appendix A (2) to *PJS* 169-171).

According to Sisir Kumar Das, Tagore was so impressed by the brevity, economy and concentration of these poems that he found in their structure ‘a congenial medium’ to express himself admirably. It is very likely that the form and structure of these poems “may have worked on his mind when he yielded to the requests of young ladies to inscribe something on their fans or autograph books” (Das 616). But what distinguishes Tagore’s short poems from the typical imagist poems or Japanese *haiku* is their excellent poetic beauty and aesthetic charm as independent poems. It needs to be mentioned here that in the poetry of pre-Tagorean Bengali literature one finds a tradition of parable-like short poems of moral or didactic import penned by the contemporary Bengali poets like Iswar Gupta , Krishnachandra Majumder and Rajanikanta Sen (Bhattacharya 626). Tagore may have drawn on this Bengali tradition of short, aphoristic poems while composing the poems of কণিকা, লেখন and স্কুলিঙ্গ. But he gives them a unique poetic beauty and aesthetic charm of their own and they are the imaginative creations of a new kind, perhaps unparalleled in world literature. Moreover, the forms used by Tagore in his brief poems are variable, from epigrammatic couplets to lyrical celebrations of nature and of human beauty. Images, themes etc. vary as forms vary, but the colour, flavour and tone gives these poems consistency and continuity.

Radice was inspired to translate Tagore’s brief poems by Martin Kampchen’s German translations of a hundred of them. What he [Radice] strives to do, through his translations of

brief poems, is to project 'the originality of Tagore's achievement in this genre' and its 'uniqueness in world literature' (Radice.3) Radice's avowed aim in translating Tagore is to represent him as a great poet rather than a sage or a guru. It is in his brief poems that one finds a natural and spontaneous expression of Tagore who is, above all, a poet. "In his brief poems", Radice says rightly, "he [Tagore] was only a poet, and this is why his voice in them is so free, so natural, so spontaneous and so friendly"(Radice *PJS* 25) In his translations of Tagore's brief poems Radice strives to represent him 'only as a poet' and to carry his poetic voice across in the TL through these brief poems. Naturally, this involves a poetic translation of Tagore's 'brief poems' such as *কণিকা* (1899), *লেখন* (1926) and *স্কুলিঙ্গ* (1945).

II

Before we evaluate Radice's poetic rendering of *কণিকা*, *লেখন* and, *স্কুলিঙ্গ*, it would be worthwhile to discuss some of the theoretical views regarding poetry translation. Poetic translation that moves between the need to achieve as much fluency as possible in the new texts, and the need to retain as close a relationship as possible to the originals is like a 'tight rope walk'. Its cardinal principle is that the translation of a poem must also be a poem. According to Dryden, the translation of poetry into poetry can only be done by a poet who alone is capable of 'enacting' what J. Felstiner calls "a parallel process of composition" (Felstiner 34). Since the translation of poetry is expected to make an impact on the reader's consciousness as poetry, it involves an extra degree of creative complication, notwithstanding the translator's attempt to "create equivalent poetical forms in the target language" (Dyson I.1). In order to translate poetry into poetry a poet-translator is required to compose a poem equivalent to the original. He is therefore required to be as much faithful to the original as to his creative self. A.K. Ramanujam's comment on this point is worth quoting: "A translation has to be true to the translator no less to the originals" (Ramanujam13). But in being faithful to the original he [the translator] must not give the impression that he is engaged in a work of translation. Secondly, by 'approximating' the form of the original, he tries to make some formal effects in his own language such as those produced by the original in the source language. Thirdly, despite its fidelity to the original, a

translated work must have a 'life' of its own. Finally, the translator "[...] ought to *be a poet as well as an interpreter, and his interpretation ought to be an act of poetry.*"(emphasis added) (Brower195).

In the light of the above theories let us now turn to the brief poems of কণিকা, লেখন and, স্কুলিঙ্গ in the following three sections. কণিকা (1899), a book of 110 poems, is Tagore's maiden venture in this *genre*; the style and character of his later brief poems can be seen to evolve from them. This first book of his brief poems contains a number of longer, lighter fable-like poems at the beginning, pithy and witty four-line and two-line poems in the middle, and more serious, probing, cosmic poems at the end. Radice seems to have followed the text of Visva-Bharati's *Rabindra Rachanabali* Vol. III for translating the poems of কণিকা. He, himself a practicing poet, attempts not only to interpret the short poems creatively in his translation but also 'strives to give a poetical form of some sort to each piece'. Tagore has used the Bengali পয়ার metre in the poems of কণিকা. Since Radice cannot transfer the পয়ার metre from Bengali to English, he tries to make up the loss in transit by using rhymed couplet rather than the conventional পয়ার metre in some of the poems of কণিকা. As for the rest of *Particles* poems he retains the form of rhyming verse, the first line here rhyming with the fourth line and the second line with the third respectively. Let us have a look at some of Tagore's Bengali brief poems and their counterparts in English in order to evaluate Radice's mode of translation. Here is an example of Tagore's fable-like Bengali poem from কণিকা:

গুণ

আমি প্রজাপতি ফিরি রঙিন পাখায়,
কবি তো আমার পানে তবু না তাকায়।
বুঝিতে না পারি আমি বল তো ভ্রমর,
কোন গুণে কাব্যে তুমি হয়েছে অমর।
অলি কহে আপনি সুন্দর তুমি বটে,
সুন্দরের গুণ তব মুখে নাহি রটে।
আমি ভাই মধু খেয়ে গুণ গেয়ে ঘুরি,
কবি আর ফুলের হৃদয় করি ছুরি।

Speaking Up for Yourself

A beautiful butterfly moans to a bee:
'Why does the poet not look at me?
My wings are so colourful; what have you got
That makes you poetic, while I am not?'
'You are', said the bee, 'lovely indeed,
But you have no hum to make yourself heard.
When I gather nectar, who doesn't know it?
I steal the heart of the flower and the poet.' (Poem No. 14)

“Speaking Up for Yourself” is the poetic re-creation of the imaginary colloquy of a butterfly and a bee in rhymed couplet. Radice does not follow the original literally but strives to remain faithful to its essential spirit. He interprets this colloquy with the imaginative vision of a poet making a new poem in English. Thus, the butterfly’s complaint in his poem is transformed into a ‘moaning’ for the discrimination that the poet makes between it and a bee. Secondly, his rendering of ‘কোন গুণে কাব্যে তুমি হয়েছে অমর’ into ‘what have you got / That makes you poetic’ is an instance of creative translation. Though his rendering of the penultimate line “আমি তাই নধু খেয়ে গুণ গেয়ে ঘুরি” [“When I gather nectar, who doesn’t it?”] seems to have deviated from the original, Radice succeeds in interpreting the poem creatively. Any bilingual reader would admit that his interpretation of the line here is fully consistent with the essential spirit of the poem.

Here is another fable-like poem from the same book of Bengali ‘brief’ poems:

স্পষ্টভাষী

বসন্ত এসেছে বনে, ফুল ওঠে ফুটি,
দিনরাত্রি গাহে পিক, নাহি তার ছুটি।
কাক বলে অন্য কাজ নাহি পেলো খুঁজি,
বসন্তের চাটুগান শুরু হল বুঝি!
গান বন্ধ করি পিক উঁকি মারি কয়,

তুমি কোথা হতে এলে কে গো মহাশয়!
আমি কাক স্পষ্টভাষী, কাক ডাকি বলে।
পিক কয়, তুমি ধন্য, নমি পদতলে;
স্পষ্টভাষা তব কণ্ঠে থাক বারমাস,
মোর থাক মিষ্ট ভাষা আর সত্যভাষ।

Radice's rendering of the above poem in rhymed verse is as follows:

Plain Speaking

The forest blooms with the coming of spring:
All that the *koel*-bird does is sing.
'I suppose', says the crow, 'you've nothing to do
But flatter the spring with your hullabaloo'.
Pausing for a moment, the *koel* looks round:
'Who are you? Where do you come from, friend?'
'I'm the plain-speaking crow', the crow replies.
'Delighted', says the *koel*, and politely bows .
'Be free to speak plainly all the year long.
I'm happy with the truth of my own sweet song'. (Poem No. 18)

Radice takes considerable liberty to interpret the original here and succeeds in making a new poem in the target language. His rendering of the first two lines of the poem is undoubtedly poetic and capable of creating the congenial ambience of the spring. Then follows the imaginary dialogue of the কোয়েল *koel* and the কাক *crow*. Radice's presentation of this dialogue in rhymed verse is really excellent. He projects himself intuitively into the creative experience of the original poem and re-creates it with the imagination of a poet. Consequently, *Plain Speaking* is not an arid translation; it has the spontaneity of an original poem.

Radice achieves similar success in translating the next brief poem:

উচ্চের প্রয়োজন

কহিল মনের খেদে মাঠ সমতল,
হাট ভরে দিই আমি কত শস্য ফল।
পবর্ত দাঁড়িয়ে রয় কী জানি কী কাজ,
পাষাণের সিংহাসনে তিনি মহারাজ।
বিধাতার অবিচার কেন উঁচুনিচু
সে কথা বুঝিতে আমি নাহি পারি কিছু।
গিরি কহে, সব হলে সমভূমি-পারা
নামিত কি ঝরনার সুমঙ্গলধারা?

Radice's poetic translation of the poem is given below :

The Need for Height

The flat field said in anger and pain:
'I fill the market with fruit and grain.
The mountain sits doing who knows what,
Like a great king perched on a throne of rock.
Why is God's management so unfair?
To me His reasons are not at all clear.'
'If all, said the mountain, 'were flat and even,
How could rivers bring manna from heaven?'

“The Need for Height” is the re-creation of the imaginary conversation of the flat field and the mountain in rhymed verse. Instead of following the original slavishly Radice transposes the essential ideas of the poem creatively from the source text to the target text. Naturally he deviates from the original in some of the details; but he compensates this loss with his creative imagination. He interprets মনের খেদ as ‘anger and pain’ which rhymes favourably with the ‘fruit and grain’ of the second line. In a striking departure, the mountain standing in the original has been visualized and interpreted as a great king sitting on ‘a throne of rock’ in

the translated version. Again, in his rendering he interprets 'বরগার সুমঙ্গলধারা' of the concluding line as 'manna from heaven' brought by 'rivers'. The concept of 'সুমঙ্গলধারা' traditionally associated with the river Ganga as bringing down 'the stream of blessing and benefit' [for man] has its roots in Indian culture . Radice seems to have been unaware of this concept and his use of the word 'rivers' in place of fountains is, therefore, very significant. According to the *COD*, the word 'manna' implies the name of 'the substance miraculously supplied as food to the Israelites in the wilderness (Exod16). Radice is in favour of accepting the dictionary meaning of 'manna' here. He prefers to interpret the expression 'সুমঙ্গলধারা' as 'manna from heaven' in order to 'domesticate' the significance of this culture-specific concept in the target language. Radice's uses 'manna from heaven' deliberately in order to make Tagore a bit 'stranger' to the Bengalis and to make him somewhat 'familiar' to the Christianized Western people.

When Radice's translation is at his best, one finds in him a good union of the spirit of the original and the creative genius of the translator, a union that has been emphasized by Matthew Arnold in his "On Translating Homer"(1861)(Ray149). Besides, he captures, in his renderings, the transition from the didacticism of the earlier aphoristic verses to the later mature, cosmic verses of Tagore's কণিকা (*Particles*). Let us examine some of the following four-line and two-line poems of Tagore's কণিকা where, in Dyson's words, "the translator's gifts and a happy serendipity combine to make excellent translations."(Dyson II.1)

Here is the original of a four-line Bengali poem the translation of which is given below:

মূল

আগা বলে, আমি বড়, তুমি ছোটো লোক।

গোড়া হেসে বলে, ভাই, ভালো তাই হোক।

তুমি উচ্ছে আছ বলে গবে আছ ভোর,

তোমারে করেছি উচ্চ এই গব মোর।

Roots

The treetop says, 'I'm high, you're low.'
The bottom of the tree says, 'Fine, who cares?
Because you're high, you take on airs.
My glory is, I've made you grow'. (Poem No. 29)

The original poem is composed in rhymed couplet [a, a] whereas the translated version is in rhymed quatrain [a b b a] much like the quatrain of a Petrarchan sonnet in which the first line rhymes with the fourth, and the second line with the third. Radice captures nicely the audacity of the treetop and the humbleness of its bottom in his rendering. He interprets the views of the bottom of the tree retaining the spirit of the original and makes a new poem based on their dialogue. Thus the translated version of the poem is a 're-creation' of the original and bears evidence to Radice's interpretative mode of translation.

Let us take another four-line poem from *Kanika* :

কুটুম্বিতা-বিচার

কেরোসিন-শিখা বলে মাটির প্রদীপে,
ভাই বলে ডাক যদি দেব গলা টিপে।
হেনকালে গগনেতে উঠিলেন চাঁদা –
কেরোসিন-শিখা বলে, 'এসো মোর দাদা'।

Kinship-consciousness

The kerosene-lantern says to the taper,
'I'll wring your neck if you say we're kin.'
Whereas to the moon he says, 'Come in:
I welcome you warmly as my brother.' (Poem No. 34)

Like many other four-line poems of কণিকা, this poem also resembles the quatrain of a typical Petrarchan sonnet having an a b b a rhyme-scheme. Radice's interpretation of the poem here seems to be dictated mainly by the demands of the rhyme in the target language. Both

the ‘কেরোসিন শিখা’ and ‘মাটির প্রদীপ’ of the original undergo transformation in Radice’s interpretation; the former becomes ‘kerosene-lantern’ and the latter ‘taper’. As a matter of fact, Radice’s ‘kerosene-lantern’ is different from what Tagore means by ‘কেরোসিন শিখা’, whereas the word ‘taper’, according to the *C. O. D.*, is ‘a wick coated with wax etc. for conveying a flame’ and is far removed from the ‘মাটির প্রদীপ’, or earthen lamp. In spite of these deviations Radice captures the underlying spirit of the original in his rendering and succeeds in making an independent poem in English. In translating উদারচরিতানাম Radice recreates the original with the imaginative vision of a poet:

উদারচরিতানাম্

প্রাচীরের ছিদ্রে এক নামগোত্রহীন
 ফুটিয়াছে ছোটো ফুল অতিশয় দীন।
 ধিক ধিক করে তারে কাননে সবাই—
 সূ্য উঠি বলে তারে, ভালো আছো ভাই?

Greatness of Spirit

A humble, nameless flower peeping
 Out of a crack in the boundary-wall:
 No one in the garden loves it at all.
 But the sun says, ‘Hi! How are you keeping?’

Here an insignificant, nameless flower is portrayed as a thing of beauty. It is also invested with all the attributes of a living being and represented as ‘peeping’ out of the ‘crack’ of the boundary wall. The beauty of this nameless flower goes unappreciated in the garden; but its beauty finds adequate recognition in the caring query of the morning sun about its well-being. The poet in Radice here outshines the translator in the imaginative representation of the flower in the first two lines and the translator is at his interpretative best in the concluding lines of this poem. Radice succeeds in capturing the spirit of the original poem and substituting its পয়ার metre by a rhymed quatrain, the rhyme scheme being a b b a. “Beyond

all Questioning” testifies to Radice’s interpretative mode of rendering in the following Bengali poem:

প্রশ্নের অতীত

হে সমুদ্র, চিরকাল কি তোমার ভাষা।
সমুদ্র কহিল, মোর অনন্ত জিজ্ঞাসা
কিসের শুদ্ধতা তব ওগো গিরিবর?
হিমাদ্রি কহিল, মোর চির-নিরুত্তর।

Beyond all Questioning

‘What, O sea, is the language you speak?’

‘A ceaseless question’, the sea replies.

‘What does your silence, O Mountain, comprise?’

‘A constant non-answer,’ says the peak.

This poem is a wonderful re-incarnation of one of the ‘brief’ poems Tagore has ever written. Radice interprets the culture-specific word ‘গিরিবর’, ‘*giribar*’, as a mountain of mountains, [hence ‘Mountain’ with a capital ‘M’?] investing him with all the attributes of a living human Being. His rendering of ‘অনন্ত জিজ্ঞাসা’ and ‘চিরনিরুত্তর’] as ‘ceaseless question’ing and ‘constant non-answer’ are nothing but “interpretative equivalent” to the original. As Novalis said, successful translations simply cannot help being *verandernde*, metaphoric (Radice and Reynolds 89). In fact, this poem is like a ‘finely-cut, sparkling gem’ and a ‘miracle’ of poetic translation (Bose 15).

Radice seems to have tried to keep as close as possible to the rhythm of the original poems. But in his attempt to translate poetry into poetry, he has to deal more often than not with the exigencies of maintaining a formal structure in the new text, involving a scheme of rhymes or assonances. As a result, he was rather compelled to pick certain words that rhyme well over words which might have conveyed his interpretation of the original more accurately. As Trevor J. Saunders reminds us, “To translate is to interpret, and one may [at times] interpret wrongly.” (Radice and Reynolds 159). Accordingly, Radice has interpreted the originals wrongly in some cases and his translations of those poems fail to convey the spirit and true

import of their originals. This seems to be more pronounced in his 'brief' poems than in his elaborate ones. Radice's "Humble Pride" is an appropriate case in point:

ক্ষুদ্রের দম্ব

শৈবাল দিঘিরে বলে উচ্চ করি শির,
লিখে রেখো এক ফোঁটা দিলেম শিশির।

Humble Pride

Says the moss to the pond, 'Don't ever forget---
A drop of my dew helps to make you wet.'

Radice deviates a little from the original and that too for the sake of rhyme only. The hollowness of pride that rings triumphantly in Tagore's verse loses something of its force in Radice's translation. This is clearly indicated in his interpretation of the title of the poem "Humble Pride". Tagore's poem is called "উপকারদম্ব", which signifies that the poem is about absurd, hollow pride. Radice's interpretation of 'লিখে রেখো এক ফোঁটা দিলেম শিশির' as 'Don't ever forget ---/ A drop of my dew helps to make you wet' seems to dilute the spirit of the original. The insolent reminder of the moss that thrives on the water of the pond is highlighted in his poem at the cost of the ironical tone of the original. It is not that Radice's interpretative mode does not ever stumble on untranslatability. Let us look at the two liners "Ungratefulness"

অকৃতজ্ঞতা

ধ্বনিটিরে প্রতিধ্বনি সদা ব্যঙ্গ করে,
ধ্বনি-কাছে ঋণী সে যে পাছে ধরা পড়ে।

Ungratefulness

Echo mocks Noise lest others discover
How deeply Echo is Noise's debator

This poem is the interpretative re-creation of the original in rhymed couplet, though the rhyme is far from a happy one. Radice's interpretation of the word 'ধ্বনি' as 'Noise' as approved by *Samsad Bengali English Dictionary*, fails to convey the extralingual connotation of the Bengali word ধ্বনি. But the actual word used in the original Bengali couplet appears to be untranslatable in view of its implied meaning. Similar failure may be detected in the two-liner called "Prudent Mediocrity":

মাঝারির সতকর্তা

উত্তম নিশ্চিন্তে চলে অধমের সাথে,
তিনিই মধ্যম যিনি চলেন তফাতে।

Prudent Mediocrity

The finest are happy to walk with the lowly.
Those in between are not so friendly.

Radice's interpretation of the above poem in rhyming couplet fails to convey the spirit of the original. What Tagore wants to reveal through this two-liner is not, after all, unfriendliness but studied distance that the middle class prefers to maintain. He tries to make it up by naming the poem "Prudent Mediocrity" but the essence of the poem is still lost. Radice's interpretation of the last line seems to have been dictated more by the exigency of rhyme and he goes totally off the key in this brief poem. But when Radice handles successfully the exigencies of maintaining a formal structure in the new text without compromising on the spirit of the original, one finds excellent poetic translations such as:

The fake diamond says, 'How big I am!'
That is how we know you're a sham. (Poem No. 52)

'I am,' says Time, 'this world's Creator'.
'Then I,' says the clock, 'am Creation's maker!' (Poem No.66)

Work and rest belong to each other---
Like eye and eyelid linked together. (Poem No).

III

As we turn from কণিকা (*Particles*) to লেখন (Radice's *Jottings*), we are immediately struck by 'the more romantic and lyrical mood' of this set of brief poems (Dyson III. 1). According to Ketaki Kushari Dyson, Radice has achieved here "a fine balance of 'faithfulness' to the source poems, innovative and imaginative ways of resolving problems, and an inspired choice of words and rhythms" by means of which he re-created the original poems in the target language (Ibid 1) It must be borne in mind that Tagore is, first and foremost, a poet and that these poems, mostly written extempore and 'on request', bears the unmistakable stamp of an ever-inspired poetic mind. As we move from poem to poem, we are captivated by the 'unpremeditated art' of one of the finest lyric poets of the world. Radice has spared no pains to capture this 'ever-inspired poetic mind' of Rabindranath Tagore in his translation of the brief poems. The poet in him goes hand in hand with the translator to 'navigate', to use Tagore's word, the brief poems of the Bengali bard from the SL to the TL.

লেখন is Tagore's only bilingual book having a complicated history of its publication. Radice has followed the text of the West Bengal Government edition (Vol. 2, 1982) of *Rabindra Rachanabali* which contains 190 poems. All the brief poems from লেখন are quoted here from this volume. Unlike in কণিকা Tagore has used three metres in লেখন with increasing variety in rhyme and arrangement of lines. As Arun Kumar Basu says, "The poet has used three kinds of metre; moreover, in each composition --- in its stanzaic inventiveness, rhyme scheme and arrangement of lines --- technical skill is readily apparent. The poems are normally between two and twelve lines in length." (Basu 34) In his attempt to 'approximate' the formal diversities of লেখন (1927), Radice has employed a variety of innovative and imaginative strategies in his poetic renderings. Let us examine some of them that Radice used in rendering the 'extempore' compositions of an itinerant and ever-inspired poet.

The opening poem of লেখন throws much light on Radice's art of translation. Here is the original poem followed by its reincarnation in the target language:

স্বপ্ন আমার জোনাকি,
দীপ্ত প্রাণের মণিকা,
সুন্ধ আঁধার নিশীথে
উড়িছে আলোর কণিকা।।

My dreams are gems of sparkling life,
Fireflies flitting;
In the still depths of the dark night,
Light's particles darting. (Poem No. 1)

Radice interprets the original with the imagination of a poet and transforms it into an independent poem. Literally, the original poem could be paraphrased thus: "My dreams are fireflies that are glittering like particles in the dead of the dark night; they are the gems of an illuminated life". Radice seems to have deviated from the original in his rendering of the original : " My dreams are the gems of glittering life that are found flitting like fireflies and they are floating like particles of light in the dead of the dark night". What distinguishes Radice's version from the original is a remarkable shift of the image. The 'firefly' image of the original has been changed into the 'gem' image in the translated version. This image shift gives one an impression of how Radice re-creates the poem drawing on his own interpretation of the original.

In poem No. 4 of লেখন Radice faces a complex problem of poetry translation that he has addressed in a novel way. Here is the text of the original poem:

ঘুমের আঁধার কোটরের তলে স্বপ্নপাখির বাসা,
কুড়িয়ে এনেছে মুখর দিনের খসে পরা ভাঙা ভাষা।

In Radice's rendering the two- line poem has been re-shaped into a four- line one:

Dreams are nests that birds
In sleep's obscure recesses
Build from our talkative days'
Discarded bits and pieces.

A comparison of this translation with its original makes it abundantly clear that Radice has interpreted the original making a new poem of his own. Literally, the dream-birds, in the original, make their nests in the deep recesses of sleep, with the help of discarded bits or remnants from the workaday life. In his interpretation, the nests are made of dreams by the birds in the deep recesses of sleep and that too with the discarded bits or remnants of the busy day. The images of the 'স্বপ্নপাখি' and 'মুখরদিন' that Tagore conjures up in the original lose something of their majesty in being reduced to a mere 'bird' or 'talkative day' in the translated text. But considered as a whole, the rendering in English reads like an independent poem with its own beauty.

A remarkable aspect of Radice's art of translation is the omissions / additions of some words that gives a subjective touch to his interpretation of the original. Equating such omissions/ additions of the translators with the 'slips and near-misses' of actors, Ketaki Kushari Dyson observes that they may come about because of "the genuine human difficulty of maintaining focus on two texts, one given and fixed, in front of the eyes, the other in the process of being built by oneself" (Dyson III.2) In other words, 'the strain', Dyson continues, 'of shifting the eyes from one text to another can generate omissions/additions' in the translated text (Dyson, Ibid 3). These additions / omissions of certain words may also come out of the translators' misreading of the original. They, as Dudley Fitts reminds us, cannot be called 'betrayals'; they are the 'legitimate, even necessary prerogatives of the translator' (Brower 39). In this connection, let us examine a few poems of Tagore's লেখন and their re-incarnations in Radice's rendering. In the first instance, a two-liner has been changed into a four-line poem in the translated text:

নিভৃত প্রাণের নিবিড় ছায়ায় নীরব নীড়ের 'পরে
কথাহীন ব্যথা একা একা বাস করে।।

In a nest, silent and shadowy,
That is ours alone,
Speechless, secret agony
Dwells on its own. (39)

Radice here exercises the translator's 'prerogative' in interpreting the source poem. He interpolates the idea that the nest is 'ours' and transforms the whole character of the poem. The original poem suggests that the silent agony embedded in the depth of the soul belongs to only one person. But Radice generalizes this agony by declaring it 'That is ours alone'. He seems to have misread the original making an independent poem in the target language. Similarly, there is no need for 'your' in the first line of the poem (48) : " When I wandered into your garden", because the original only says :

যখন পখিক এলেম কুসুমবনে

In another poem (45) Radice transforms the original making a new poem in English. The source poem and its reincarnation in the target language are given below to demonstrate his art of translation:

রঙের খেলায় আপনা খোয়ালে
 হে মেঘ করিলে খেলা।
 চাঁদের আসরে যবে ডাকে তোরে
 ফুরালো যে তোর বেলা।

You've squandered your wealth, O cloud,
 On your passion for colour:
 Called to the moon's *salon*,
 You've nothing to offer.

Radice here interpolates the word 'wealth' that the cloud is supposed to have squandered. And his interpretation fails to accommodate the 'খেলা', play of the cloud and the expression 'ফুরালো যে তোর বেলা', (your time is over), in the target language. He makes up this loss in translation by the interpolated line 'You've nothing to offer'. Though the original does not provide for this interpolation, he has to add this line in tune with the word 'wealth' to the first line.

By comparing the English texts with the originals one discovers how Radice , at times , adds a word [like ‘ours’ or ‘your’] which is not in the original text, or for some mysterious reason omits another [like ‘my’] that should have been there. Let us examine the following source poem (9), Tagore’s rendering of the poem in English and Radice’s translated version to drive home the point:

আমার প্রেম রবি-কিরণ হেন
জ্যোতির্ময় মুক্তি দিয়ে তোমায় ঘেরে যেন।

Let my love, like sunlight, surround you
and give you a freedom illumined. (Tagore) [Lekhan

May love, like the sun’s brightness,
By giving you glorious liberty
Hold you within its compass. (9)

It goes without saying that Radice here deviates from the original in his interpretation of the source poem. He seeks to liberate love from the narrow confines of personal possession giving it an impersonal character. This explains why the expression ‘my love’ of the original becomes only ‘love’ in the English version. There is really no other stylistic reason for this mysterious omission. Only those bilingual readers who are acquainted with the original can detect this omission. But for the target readers this is an independent poem with a life of its own.

It is very often found that Radice deviates from the original in his interpretation of the source poem. This sort of deviation is a common feature of Radice’s Tagore translation. Let us examine poem no.47 from Radice’s *Jottings* to see how he handles the source poem. The original and its translation by Tagore are given below to show the innovative interpretation that Radice makes of this poem:

পথে হল দেরি, ঝরে গেল চেঁচী,
দিন বৃথা গেল প্রিয়া।
তবুও তোমার ক্ষমা হাসি বহি
দেখা দিল আজেলিয়া।

I lingered on my way
Till thy cheery tree lost its blossoms,
but the azalea brings to me , my love,
thy forgiveness(Tagore)

Delay on my journey:
This cherry-blossom fell
Before I could give it to you.
But your gift, how it cheers me!
This azalea's smile
Shows I have not upset you. (47) Radice.

Here Radice has departed from the original in his interpretation of the source poem. Taking the cue from Tagore's translation of the poem he seems to have interpreted it imaginatively. Literally, there is no explicit mention of an exchange of gifts in the Bengali text. But Radice misreads the Bengali original and arrives at what Dyson calls 'a very special interpretation of the meaning of the poem' (Dyson-III.3). According to his interpretation, the lover is supposed to meet his lady love when the cheery trees are in full bloom and to present her with a bouquet of cherry-blossoms. But the delay in coming back to her has cost the lover dearly. With the season of cherry-blossoms being over, the azalea is now in bloom, incarnating, as it were, the forgiving smile of the beloved. He realises from this signal that he has been forgiven by his beloved. Radice's misreading of or response to what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls 'the special call of the text' helps him to interpret the original in this novel way (Mukherjee 99) In fact, he is at his interpretative best in this new poem in the target language. Instances of this type of interpretative translation abound in *Jottings*. Another poem of this category is poem no.65; the original and Radice's translation together with Tagore's rendering are given below :

আমি জানি মোর ফুলগুলি ফুটে হরষে

না-জানা সে কোন শুভ চুম্বন পরশে।

I see an unseen kiss from the sky

In its response in my rose' (Tagore)

A kiss from the sky has made

My flowers bloom with pleasure.

A lover's touch is displayed,

But not the actual lover.(65 Radice)

Literally, the flowers bloom with pleasure when they [the buds] are touched with the loving kiss of an unknown lover. The expression 'A kiss from the sky' is an interpolation that Tagore brings into his interpretation of the original when he translated the poem. Radice owes this interpolated expression to Tagore. His interpretation of 'নাম না জানা সে কোন শুভ চুম্বন পরশে' as 'A lover's touch ... displayed, / But not the actual lover' is really excellent and definitely the work of an inspired poet. Thus, the original poem undergoes a transformation with the magic touch of Radice's poetic imagination. But when Radice fails to make his interpretation imaginative as well as creative, notwithstanding the addition/ omission of a few words or sentences to/from the original, his translations cannot touch the deeper chords of the readers acquainted with the original. Now let us look at poem no.21 of Radice's *Jottings*:

ভাসিয়ে দিয়ে মেঘের ভেলা

খেলেন আলো-ছায়ার খেলা,

শিশুর মতো শিশুর সাথে

কাটান হেসে প্রভাত বেলা।।

Clouds of the morning floating,

Light and shadow playing,

Like somebody passing the time

With a smiling childish game.

Though Radice here re-creates the original, he does not care to maintain fidelity to it in his interpretation of the poem. Even a casual reading of the poem makes one convinced that it is God who is being talked about. The subject 'He' is omitted, but the verb-forms clearly indicate who the subject of the poem is. The poem could be paraphrased thus: "Setting afloat rafts of clouds, [He] plays a game of lights and shadows. As a child with children, [He] spends the morning smiling/ having fun."(Dyson III.5) Radice seems to have departed from the spirit of the poem. Although he has portrayed the natural backdrop of the poem in the first two lines, the concluding lines fail to produce an effect 'comparable' to that of the original for omitting the pronoun in the honorific mode. Had the translator not dropped the pronoun, the cluster of images that make up the short poem would have attained a characteristic Tagorean spirit. Here is another poem worth looking at:

বিলম্বে উঠেছো তুমি কৃষ্ণপক্ষশশী,
রজনীগন্ধা যে তবু চেয়ে আছে বসি।।

Late is your rising;
O crescent moon,
But the perfumed flowers of the night
Are still longing.(32)

This simple night poem of Tagore presents a complex problem for the translator of poetry, as it involves the problem of carrying across two Bengali words from the source language to the receptor language. Adopting an interpretative mode of translation Radice tries to 'domesticate' them in the target language ; the 'কৃষ্ণপক্ষশশী' and 'রজনীগন্ধা' of the original are, thus, transformed into 'crescent moon' and 'perfumed flower of the night' respectively. The 'crescent moon' in English refers primarily to the sickle-shaped moon, without reference to its waxing or waning. But the original here refers explicitly to the moon in its waning phase. Etymologically, the English word '*crescent*', as Dyson reminds us, means 'growing' (from Latin *crescere*, to grow), and there is actually an adjectival use of this word meaning 'increasing' (such as 'crescent fortunes') (Dyson.III. 6). The 'crescent moon' here refers to the opposite of what the original text signifies and is, therefore, a clear deviation from the

original. Secondly, Radice's interpretation of 'রজনীগন্ধা' as the 'perfumed flowers of the night' is an attempt to 'domesticate' this Indian flower in the English language. This is very likely to deprive the Westerners of the knowledge that the tuberose plays a vital role in Tagore's floral imagery. And this flower does need to be mentioned specifically in order to 'contextualize' the poem. According to Dyson, what the translator needs to capture in translation is the Bengali 'otherness' of the poem for those who are supposed to read it in English(Ibid 7). Radice fails to convey this Bengali 'otherness' in his otherwise good interpretation of the poem.

(IV)

স্কুলিঙ্গ is Tagore's last (posthumous) collection of brief poems which was first published in 1945. It consists of 198 poems collected from diverse sources. One can have a fair idea about them from the end note of this volume: "In 1334 লেখন was published. Many more poems similar to লেখন were for a long time scattered in various manuscripts of Rabindranath, in journals and in the collections of those dear to him or who had sought his blessing.... স্কুলিঙ্গ is a compendium of all these" (Radice *PJS* 19)

In the centenary edition of the রবীন্দ্ররচনাবলী (1961) Visva-Bharati has included 260 poems in স্কুলিঙ্গ. The text of this edition with its numbering is now accepted as the standard edition which has been used in Sisir Kumar Das's edition of Tagore's English works. Besides, Volume 3 of the West Bengal Government edition of *Tagore's Complete Works* (1983) contains the same text and Radice first followed this text, translating all of the 260 poems. But subsequently he changed his mind choosing the first edition of 1945, with its 198 poems simply because Pulinbihari Sen who compiled the volume might have been given the approval by Tagore to go ahead with this work. What are, then, the distinguishing marks of the true স্কুলিঙ্গ poems? In the Introduction to *PJS* (2000) Radice says, "The true স্কুলিঙ্গ poems have a character, spirit, quality or...a *bhava* that is general in implication, not specific. They may mostly have stemmed from occasions, but only those that transcend their occasion

deserve a place in *Sphulinga*.” (Radice 22). Secondly, almost every one of the 198 poems in *स्फुलिङ्ग* is different in form. Their extraordinary formal diversity is, no doubt, ‘a breathtaking achievement’ of Tagore’s poetic art.. Radice’s endeavour in *Sparks* is to reincarnate the *स्फुलिङ्ग* poems and to capture this ‘poetic art’ in the target language.

In the translation of Tagore’s *स्फुलिङ्ग* one comes across more often than not a certain ‘shift of expression’ in many of the poems when the poetical texts move from the source language to the target language. This ‘shift of expression’ occurs in the case of meaning, image, metaphor etc. and is one of the essential prerogatives of a creative translator. Describing the function of this ‘shift of expression’ in translation Anton Popovic says:

It is the translator’s only business to “identify” himself with the original: that would merely result in a transparent translation. The translator also has the right to differ organically, to be independent, as long as that independence is pursued for the sake of the original, a technique applied in order to reproduce it as a living work. Between the basic semantic substance of the original and its shift in another linguistic structure a kind of dialectic tension develops along the axis faithfulness—freedom.

The demand to be faithful in translation is a starting point. Its observation, at least the effort to observe it, is the basis upon which stylistic requirements can assert themselves. Thus, *shifts do not occur because the translator wishes to “change” a work, but because he strives to reproduce it as faithfully as possible and to grasp it in its totality, as an organic whole.* (emphasis added) (Popovic 80).

Radice makes use of his creative freedom through this ‘shift of expression’ not because he wishes to “change” the original poems, but because he strives to “interpret” them as faithfully as possible and to re-create them in their totality, as organic wholes. In his [Radice’s] Tagore translations meaning-shifts are more frequent than image or metaphor shifts. “Slight shifts of meaning”, as Dyson suggests, “are sometimes unavoidable, even inevitable, and in longer poems small local shifts can be easily accommodated, but when the poems are really brief, the detail can affect the meaning of the whole more dramatically”

(Dyson IV 3). One finds this kind of ‘meaning-shifts’ in the following renderings from Radice’s *Sparks* (Tagore’s স্ফুলিঙ্গ). This original স্ফুলিঙ্গ poem (No. 7), noted below, shows this shift in meaning transforming the entire poem:

আকাশে ছড়িয়ে বাণী
অজানার বাঁশি বাজে বুঝি।
শুনতে না পায় জন্তু,
মানুষ চলেছে সুর খুঁজি।

Like a flute playing in the sky
A message from the not-known.
Animals do not hear it ;
People try to catch the tune. (No.10)

Here the overall meaning of the original seems to have moved away in the first two lines. According to Tagore, the flute of the unknown seems to ring in the sky spreading its message ; animals cannot hear it whereas man is in perennial quest of this melody. In Radice’s translation of the brief poem, there is a strange meaning-shift in the first two lines. Interpreting the flute of the unknown as ‘A message from the not-known’ he succeeds in making a new poem in English. Another poem of this category is as follows:

এই সে পরম মূল্য
আমার পূজার —
না পূজা করিলে তবু
শাস্তি নাই তার।

I worship a value that is so supreme,
Neglect of it does it no harm. (No.30)

Here the overall meaning of the original seems to have moved away in the translation. Tagore seems to say, “This is the supreme value of the nature of my worship—that even if I

don't worship I am not punished.” What distinguishes the original from the translation is the marked meaning-shift. As a result, the poet's 'worship' is equated with 'a value' in the first line and the 'punishment' with 'harm' in the second line. Radice's rendering is self-sufficient as an independent poem but it is not 'identical' with the original. How meaning-shift of one or two words causes a shift in the poem's total meaning can be seen in the following poem:

এখনো অন্ধুর যাহা
তারি পথপানে
প্রত্যহ প্রভাতে রবি
আশীর্বাদ আনে।

Still, everyday, the dawn
Brings a blessing
To whatever is growing
Towards the sun. (31)

Tagore seems to say here that every morning the sun brings a blessing in the direction of whatever is still germinating or growing, but not fully grown. But in Radice's rendering, the word 'blessing' has been attributed to the dawn instead of the sun, causing a marked shift in the poem's meaning. The Bengali poem begins with এখনো and the English with *still*, which may seem the same, but the words are functioning differently. Nevertheless, Radice's rendering turns out to be an independent poem in English. Another meaning-shift of a different nature occurs in the following instance:

তরঙ্গের বাণী সিন্ধু
চাহে বুঝাবারে,
ফেনায়ে কেবলি লেখে,
মুছে বারে বারে

The sea wants to understand
The message, written in spray,
That the waves repeatedly write
And immediately wipe away. (73)

The meaning-shift here arises from a mistranslation of বুঝিবারে the meaning of which is ‘to explain, to communicate, to cause others to understand’. It is, no doubt, that this word may have been confused with বুঝিবারে, ‘to understand, to grasp’. This mistranslation results in a very strange poem in which the sea wants to understand the message that its waves go on writing for ever. What the original poem seems to mean is that the sea tries repeatedly, without satisfaction, to communicate—to the world, to the beach—the language of its waves. It writes the message and wipes it off in a repeated action. As an independent poem, Radice’s rendering is, on the whole, satisfactory.

One finds an interesting meaning-shift in the interpretation of the following poem:

দূর সাগরের পারের পবন
 আসবে যখন কাছের কূলে
 রঙিন আগুন জ্বালবে ফাগুন
 মাতবে অশোক সোনার ফুলে।

When a wind from across the sea
 Comes to this shore,
 Red fire ignites the Spring
 And sparks the Ashoka-tree
 Into golden fire. (90)

According to the original, it is the month of ফাগুন i.e., the coming of spring, that will light the fire and cause the অশোক -tree to burst into flowers. In the translation it is the other way around—the subject and the object have changed places. If we compare the English version with the original, an interesting point strikes us. Instead of spring itself lighting a ‘coloured’ fire, of which the ‘golden’ flowers of the অশোক tree are a part, a red fire from somewhere else comes along and ignites the spring, and in the process sparks the অশোক -tree into golden fire. Radice’s translation of রঙিন as ‘red’ is interesting but this does not give us any idea of the ambiguity of Tagore’s red-references.

A creative translator like Radice is very often seen to omit a word or two while transposing the text creatively from the source language to the target language. Apparently, the omission of a word or two is not supposed to make much of an effect on the meaning of the translated poem. But sometimes, the omission of just one crucial word from the text can have a wider effect on the meaning in such brief spark-like poems as the following:

পশ্চিমে রবির দিন
হলে অবসান
তখনো বাজুক কানে
পূর্ববীর গান।

When the sun sets in the West,
Let Purabi sound in your ears –
Raga of the East. (101)

The omission of the word তখনো takes away the punch of this little poem, which is, in Dyson's words, 'a joke in verse' (Dyson IV6). Here পূর্ববীর is an evening raga, but the name also means 'eastern'. Radice provides a note to this effect, but the second line calls for the insertion of a word or phrase corresponding to তখনো. The above poem is quite O.K. as an independent creative work. Another crucial word is missed out in the following example too:

পুষ্পের মুকুল
নিয়ে আসে অরণ্যের
আশ্বাস বিপুল।

Buds
Bring solace
To the woods. (105)

A comparison of the original with the translation shows that there is nothing in the English text to correspond to the adjective বিপুল and this makes a difference to the 'feel' of the poem. According to the original, flower- buds carry with them the great promise for the woods. Flowers mean more seeds and seeds mean more trees. Tagore here seems to have stressed the immensity of the promise for the woods. Radice fails to convey the immensity of promise for the woods in his translation. But the omission of a word from the original does not stand in the way of making it an independent poem. Again, the haiku-like brevity of the original has excellently been captured in the translation.

Sometimes, the meaning-shift occurs due to the misinterpretation of a single word, as in the following example:

প্রেমের আদিম জ্যোতি আকাশে সঞ্চরে
শুভ্রতম তেজে,
পৃথিবীতে নামে সেই নানা রূপে রূপে
নানা বর্ণে সেজে।

Love's original fire fills
The sky with white-hot flame.
Descending to earth it separates out
Into colour, dress and form. (109)

Here the original presents an image that is derived from the separation of white light into a spectrum of colours. Tagore does not say that white light descends to the earth separated out into three categories, namely, 'colour, dress and form'. He seems to say, suggests Dyson, that it descends to the earth 'in diverse forms, dressed in diverse colours' (Dyson IV 6). The last word of the poem, সেজে, Dyson continues, seems to have been confused with the noun-word সেজে (meaning dress, costume or make-up)(Dyson Ibid 6). Notwithstanding the misinterpretation of this word, this brief poem has been successfully 'reincarnate'd in the target language. One needs to remember in this connection that though Radice's forte is in the interpretative translation, meaning-shifts remain one of the constituent features of his art of translation.

Notes:

I. All citations of 'Brief' poems of Tagore in English, unless otherwise stated, are from Radice's *Particles, Jottings, Sparks: Complete Brief Poems of Rabindranath Tagore* (2000).

2. Ketaki Kushari Dyson's four-part article "On the Wings of Hummingbirds, Rabindranath Tagore's Little Poems: An Invitation to a Review-cum- Workshop" has been shown in the references as follows:

Dyson I – (Introduction). Page 1-4

----- II— (*Kanika*) Page 1-6

----- III – (*Lekhan*). Page 1-10

----- IV – (*Sphulingha*). Page 1-14

CHAPTER VI

GITANJALI ONCE AGAIN

When William Radice began to translate the poems of Tagore for his Penguin *Selected Poems* (1985) in the late 1970s, he wanted to forget all about *Gitanjali*, the crowning glory of ‘the English Tagore’ and decided not to include in his selection any poems from this anthology. As a young translator and Tagore scholar from SOAS, Radice has taken a considerable amount of time to come to terms with *Gitanjali*, Tagore’s most famous book which helped him to make “his poetic thought ... a part of the literature of the West” (Tagore. 301). The main reason for his initial rejection of *Gitanjali* poems for his selection was that he wanted to “establish his [Tagore’s] reputation and credibility as [a] great poet in Bengali, with an output far more complex and variegated than one could tell from his own English translations (Radice 279). His selection included only one poem from the English *Gitanjali*, ‘Arrival’ [Agaman], which was the first Tagore poem he translated, though he did not at the time realize it was from *Gitanjali* (No.51), because it comes not from the Bengali book of that name but from *Kheya* [‘The Ferry-Boat’, 1906]. Another reason was his reluctance to include songs in his selection and the majority of the poems of Tagore’s *Gitanjali* are actually songs (*Ibid*). Thirdly, Radice believes that songs are untranslatable, ‘I do not believe you can translate songs, and I have not tried to translate songs in this book’ (Radice28). It was because of the untranslatability of songs that he did not take up any ‘song-poem’ from Tagore’s *Gitanjali* (1912) for inclusion in his *Selected Poems* of Tagore as translation policy. But he was not unaware of the fact that ‘Tagore’s genius showed itself most naturally and faultlessly in his songs’ (*Ibid* 30) and his songs were for him, to quote his own words, his শেষপারাবারি কড়ি, the buck for his last journey (Tagore17). But this aspect of Tagore’s genius remained unrepresented in his own translations; for he deliberately kept his songs outside the purview of his selection.

Radice's ever growing engagement with *Rabindrasangit*, Tagore's songs, over the years, drew him nearer to Tagore's *Gitanjali* and he came to realize its importance in Tagore's 'English career'. Although his *Gitanjali* poems vary in 'literary quality', they represent, at their best, "a very considerable creative achievement, an expression of real imagination and inventiveness in a language that was not primarily his own....they can work when read aloud: the sensitive ear of a *mahakabi* is ever active in them, in their rhythms and cadences and word-painting" (Radice 279). Thus Radice came to discover, albeit belatedly, the true importance of Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) as the *magnum opus* of a *mahakabi*, a great poet, more than two decades after the publication of his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore. But it is fascinating to distinguish his English version from the Bengali original in order to understand 'the subtle changes or cuts or additions' that have gone into the rendering of *Gitanjali* making it "a miracle of translation" (Bose15).

Radice's belated realization of the importance of Tagore's *Gitanjali* made him aware of the existence of 'two *Gitanjalis*', ---the original Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910) and its English translation entitled *Gitanjali: Song Offerings* (1912) and he came to discover a lot of differences between them; for the Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910) is not the same in its form and content as the English one. The former is an anthology of 157 lyric poems in Bengali, many of which are known as songs whereas the latter is the famous English *Gitanjali* containing 103 prose-poems in translation, with W. B. Yeats's famous and impassioned introduction. With its first publication by India Society in November 1912, the English *Gitanjali* created an unprecedented sensation among the leading English literary persons of the time. Thomas Sturge Moore was so moved by the mesmerizing power of the *Gitanjali* poems that he recommended the name of Tagore to the Swedish Academy and he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.

The poems that Tagore translated on the eve of his 1912 journey to England finally became his English *Gitanjali (Song-Offerings)*. They were translated from 'a motley collection of his poems, not all from the Bengali *Gitanjali* as is the popular notion' (DasGupta 61). He takes 53 poems from the Bengali *Gitanjali*, and the rest from nine other books of his poetry, most of which belong to 'the devotional genre of his lyrics' (Ibid 61). Although Tagore's *Gitanjali*

(1912) has been widely acclaimed in the West as an anthology of ‘mystic’ poems, it actually contains a variety of poems that often remain concealed not only by the random order of the text but also by Tagore’s rendering of the poems into the uniform style of poetic prose. André Gide, the French translator of Tagore, was perhaps the first to identify the ‘diversity’ of *Gitanjali* poems in the Introduction to his translation. Concurring with Gide’s views Radice seems to have classified *Gitanjali* into three types of poems: songs, sonnets and ballads. They are the ‘song-like poems’ of the *Gitanjali* phase proper, the intricate, sensuous and austere sonnets from *Naibedya* (‘Offerings’ 1901) and the lighter ballad-like poems from *Kheya* (‘The Ferry’, 1906), of which *Agaman* is a typical example. According to Radice, any new translator of *Gitanjali* today would have to face two options. Either he or she would have to do a new translation of the Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910) or a retranslation of all the poems from the English *Gitanjali* (1912). The first option has already been adopted by Brother James Talarovic in 1983 and by Joe Winter in 1998. The first poem was published by University Press Limited in Dhaka and republished as *Show Yourself to My Soul: A New Translation of Gitanjali* (Sorin Books, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2002). Radice, as he confesses, has chosen a more ‘audacious’ option than James Talarovic or Joe Winter of translating afresh the poems of the English *Gitanjali* when he was given by Penguin India the assignment of rendering them on the occasion of Tagore’s 150th birth anniversary (Radice p.xvii). His *Gitanjali* (2011), published from Penguin India, is a retranslation of all the poems contained in what is called the Rothenstein manuscript. While translating afresh *Gitanjali* Radice has to grapple with the ‘iconic’ status of Tagore’s *Gitanjali* (1912) in India and an inevitable comparison with his translation invariably comes into our mind as we go through his rendering (2011). Moreover, *Gitanjali* --- being a unique combination of poetry and song--- posed a difficult challenge for Radice and he tackled it confidently with moderate success. In his essay “The Challenge of Translating Tagore” (2012) Radice says, “[...] I tackled this challenge by looking afresh at Tagore’s own translation as well as doing a new one of my own. My book contains *an entirely new text* of Tagore’s English *Gitanjali*, based on his manuscript, and giving, I hope, *a very different impression* from the standard text as introduced and edited in 1912 by W.B. Yeats” (emphasis added) (Radice 458).

Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) contains three types of poems representing a uniform style in poetic prose whereas Radice tries his best to reflect the three styles clearly and distinctly in his new translation. Consequently, there is a 'diversity' in style which distinguishes his *Gitanjali* from Tagore's anthology. In his Introduction to *Gitanjali* (2011) Radice dwells on the 'three styles' that he has tried to capture and carry across in his own rendering from Tagore's original *Gitanjali* (1910). While translating poems for his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore, Radice steered clear of such 'poems that are songs', concentrating exclusively on the rendering of non-*Gitanjali* poems only. In his attempt to make a fresh translation of Tagore's *Gitanjali*, Radice adopts a new translation method for the 'song-poems' of the *Gitanjali* phase --- poems that convey the "intimate combinations of words and melody" characteristic of songs (Radice 28). He seems to have learnt with time that "it is through his songs that Tagore speaks, *as a poet*, to his widest audience in Bengal" (Dyson 41) and that it is "in his songs that Tagore is nearest to his people and culture" (Radice 30). There is no denying the fact that Tagore is "great in poetry and equally great in songs" (Mukherji 185). According to Buddhadeva Bose, his songs too can claim a prominent place among his best poems (Bose 248). This is perhaps the reason why Tagore believes that his greatest contribution to his countrymen is his songs. In "The Religion of an Artist" he declares, "I do not hesitate to say that my songs have found their place in the heart of my land...and that the folk of the future, in days of joy or sorrow or festival, will have to sing them" (Das 687). Consequently, his genius *as a poet* would remain incomplete if his songs are not translated in English for the West.

This realization seems to have prepared Radice inwardly for the translation of Tagore's 'song-poems' of *Gitanjali* that he had once deliberately rejected. It was during the 150th birth anniversary of Tagore that Penguin India approached him with the proposal to do a fresh translation of Tagore's *Gitanjali* in the changed scenario of the 21st century. This proposal seems to have inspired him to undertake a poetic quest afresh for *Gitanjali* which culminated in his startling 'discovery' that its published text was in many respects 'a betrayal of what Tagore originally had in mind' (Radice lvii). This 'discovery' seems to have prompted Radice to offer his 'new translation and the original text of Tagore's translation contained in Rothenstein manuscript, as a kind of 'restitution'. According to Radice, W.B. Yeats tampered with the original manuscript while editing it and, to a great extent, influenced the

interpretation and reception of *Gitanjali* with his seminal introduction dwelling on its contents. The published text of *Gitanjali* is not what Tagore had originally conceived it to be and Radice's objective in his new translation is to enable the reader to discover 'the real *Gitanjali*' that Yeats seems to have taken away from him (p. lvi). By the expression 'the real *Gitanjali*' Radice seems to imply the recreation of the boundless 'creative joy' out of which the poems of the original *Gitanjali* were born.

While translating the *Gitanjali* poems Radice faces some complex problems for rendering songs and he addresses them through an innovative translation method. In "The Challenge of Translating Tagore" (2012) he sums up this 'innovative' method very succinctly: "There are also special challenges in translating poems that are songs --- something I was reluctant to do in the past, but which I now approach by repeating lines and indicating the four-part structure of the song with line-breaks" (Chakravarty 458). Again, in "Painting the Dust and the Sunlight: Rabindranath Tagore and the Two *Gitanjalis*" (2011) he gives a practical demonstration of this translation method by translating ^{ধায় যেনো মর সাকল ভালোবাসা} *Dhay yeno mor sakal bhalobasa* from Tagore's Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910). The complete song is reproduced below to illustrate the translation method Radice follows for rendering the *Gitanjali* poems, the majority of which are basically songs:

Let all my love rush
 Lord, towards you, towards you, towards you
 Let all my deepest hopes run
 Lord, your ears, to your ears, to your ears
 Let all my love rush
 Lord, towards you, towards you, towards you

Wherever my thoughts are, let them respond to your call
 Wherever my thoughts are, let them respond to your call
 Whatever my fetters let them all snap
 O Lord, at your pull, your pull, your pull
 Let all my love rush
 Lord, towards you, towards you, towards you

This beggar's bag outside me, let it be emptied endlessly
 And let my heart be secretly filled

Lord, by your gifts, your gifts, your gifts
This beggar's bag outside me, let it be emptied endlessly
And let my heart be secretly filled
Lord, by your gifts, your gifts, your gifts

O inmost friend, let all that is lovely in this life
O inmost friend, let all that is lovely in this life
Let it burst out today
Lord, with your songs, your songs, your songs
Let all my love rush
Lord, towards you, towards you, towards you

(Tr. William Radice).(Biswas *et al* 281)

In this well-known song from Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910) Radice preserves, in its four-part structure, the repetition of words and phrases that is indispensable in a song by Tagore. According to Radice, there are three advantages in this method of rendering. In the first place, the reader can immediately know that this is “a song, not a poem”, as repetitions are a universal feature of songs in all languages. Secondly, while reciting the translation, the reader has the right or opportunity to change the ‘tone and ‘space’ and ‘emotional effect of each recurrence’ just as the singer has the freedom to vary such repetitions in his or her interpretation. Thirdly, and most importantly, by introducing the ‘line-breaks’ in the translation, the four sections or *tukkas* of the vast majority of Tagore’s songs – *asthayi*, *antara*, *sanchari* and *abhog* --- can be singled out and differentiated. It is this form, originally derived from *Dhrupad*, that Tagore used successfully again and again, in order to preserve the beauty, mystery and profundity of the songs.(Radice 281-282). But his repetitions of line/lines to indicate their identities as song borders more often than not on monotony. He fails to produce the aesthetic effect that Eliot famously does in his *The Hollow Men* by repeating the following lines at the end of the poem.

This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but with a whimper.

(Eliot 86).

Had Radice used this technique discreetly the effect would have been much better, as has been the case with Tagore's own rendering of poem no. 7 that begins with the line যাবার দিনে এই কথাটি বলে যেন যাই (*Gitanjali* 2009). In the Bengali original he repeats the line twice like a refrain but in his English rendering he retains part of the line -- *let this be my parting word* --- making an artistic effect on the readers. In poem no. 60 of the published text ('On the seashore of endless worlds children meet') and its original he uses the opening line as a refrain with tremendous effect. Surprisingly, Radice refrains from repeating any such line/lines and his translations of these poems seem to be less effective than those of Tagore's English *Gitanjali*.

Since Radice considers the Rotheinstein manuscript as the authentic version of Tagore's translations, he begins his translation of *Gitanjali* poems following its sequence and order of arrangement of lines. In his translations Tagore discards the metre and rhyme, the associational ideas and the irreplaceable symbols of his Bengali poetry in favour of rhythmic 'prose-poems' in English. Naturally his prose rendering tends to conceal repetitions of words/phrases, if any, traditionally associated with songs and fails to give the non-Bengali and non-Indian readers any idea about their song-like quality and structure. Radice had to face the special challenge of rendering these 'song-poems' and to ensure their appeal and reception as songs to the Western readers. His innovative translation method enables him to translate these 'song-poems' on which he turned his back at the time of rendering his *Selected Poems* of Tagore. In "The Challenge of Translating Tagore"^(২০১২) Radice touches upon the challenges, "There are also special challenges in translating poems that are songs --- something I was reluctant to do in the past, but which I now approach by repeating lines and indicating the four-part structure of the song with line-breaks (Chakravarty 458). It must be admitted that most of Tagore's songs make use of metre, *chanda*, and rhyme, *mil*, in the words and that they remain concealed and overridden by the rhythm and phrasing of the music. Radice believes that this rhythm and phrasing can be "represented in English translation by the use of repetition and line-breaks", though Tagore undoubtedly did his best to "reflect it too in the musicality of his Bible-influenced prose-poetry" (Radice 283). His experiences as a musician and a piano player may have helped him for rendering the 'song-poems' of *Gitanjali*. In a confessional tone Radice seems to have explained:

How could I have found my way into the songs of *Gitanjali* without being something of a musician myself? [Without] Playing the piano --- a pastime that has entered my professional life through my work with opera composers ... I would not be able to approach a poet such as Tagore, for whom poetry and music were always --- in Milton's famous words --- 'Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heav'ns joy, Sphear-born harmonious Sisters...'

(Chakravarty 459).

Despite his best efforts to render Tagore songs by repeating lines or phrases and presenting their four-part structure with line-breaks, Radice could only convey the words of the songs rather than their melody. The text of a song on the printed page looks like a poem and does not have its melody unless it is sung. In his review of Radice's translation of *Gitanjali* (2011) Martin Kampchen expresses the same view about the 'song-poems', "There are many which read well as poems; in that case reading the repetitions (of the singer) disturbs. Other song-texts do not really read well, they sound vapid and bland --- they unfold their essence only as songs" (Kampchen 4). In other words, the melody of a song cannot be captured in a translation and a song minus its melody resembles a poem in its printed form. This explains why Tagore expresses his reluctance in his *Reminiscences* to publish books of the words of songs; for without melodies they would seem to be lacking in their soul (Stern 295). They may at best be treated as poems but never as songs. In his essay "The Real Rabindranath Tagore and His Music" Philippe Stern quotes Tagore as saying [speaking of a Baul song in his *Creative Unity*], "*the best part of a song is missed when the tune is absent, for thereby its movement and its colour are lost, and it becomes like a butterfly whose wings have been plucked*" (emphasis added) (*Ibid*). What Tagore seems to emphasize here is that a song is like 'a butterfly' flying around on the 'wings' of its 'tune' or melody and that a poem is like a 'butterfly' stripped of its wings. In the Granthaparichay section of *Sanchayita* Tagore is quoted as having described the songs of his *Gitabitan* as গীতিকাব্য, lyric poems: ("ভাবের অনুষ্ণ রক্ষা করে গানগুলি সাজানো হয়েছে। এই উপায়ে সুরের সহযোগিতা না পেলেও পাঠকেরা গীতিকাব্যরূপে এই গানগুলির অনুসরণ করতে পারবেন") "The songs have been arranged following the associations of their feelings. If they do not have the accompaniment of tune, the readers may accept them as গীতিকাব্য, lyric poems" (translation mine) (Tagore 878). By the same logic the songs of

Gitanjali may be accepted as 'lyric poems'. Translation cannot carry across the 'tune' or melody of a song from one language to another; for the 'tune' or melody is something that transcends the verbal language and is untranslatable. According to Murray Schafer, music comes 'alive in performance, gaining its true freedom and cadence' (Sutton136). Thus translation, however competent, cannot capture the tune or melody of a song that only comes 'alive in performance' simply because the tune or melody is something elusive and unattainable.

It is not always remembered in the West that Tagore is not only a poet, but a musician as well. In fact, poetry and music are so integrally connected in his works that they cannot be separated. Songs form an important part of his creative work and in them, words and melody complete each other (Stern 295).D.P. Mukerji's observation on the nature of Tagore's songs is worth mentioning here: "Certain compositions had a two-fold character, the poetry of the words and the poetry of music" (Mukherjee183). What Mukerji seems to emphasize is that poetry and song are inseparably related in Tagore's creative soul and that there is a subterranean poetic essence in his songs. In another essay entitled "Tagore, The Supreme Composer" Mukerji dwells on the intimate relation between his poems and songs in his creative soul:

His songs are excellent poems And his songs are composed with due regard to the musical value of words and phrases. The texture of his verse, i.e., its assonance and rhythm, its proper arrangements of vowels and consonants, its beginnings, pauses, and ends are all in tune with its music. The poetic value never jars with, in fact, almost invariably supports the musical value. To him words come clothed in music and the two are inseparable (emphasis added)

Chatterjee
(Mukherjee 177)

What distinguishes Tagore's songs from those of other Indian composers is their exuberance of poetry or lyricism. Comparing his songs with the rest of Indian composers Mr. Mukerjee comments: "Tagore's contribution, though not in the same field of orthodox classical tradition, was at least as rich and varied as that of any other Indian composer. His poetry was certainly superior" (emphasis added) (Mukherjee 185). It is because of the 'superiority' or

abundance of his 'poetry' or lyricism that Tagore's songs surpass those of other Indian composers, past and present. His songs are the spontaneous expression of his poetic feelings and Tagore as 'a poet' definitely speaks through them. Nevertheless, Humayun Kabir, the editor of *Poems of Rabindranath Tagore* (1966) left out songs from this centenary anthology for their untranslatability. According to Kabir, "[his] songs are even more difficult to translate than poems. In their case, fusion of words and music is inviolate" (Kabir p.:xxvii). Even though Tagore's poems are, on the whole, translatable, the fusion of 'words and music' in his songs, in Kabir's view, is the cause of despair for the translator of his songs. It needs to be mentioned here that a rigid division between poems and songs cannot be made in Indian social context where an intimate overlap between the two has been taken for granted since time immemorial. The *bhajans* of Mirabai have been considered for ages in India as both poems and songs. The Baishnab lyrics of the medieval Bengali literature have been equally treated as both poems and songs. Tagore is found to have thought of the roles of the poet and the singer / songmaker as 'interchangeable' and this is true of many other cultures as well. Even much of the folk poetry of India and many other countries is essentially folk song, and *vice versa* (Dyson 40). Even when Tagore began to translate his Bengali poems for his English *Gitanjali* or *Song-Offerings* (1912), he considered the songs as essentially poems and reincarnated them in the receptor language as prose poems. In a letter to Ajit Kumar Chakravarty he enunciated his concept of poetry translation from his first-hand experience of translating the songs of *Gitanjali* as basically poems (Chakravarty 145-147). Commenting on the *Gitanjali* poems Buddhadev Bose says that "[...] it has poems which sing [...] I mean they are so musical as poems, and so genuinely poetry, [...] The poems have gained immensely from their being written in the form of songs, but they are much more poetry than music" (Bose 478). It is only for the poetic core of his songs that Radice has characterized the songs of Tagore's *Gitanjali* as 'song-poems' as they are made of words and melodies only to be sung (Radice 281). Since the melody of a song cannot be translated from one language to another, the best option left for a translator of songs is to carry across the poetic feelings and emotions in his rendering of the song-text. Once an unknown female admirer of Tagore sent to him translations of two of his songs done by her for his well-considered views. Tagore gave vent to his views on the rendering of his songs in a letter to her dated 24 Baishakh 1321 (7 May 1921):

“... বাংলা হইতে ইংরেজী তর্জমা ঠিক literal হইলে চলে না। বিশেষত বাংলা গান। কারণ গানের সুরটুকুর তো তর্জমা হয় না, সে অভাব পূরণ করিয়া লইবার জন্য ইংরেজিতে অনেকটা বদল করিয়া লইতে হয় -- নতুবা বড়ই ন্যাড়া দেখিতে হয়। এরূপ তর্জমায় যথেষ্ট স্বাধীনতা লইতে হয়, এই জন্য নিজে ছাড়া কাহারও উপর এ ভার দেওয়া যায় না। ”

One should not translate literally especially when a Bengali song is to be rendered into English; for the melody of the song is untranslatable, and many changes are to be made to make up for this loss, or else the whole exercise would appear to be barren. One needs to take great liberty for such a rendering and this task can be assigned to no one else but myself. (my translation)

(Chowdhury 107)

Thus Tagore’s method of translating songs and poems are virtually identical. Radice also adopts the same method of rendering songs in Tagore’s *Card Country* (2008) which is replete with songs. Interestingly, he does not follow here the process of repeating line or lines as a refrain that he famously does in translating the ‘song-poems’ of *Gitanjali*. It needs to be mentioned here that the translation of the opening song contains a refrain [“Heave-ho / Heave-ho”] simply because there is a similar refrain in the original.

Surprisingly, this method of translation has been adopted by the translators of Tagore’s songs. In *I Won’t Let You Go* (1992) Ketaki Kushari Dyson seems to have adopted this method for translating twenty four songs for her anthology. She has kept the songs together in one section lest the readers forget that the originals have melodies and are meant to be sung. She renders Tagore’s songs in such a way that they look like the translations of poems in their printed forms. Here is a specimen from the translation of one of his famous songs:

I shall not beguile you with my beauty,
I shall beguile you with my love.
I shall not open the door with my hand,
but with my song I shall make it come open.

I shall not load you with the weight of jewels,
nor cover you with chains of flowers.
My tenderness will be the garland
with which I shall swing from your throat. (Dyson227)

The translation of this Tagore song is not basically different from the translation of a poem. One gets the same impression looking at the rendering of another song by Sukanta Chaudhuri. As the General Editor of *O T T* Prof. Chaudhuri takes up the complicated issue of translating songs in the *Preface to Selected Poems: Rabindranath Tagore* (2004), “The songs present a special problem. Even when *they are read on the printed page like any other poem*, closer study brings out a distinctive movement and texture that *resists rendering in another language*” (emphasis added) (Chaudhuri p. vii). In other words, Chaudhuri seems to imply that songs are generally untranslatable and that they look like poems having no melodies of their own in their printed forms. Melodies come alive only when the song is presented in a performance. Chaudhuri’s translation of Tagore’s songs also reads like poems. Here is an extract from the translation of a Tagore song:

I have been called to the joy-feast of this earth:

Blessed, O blessed is my human birth.

My eye surfeited roams

The palace of all forms,

My ear in sweet music is immersed.

I have part in your festival:

I play upon the flute,

Threading my tears and laughter

Upon my music’s note. (Tr. Sukanta Chaudhuri)

(Chaudhuri 199).

A careful study of the translations of Tagore songs quoted above is very likely to lead one to conclude that they can be considered as independent poems on the printed pages. In fact, the translation of a song-text in its printed form is identical to that of a poem and makes no difference unless and until it is taken up for vocal or instrumental rendition. It is against this theoretical background that Radice’s translations of Tagore’s *Gitanjali* (2011) poems are to be evaluated.

II

Radice's *Gitanjali* (2011) begins with the translation of the first poem of the Rothenstein manuscript ["This is my delight, thus to wait and watch"] preserved in Houghton library, Harvard University, and published in facsimile edition from Kolkata in 2009(Dey 1). He follows faithfully the order of arrangement of the poems in the original manuscript as it came from the poet himself. Unlike Tagore Radice does not render the poems of this manuscript in simple and poetic prose; he translates them in verse repeating lines and dividing the text into a four-part structure lest the target readers should forget that this is a song.

Radice's method of translation in this poem is both literal and interpretative. The rendering of the original in the first part of the poem is literal whereas it is interpretative in the remaining three parts of the poem. The first verse deals with the poet watching the road--
আমার এই পথ চাওয়াতেই আনন্দ. Radice is here literal ['I love to watch the road'] whereas Tagore is interpretative ['This is my delight, thus to wait and watch at the wayside']. Radice's fidelity is to the original but Tagore's to the interpretative sense of the original. Again, Radice's interpretation of the second verse is concise and true to the original. Thus the following lines of the original কারা এই সমুখ দিয়ে / আসে যায় খবর নিয়ে, / খুসি রই আ পন মনে, /
বাতাস বহে সুমন্দ are rendered as "People pass to and fro bringing news' / I' m happy to live in my thoughts / when the breeze cools, / cools me gently". Tagore is here verbose and digressive in his interpretation of the lines: "Messengers, with tidings from unknown skies, greet me and speed along the road. My heart is glad within and the breath of the passing breeze is sweet". Again, Radice's rendering of শুভখন হঠাৎ এলে তখনি পাবো দেখা of the third verse is apt and conforms to the uncertain note of the original: "If the time comes for you to be suddenly here, / I'll see you". Conversely, Tagore sounds confident in his translation "I know the happy moment will arrive of a sudden when I will surely see"; for his perception is free from any trace of uncertainty. The conflict between the certainty and uncertainty of meeting casts its shadow on the translation of the last verse. Radice's rendering is filled with the 'scent' wafted by the breeze but still the uncertainty of the meeting lingers on whereas Tagore's translation breathes 'the perfume of promise' of a long-awaited meeting.

The poem with which the Macmillan text of *Gitanjali* begins is the third poem in Radice's book. His rendering of the first line of the original 'আমারে তুমি অশেষ করেছো এমনই লীলা তব' as 'You've made me limitless, it amuses you to do so' testifies to his literal-cum-free mode of translation here. In Radice's text the Bengali word অশেষ becomes 'limitless' and the Bengali expression 'এমনি লীলা তব' is turned into 'it amuses you to do so' in English. Words like 'অশেষ' and 'লীলা' seem to have *Upanishadic* overtones that Radice fails to capture in his rendering. Tagore who has his spiritual moorings in the *Upanishad* renders words such as 'অশেষ' and 'লীলা' in their literal senses giving one an impression of 'ভূমা' of the *Upanishad*. The *Upanishadic* associations of the two words give Tagore's translation of the line an edge over Radice's. Tagore's literal rendering of the first line confirms the truth of Nabokov's assertion made in a different context that sometimes 'literal translation is a thousand times more useful than the prettiest paraphrase' (Radice and Reynolds 89).

Unlike Tagore, Radice conveys the sense of the original in the second and fourth lines almost word for word. Tagore renders the second line by using the interpretative phrase 'frail vessel' and the fourth line with the help of the 'little flute of reed'. Radice's fidelity to the original here is simply literal rather than interpretative and he renders 'ছেট এ বাঁশিটির' as 'this little flute'. He is, again, literal but true to the spirit of the original in the remaining lines of the first verse except his rendering of the word 'তান' which becomes 'flourishes'. Tagore departs from the original transcreating a new line: ['Thou'] "hast breathed through it melodies eternally new". He misses out on the half-line 'কাহারে কব' and the word তান is transformed into "melodies eternally new". Thus Tagore's translation here becomes truncated because of his dropping of the part of the line whereas Radice's rendering is free from any such lapses. The third part of the poem deals with the effect of His 'অমৃত পরশ' on his soul. Radice's literal rendering acquaints the target readers with the flavour of the original whereas Tagore's imaginative and interpretative translation recreates the original with the vision of a poet. The 'অমৃত পরশ' is translated as the 'nectre-touch of yours' by Radice and 'immortal touch of thy hands' by Tagore respectively. It is under the impact of His 'অমৃত পরশ' that the heart, in Radice's rendering, gives way to boundless 'ecstasy' and 'words gush out' spontaneously. In

Tagore's translation, the heart loses its bound in extreme joy evoking 'utterance ineffable'. Here Radice remains faithful to the original but Tagore recreates, taking liberty with it. Both Radice and Tagore differ from each other in their rendering of the last verse. With the former the gifts come to his 'single cupped hand' and the recipient continues to receive them for many ages together. But in the case of the latter, the 'infinite gifts' of the Supreme One come on the 'small hands' of the recipient and He continues to pour them out for ever: "Ages pass and still thou pourest and still there is room to fill".

Poem no 6 of the Rothenstein manuscript is a representative Tagore poem that deals with 'the joy of finding the infinite in the finite and finite in the infinite', to quote the words of Tagore from *My Reminiscences* (1917), the English translation of *Jibansmriti* (1912) by Surendranath Tagore. Radice's mode of rendering in this 'song-poem' is literal as well as interpretative. The first verse of this poem has been rendered word for word while the second one has been done sense for sense. His renderings of 'পুরানো আবাস' as 'familiar surroundings' and of 'মনে ভেবে মরি কি জানি কি হবে' as *I worry about how it will be* are anything but literal. Tagore's translation of the two lines into a one-liner --- "I am uneasy at heart when I have to leave accustomed shelter" --- is interpretative rather than literal. His rendering of 'নূতনের মাঝে তুমি পুরাতন' as "the changeless old in the changing new" tends to surpass the original. Radice, on the other hand, is faithful to the original --- "[...] *amidst the new you are always there*" and the same is true of the remaining verses of the poem. As a creative writer, Tagore is under no compulsion to follow the original slavishly; he recreates it from time to time at the promptings of his creative imagination. This accounts for his creative interpretation in such lines as "...one companion of my endless life who ever linkest my heart with bonds of joy to the unfamiliar" and "I may never lose the bliss of the touch of the One in the play of the diverse many". The last verse shows Radice's fidelity to the original at its best whereas Tagore is at his creative best in the interpretation of the concluding lines.

In Radice's rendering of poem no 7 of the Rothenstein manuscript one finds an excellent combination of fidelity and freedom. This 'song-poem' which also deals with "the joy of finding the infinite in the finite" and *vice versa* does not have the repetition of lines that one

finds in his translations of Tagore's songs. The original song of Tagore's Bengali *Gitanjali* (1910) contains the repetition of the opening line –‘যাবার দিনে এই কথাটি বলে যেন যাই’---like a refrain. Surprisingly Radice's translation of the ‘song-poem’ is conspicuous by the absence of any such repetition.

Naturally, the first verse of this exquisite song is recreated in a verse-form that is obviously different from that of the original. Instead of using the rhyming couplet of the original Radice evolves a novel verse form in which the first two lines of the original are turned into four, with two brief lines in between the first and the fourth lines. Even though he tries to remain faithful to the original, he seems to have deviated a little in the fourth line in order to ensure its rhyme with the first line. Here is the first verse:

Let me pronounce these words the day I go :

Nothing compares

With what I've seen,

With what I've come to know. (Radice 12)

Radice follows the same rhyming pattern in the rest of the ‘song-poem’. In the fourth line of the first verse, he moves away from the original interpreting it in a different way. This results in a distinct translation shift through which the expression ‘যা পেয়েছি’ is transformed into “what I've come to know”. In Tagore's rendering this expression ‘যা পেয়েছি’ has been dropped making the translation truncated, for the line in the original is ‘যা দেখেছি যা পেয়েছি তুলনা তার নাই’ ---“what I have seen is unsurpassed”. Thus what one finds in Tagore's rendering is translation loss rather than translation shift.

Even though the second and third verses of this ‘song-poem’ in Radice's translation expresses the joy of discovering the infinite in the finite and *vice versa*, his mode of rendering is surprisingly literal. The literal mode of rendering that Radice adopts cannot always capture and convey the poetic and imaginative beauty of the original. His translation of the following lines of this poem deserves special consideration:

বিশ্বরূপের খেলাঘরে কতই গেলেন খেলে,
অপরূপকে দেখে গেলেন দুটি নয়ন মেলে।

This world of forms
In which I've played
Allows what has no form to show
Its Beauty. (*Ibid* 13)

Radice's rendering of the two Bengali lines quoted above is prosaic and unimaginative whereas Tagore's translation of them poetic and imaginative: "In this playhouse of infinite forms I have had my play and here have I caught sight of him that eludes all forms". Thus he recaptures in his rendering something of the 'poetic' essence that Radice fails to convey in his literal representation of the original. The poetic prose used by Tagore in the rendering of *Gitanjali* poems is more poetic and imaginative than Radice's rhymed verse and corresponding verse form.

The poem 9(22)--- 'আজি শ্রাবণ-ঘন গহন-মোহে' ---is 'a perfect lyric', haunting in metre, rhyme and alliteration (Bose17). Radice's mode of rendering here is almost literal. His translation of the first line--- 'আজি শ্রাবণ-ঘন গহন-মোহে'--- as 'In the murky chaos of Shraban' seems to be misleading. The expression 'murky chaos of Shraban' fails to convey the note of 'deep dark enchantment' that is associated with the Bengali expression 'শ্রাবণ-ঘন গহন-মোহে'. Tagore's rendering of the line as 'the deep shadow of the rainy July' seems to have captured something of the original. Radice retains the Bengali term 'শ্রাবণ' in his translation whereas Tagore changes it into 'the rainy July' to convey to the Western readers the exact point of time he has in view. Again, Radice's interpretative translation of 'নিলাজ নীল আকাশ ঢাকি নিবিড় মেঘ কে দিল মেলে' as 'Someone has draped in dense cloud the innocent blue of the sky' succeeds in capturing the sense of 'নিলাজ নীল' whereas Tagore's phrase 'ever wakeful blue sky' seems to have moved away from the original. Radice may have in his mind the innocence of Adam and Eve before their Fall when they did not have the sense of shame that

generally comes to us with experience. His translation of the word নিলাজ as 'innocent' carries with it the biblical sense of the Bengali word.

Radice's fidelity to the original in the last stanza of the poem is literal whereas Tagore's imaginative. For Radice 'কূজনহীন কাননভূমি' becomes 'The woods are empty of birdsong'. With Tagore the line is imaginatively transformed into 'The woodlands have hushed their songs'. He recreates the original here without deviating from its spirit. Radice's almost word for word rendering in the last line stands in sharp contrast to Tagore's free translation. The former renders the last line as 'Do not ignore me, do not fade like a dream' whereas the latter translates it as 'do not pass by like a dream'. Radice is here literal in his rendering whereas Tagore imaginative.

Poem no 10 of the English *Gitanjali* is one of the best poems rendered by the poet himself. This poem has also been translated by William Radice for his *Gitanjali* (2011) and it is one of the best translations of Tagore poems he has ever done. His mode of rendering in this poem is quasi-literal. He succeeds in capturing the essential spirit of the original so faithfully that the English rendering of the poem may be called, in the words of Walter Benzamin, an example of 'transparent translation' (Benzamin 1992).

Radice's line-by-line translation of the first verse stands in sharp contrast to Tagore's free rendering of the original. He retains the five lines of the first verse in his rendering whereas Tagore abridges them into a single line in poetic prose:

Humbler than all and lower than the low
That is the place where your feet reign
 Behind all, beneath all
Among those who have lost all
Humbler than all and lower than the low (Ibid 35)

Here is thy footstall and there rest thy feet where live the poorest and lowliest and lost.
(Tagore 26)

Radice's mode of translation here is at its literal best and he succeeds in carrying over the spirit of the original from the SLT to the TLT. In his attempt to recapture the 'feelings and sentiments' of the original Tagore deviates from the SLT re-creating it in the receptor language. Even though Tagore's phrase 'the poorest and lowliest and lost' may have its special effect in the target language, it fails as an adequate equivalent for 'সবার অধম, দীনের থেকে দীন' and 'সবহারা' of the original. Radice's literal rendering of the verse, repeating the first line 'Humbler than all and lower than the low' as a refrain seems to have captured the spirit of the original. Despite the use of his imaginative phrase 'the poorest and lowliest and lost' Tagore's translation of this verse fails to convey the spirit of the SLT.

The second verse of the poem brings out the pitfalls of literal rendering. In spite of Radice's best efforts his rendering of the first two lines cannot attain the spontaneity and readability that Tagore's translation seems to have achieved:

I bow down before you
 but my bending gets stuck somewhere
 It doesn't reach down to the place below shame
 where your feet reach
 Behind all, beneath all
 Among those who have lost all
 Humbler than all and lower than the low (Ibid 26)

Tagore's translation of the above verse is as follows:

When I try to bow to thee my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where
 thy feet rest among the poorest and lowliest and lost. (Ibid 26)

Radice's rendering of the original lines 'তোমার চরণ যেথায় নামে অপমানের তলে/ সেথায় আমার প্রণাম নামে না যে' into 'It does not reach down to the place below shame / where your feet reach' is literally accurate but lacks fluency. His use of the last three lines of each verse as a refrain makes an aesthetic effect corresponding to that of the original. Tagore achieves a certain measure of spontaneity at the cost of accuracy in the following line: 'When I try to

bow to thee my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where thy feet rest'. He fails to 'carry across' the expression 'অপমানের তলে' in the TL and his rendering suffers from translation loss. Radice seldom suffers from this type of loss as long as he sticks to literal mode of rendering. But when he deviates from the literal mode, he becomes interpretative at the expense of translation loss. His rendering of the first line of the next verse is interpretative. The original lines are as follows: 'ধনে মানে যেথায় আছো ভরি/ সেথায় তোমার সঙ্গ আশা করি' and Radice interprets them as 'We count on companionship with you / in places of wealth and grandeur'. His rendering of 'ধনে মানে' as 'wealth and grandeur' is an example of translation loss, for the word 'grandeur' cannot convey the sense of 'মানে' of the original. Thus he attempts to interpret the phrase 'ধনে মানে' at the risk of translation loss whereas Tagore drops the two lines altogether making his rendering truncated.

Poem no. 17 beginning with 'When the heart is hard and parched up come upon me with a shower of mercy' is one of the famous poems of *Gitanjali* rendered in poetic prose by Tagore. Radice translates this 'song-poem' in verse form repeating the key lines and dividing it into four parts. His method of translation is, on the whole, literal but it rises, at times, to the interpretative level depending on the context of the poem. His rendering of the first verse of this devotional poem is literal:

When the life in me dries up
Come with a stream of kindness
When the sweetness in me disappears
Come with a song's nectar (Ibid 26)

Radice's rendering of 'গীতসুধারসে এসো' as 'Come with a song's nectar' is very likely to give one an aesthetic jolt. Tagore's translation of this line --- 'come with a burst of song' ---- comes closer to the original producing an aesthetic sense. Tagore's 'come with a burst of song' is more readable and fluent than Radice's 'Come with a song's nectar'.

Radice finds the original verse so imaginative that he cannot render it literally. Accordingly, he translates the verse interpretatively.

When my work becomes menacing
and crowds me all round
with its roaring
Steal into my heart, O quiet Lord,
with noiseless steps. (Ibid 26-27)

He follows the spirit of the original faithfully in the first line of the above verse and interprets the second line creatively. He invokes the 'lord of quiet' to 'steal' into the heart on tiptoe. Compared to Tagore's rendering ['come to me, my lord of silence, with thy peace and rest'] Radice's is more direct and more faithful.

In the third and fourth verses of the poem there are translation shifts and the translator is found to be at his interpretative best here. Radice makes use of the translation shifts not merely to "change" the last two verses but to recreate them as organic whole. His interpretation of 'দীনহীন মন' as 'miserable mind' is intended to show that the poet is a prisoner of a selfish world. Radice's rendering of the line 'আপনারে যবে করিয়া কৃপণ' implies the poet's imprisonment in a selfish world and his prayer for flinging open the door indicates his longing for liberation. This idea seems to have been conveyed by the translator through translation shift. His prayer to the Lord to break open the door is the emancipation the poet is here looking forward to. One needs to have a look at the concluding Bengali verse to grasp the nature and implications of another translation shift that gives it an interpretative twist. Here is the original Bengali verse:

বাসনা যখন বিপুল ধুলায়
অন্ধ করিয়া অবোধে ভুলায়
ওহে পবিত্র, ওহে অনিদ্র,
রুদ্ধ আলোকে এসো।

In his rendering of the last verse Radice's imagination is at its exuberant best. He deviates from the original in translating the following lines – ‘বাসনা যখন বিপুল ধূলায়/ অন্ধ করিয়া অবোধে
ধূলায়/ ওহে পবিত্র, ওহে অনিদ্র,/ রুদ্ধ আলোকে এসো’ – and ends up transcreating them as “When my stupid cravings / blind and entomb me / in mountains of dust’/ Come, O pure and unsleeping Lord, / with explosions of light”. But he fails to carry across the expression ‘অবোধে ধূলায়’ in the target language and there is inevitably a *translation loss* here. Tagore's rendering of the last verse is comparatively more fluent and more faithful than Radice's: “When desire blinds the mind with delusion and dust, O thou holy one, thou wakeful, come with thy light of thunder”.

Poem no 28 is a famous poem of *Gitanjali* that takes the poet-quester to the toiling masses in his quest for God, far from the lonely dark corner of a temple. This is one of the poems successfully rendered by Radice for his *Gitanjali* (2011) following the Rothenstein manuscript. His mode of translation is both literal and creative. One distinguishing mark of this poem is its absence of repetition of lines or words and the four-part structure that characterize a typical ‘song-poem’ of Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912). His method of rendering in this ‘song-poem’ is in many ways similar to that followed by Radice in his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore.

Radice renders the first verse of the poem following the rhyme pattern – *a a b b a* -- of the original faithfully. His mode of rendering is marked by fidelity and freedom. He interprets the first line in keeping with the spirit of the original and re-creates the fourth line departing from it. Tagore translates the line literally [“Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple...?”] whereas Radice transcreates the line with a hint at the ‘বর’ (gift) associated with ‘পূজা’ [“What pooja object do you seek?”]. Even the arrangement of the lines of the original has been followed in this poem with utmost fidelity. Let us compare the first verse of the original with its rendering to clarify the point:

ভজন পূজন সাধন আরাধনা

সমস্ত থাক পড়ে।

রুদ্ধদ্বারে দেবালয়ের কোণে

কেন আছিস ওরে

অন্ধকারে লুকিয়ে আপন মনে

কাহারে তুই পূজিস সংগোপনে,

নয়ন মেলে দেখ দেখি তুই চেয়ে

দেবতা নাই যবে।

Prayer and worship and rite ---

cast them aside.

In a nook of the closed temple,

why hide?

Groping in your mind's dark,

What pooja-object do you seek?

Open your eyes and look:

God does not stay inside. (Ibid 40).

Radice has taken liberty with the punctuation of the original in order to re-create the poem drawing on the 'feelings and sentiments' of the original.

In the second and third verses of the poem Radice maintains the same rhyme pattern as in the first[*aa bb a*] and takes liberty at times with the original in order to preserve the rhyme pattern. He is required to render 'রৌদ্রজলে' as 'the flood and the heat' and 'ধূলা' as 'dirt' for maintaining the end rhyme of this couplet. He is compelled to use the English word 'shirt' as the equivalent for 'শ্চিত্রবসন' only to ensure rhyme with 'heat' and 'dirt': "He's there in the flood and the heat; / His hands are plastered with dirt; / Be like him, strip off your shirt to be level with all". Radice also attempts to have far-fetched rhyme in the third and fourth lines of the third verse: "Forget about trances or poojas; / Throw away trays of flowers". The concept of 'মুক্তি' in Indian Culture has got a deeper meaning than the word 'Release'. Tagore's word

'Deliverance' is capable of conveying much of the spiritual nuance of the word 'বুক্তি'. The last line of the poem is marked by a *translation loss*; for there is no equivalent for the word 'কর্মযোগ' in English vocabulary. Tagore strives to convey the sense of the word through 'toil' and 'sweat' whereas Radice tries to carry it across suggestively ['get grimy, get sweaty']. But the expression 'কর্মযোগে তার সাথে এক হয়ে' of the original cannot be carried across in the target language simply because there is no adequate equivalent for the culture –specific word 'কর্মযোগ'.

Poem no.72 (35) is one of the sonnets from *নৈবেদ্য* that Tagore translates for his *Gitanjali* in poetic prose with no paragraph breaks at all. He does not feel the need for retaining the sonnet form in his rendering; for he seems to have shared Nida's view that the translation should lay emphasize on the 'the reproduction of the message rather than the conservation of the form of the utterance' (Nida 12). This poem enjoys such a world-wide popularity that it has no equal among the *Gitanjali* poems transcreated by the poet. Another unique feature of this poem is that a fourteen-line sonnet has been transformed by Tagore into a prose-poem consisting of a long complex sentence. Radice's fresh attempt at rendering the poem may give rise to a strong cavil in some quarters about the rationale of translating the poem again. The original poem is a sonnet in rhymed couplet, having a distinct octave-sestet division and Radice rewrites it after the English or Shakespearean sonnet form following the rhyme scheme of *a b a b, c d c d, e f e f, g g*.

Radice's rendering of the poem is more interpretative than literal. Instead of word-for-word adherence to the original, he interprets the 'place' the sonnet revolves around from an objective point of view. Conversely, Tagore's mode of rendering is literal as well as creative and he gives his interpretation of the place from a subjective point of view. For Radice, the place is a 'fearless' one where everyone is free to move about and share knowledge; Tagore visualizes it as one where 'the mind is without fear and the head is held high'. Radice's rendering of the line 'যেথা বাক্য হৃদয়ের উৎসসুখ হ'তে উচ্ছসিয়া উঠে' as 'Where speech wells from the heart' is marked by *translation loss* whereas Tagore's translation of the line ['where words come out from the depth of truth'] is more interpretative and closer to the original than

Radice's. The next three lines of the original --- 'যেথা নিৰ্ব্বাৰিত শোভে/ দেশে দেশে দিশে দিশে
কৰ্মধারা ধায়/ অজস্র সহস্রবিধ চরিতার্থায়' --- contains an image of the stream of a river. Radice
carries across the image, though his rendering here is verbose and roundabout. Tagore's
translation of the line is marked by a note of spontaneity, even though the image of the
stream is lost and hint of a new image is suggested ['stretches its arms'] in its place.

Radice's literal rendering of the closing couplet of the poem stands in sharp contrast to
Tagore's creative translation. The manuscript of the original *Gitanjali* contained the
rendering of 'ভারতেরে সেই স্বর্গে কর জাগরিত' ['there waken up my country into that heaven of
freedom, my father!'] dropping the penultimate line. The editor of *Gitanjali* here intervenes
and the poet rewrites the last line as 'Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country
awake'. In the manuscript version the poet's prayer was for India, the land of his own birth.
But with the replacement of 'India' by 'my country', the poem became, at once, a hymn of
universal patriotic feelings for 'Everyman' transcending the narrow geographical boundary.
The poet's creative rendering coupled with this editorial intervention have made this poem 'a
miracle of translation' ---- a miracle that seems to have eluded Radice.

Poem no. 60 of the published text [also known as poem no. 12 of the Additional poems] is
one of the great poems that Tagore rendered for his *Gitanjali* before his departure for
England in 1912. This happens to be the title poem from Tagore's *Shishu*, a book of poems
for children and its prose translation by the poet was later included in *The Crescent Moon*.
The translation of this poem from *Gitanjali* ranks as one of the best by Radice. It is a poem of
five stanzas rendered in verse with each stanza following the rhyme scheme of *a b b a a* .
Radice's mode of rendering is both literal and creative. He transforms the Bengali poem into
a new independent poem in English drawing on the 'feelings and sentiments' of the original.

Radice's fidelity to the original is imaginative so far as his re-creation of the first verse is
concerned. In his attempt to rewrite the poem Radice 'manipulates' the original text in order
to adapt his text to its rhyme scheme. In the first line he does not hesitate to take recourse to a
translation shift to ensure its rhyme with the 4th and 5th lines of the original. Let us take a
look at the Bengali original and its rendering by Radice:

জগৎ-পারাবারের তীরে
ছেলেরা করে মেলা ।
অন্তহীন গগনতল
মাথার 'পরে অচঞ্চল,
ফেনিল ওই সুনীল জল
নাচিছে সারা বেলা।
উঠিছে তটে কী কোলাহল –
ছেলেরা করে মেলা।

On the shore of the world-sea,
Children play.
Endless sky stretching
Above their heads unmoving;
Deep blue water foaming ---
Dances all day.
Merrily on the shore
They meet and play (Ibid 131)

Since Tagore renders the poem in poetic prose, he does not feel the need of following any such rhyme scheme. He transcreates the first verse drawing on his intuitive impression of the original. This makes his renderings widely different from Radice's. Radice translates 'জগৎ পারাবার' as 'world-sea' whereas Tagore renders it as 'endless worlds'. The third line 'ফেনিল ওই সুনীল জল নাচিছে সারাবেলা' which has been literally translated ['Deep blue water foaming - - /Dances all day'.] by Radice was transcreated in a truncated form ['the restless water is boisterous'] by Tagore. Consequently, something is definitely lost from his rendering but he succeeded in conveying the inner sense of the original line. In the translation of last line of the first verse, Radice is at his precise best whereas Tagore is at his interpretative best.

In translating *Gitanjali* poems Radice's mode of rendering is mostly literal but he switches over to the interpretative mode from time to time depending on the exigency of the text. The

houses made by the children on the shore with sands have been interpreted by Radice as 'sandcastles'. The rafts and toy-boats made by them with withered leaves are floated on the 'vast blue water' and the interpolated line 'While ocean swells' is added to the verse for the sake of rhyme. The original contains no such lines or expressions as to defend the interpolation in the target text. Again, this line seems to convey an interpretative significance against the background of the swelling ocean. In the last line of the verse Radice alters the refrain of the original --- 'জগত্ পাবারের তীরে ছেলেরা করে খেলা' ---to suit the rhyme scheme of the poem "On the shore of the world –sea, / They join to play". The replacement of the Bengali line 'ছেলেরা করে খেলা' ['Children play'] by the English expression 'They join to play' constitutes a translation shift which is interpretative. Radice makes use of this translation method in the remaining two verses of this poem. Thus he tries to enact the creative joy out of which his songs are born and ends up writing a parallel text.

While evaluating Nirendranath Roy's rendering of Shelley's poem "One Word Too Often Profaned" Tagore sums up the basic concepts of modern translation, "If one attempts to make the translation as comprehensible as possible, it is rather difficult to cast it perfectly in the mould of the original. It [your rendering] has been to some extent analogous rather than identical to the original" (my translation) (DasGupta & Ghose 1962). What Tagore implies here is that translation of a poem can never be the same as the original and that it can at best be 'analogous [^{অনুরূপ}anurup]' rather than identical [^{প্রতিরূপ}pratirup] with it. One also finds confirmation of this view in Octavio Paz's assertion, "the translator must compose a poem analogous to the original" (Paz 159), for what he seeks to achieve in his translation effort is, in the words of Nida, 'equivalence rather than identity' (Nida 120). Radice's translations of *Gitanjali* poems are, therefore, 'analogous' rather than identical with their originals. .

III

In his oft-quoted letter to Indira Devi, Tagore tells her what he proposes to do in his translation of *Gitanjali* poems, "I simply felt an urge to recapture through the medium of another language the feelings and sentiments which had created such a feast of joy within me in the days gone by" (Chakravarty 21). Accordingly, he re-created the 'feelings and

sentiments' of the original *Gitanjali* (1910) in his 'English' renderings and handed over his manuscript to Rothenstein who then sent it to W.B. Yeats for his editorial supervision. Yeats edited the *Gitanjali* poems altering their sequence, paragraphing, punctuation and choice of words wherever he felt it necessary. Above all, he wrote an impassioned introduction to *Gitanjali* so as to influence its appreciation and reception in the West. According to Radice, Yeats is responsible for distorting the 'real *Gitanjali*' that Tagore originally conceived it to be. It is through his fresh rendering of the poems of the Rothenstein manuscript that Radice tries to recover to Tagore 'the real *Gitanjali*' that Yeats allegedly took away from him.

Now the question is how far Radice's charge against Yeats is based on facts and how Tagore would have reacted to this charge even if it were true. Interestingly, Radice cannot put forward any incontrovertible proof in support of his charge. In his Introduction to *Gitanjali* he says, "*I do believe* that the changes that Yeats made --- to the order and selection of the poems, to the paragraphing, to the punctuation, and above all to Tagore's choice of words and phrases ---would have contributed to Tagore's growing feeling over time that in the English *Gitanjali*, as presented and edited by Yeats, he had betrayed his true self" (emphasis added) (Radice p. lvi). He levels this charge against Yeats solely on the basis of his intuitive belief ['I do believe'] rather than any solid arguments. Secondly, he found out altogether 326 changes which were basically of minor nature. Moreover, in certain cases, the changes heighten the effect of the poems, as for example, the sonnet 'Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high'. But how can they alter the 'the real *Gitanjali*' distorting its mood and spirit? Had it been so Tagore would certainly have registered his protest as he did when Robert Bridges made certain alterations in one of Tagore's poems from *Gitanjali* to be included in a proposed anthology to be made by him. He was not at all happy about the Introduction to *Gitanjali* written by Yeats and did not mince words to convey his unhappiness about it in a letter to Jagadananda, 18 September 1912. But nowhere did he utter a single word about the alleged 'twisting' of the original intention and mood of the *Gitanjali* poems. In a letter to Edward Thompson (18 Nov.1913) Tagore expresses his gratitude to Yeats for what he did for the English *Gitanjali* poems, "...I think that the method that Yeats followed while editing my book was the right one in selecting those poems that required least alterations and rejecting others in spite of their merits"(DasGupta 165. In his essay "On the

(Nov. 1977 - April 1978)

Autograph Manuscript”[^] Shyamal Kumar Sarkar makes a detailed examination of the Rothenstein manuscript and the printed text of *Gitanjali* but finds no such distortion as claimed by Radice. He, therefore, concludes his study by referring to Tagore’s acknowledgement of Yeats’s ‘literary comradeship’ for the ‘foreign reincarnation’ of the *Gitanjali* poems in his letter (26 November 1926) to Rothenstein (Sarkar 31).

Radice’s main objective of rendering Tagore’s *Gitanjali* afresh is to give the foreign readers a taste of the ‘real *Gitanjali*’.. As the original writer, even Tagore cannot ‘revive’ or ‘re-enact’ the creative process, let alone the translator. This is as much true of the meaning of a creative work as of its other constituent parts. Though the *Gitanjali* poems have been praised by Buddhadev Bose as a ‘miracle of translation’ (1948), even Tagore could not give us the taste of the original but ended up capturing only the ‘echo of the original’. In an important article ‘Tagore in Translation’ Bose characterized the English *Gitanjali* as ‘a by-product’ (Bose 25) of the original. If the original writer rendering the Source Text (ST) cannot give us the taste of ‘the real *Gitanjali*’, how can a third-person translator hope to do so?

Secondly, from theoretical point of view, Radice’s claim is not at all tenable. A translation can never be identical with the original. According to Nida: “The basic principles of translation mean that no translation in a receptor language can be the exact equivalent of the model in the source language” (Nida 27). He cites three things that all types of translation involves: (1) ‘loss of information’, (2) ‘addition of information’, and (3) ‘skewing of information’ (*Ibid* 27). In other words, the translator cannot carry across everything of the original and loses something during its transfer from the SLT to the TLT. Secondly, in his attempt to interpret the original he needs to add some words or expressions to make the rendering fluent and readable. Lastly, he has to ‘manipulate’ the original to adapt it to his understanding, purpose and vision. Consequently, the translation undergoes a transmutation and deviates from the original. One finds a plethora of translation losses, translation shifts and attempts at domesticating words or ideas of the original in Radice’s rendering of the *Gitanjali* poems. Thus, his translation, however excellent, can never give us the real taste of Tagore’s ‘original *Gitanjali*’ in Bengali. Tagore was well aware of the limitations of translations. “A translation”, he says, [in an interview to Musical America, 27 Nov 1920]

“may be a re-incarnation but it cannot be identical” (Lal 110). Radice’s *Gitanjali* may be the re-incarnation of but cannot be ‘identical’ with the original, however competent the rendering is. Again, Harish Trivedi complimented Radice for creating ‘a third Tagore’ in his Tagore translations. Accepting Trivedi’s compliment Radice says, “As well as the Bengali Rabindranath and the English Tagore, a third Tagore was being revealed by me and other translators” (Radice76). If Radice and his contemporary translators are revealing ‘a third Tagore’ in their translations, how can he hope to give us the taste of the ‘real Tagore’ / (does he mean the first Tagore?] in his rendering of *Gitanjali* ?

Note:

All citations from Tagore’s Bengali and English *Gitanjali* to be found in this article have been taken from *Gitanjali: Song Offerings* – Rabindranath Tagore (bilingual edition) edited by Subhankar Bhattacharyya and Mayukh Chakraborty (Parul) 2007.

CHAPTER VII

THE POST OFFICE

Rabindranath Tagore's ডাকঘর (*The Post Office*) is the most popular and perhaps the best of all his dramatic works. Mixing simplicity with sophistication, realism with symbolism, this play gives expression to man's passionate longing for the faraway and spiritual freedom. At the heart of the play is a young boy, through whose imaginative mind Tagore, the poet-dramatist, sings a paean to the beauty and romance of life. Even though the boy ultimately dies, the imaginative and the poetic aspects of life triumphs over its materialistic concerns. It is not, however, a tragedy in the conventional literary sense of the word. Realistically viewed, it is 'an agonizing depiction of the human condition'. Symbolically interpreted, it is 'gentle and reassuring of ultimate fulfillment'. It is "the interplay of this dual significance which gives the drama its delicate charm and its unique status between tragedy and comedy" (Ayyub101-102). Even though *The Post Office* contains "elements of a tense human drama, a moving fairy tale and a deeply suggestive spiritual symbol" (SenGupta176), its enormous popularity at home and abroad has made it a world classic of all times. ডাকঘর was originally written towards the end of 1911 and published in January, 1912. Chronologically, the play belongs to the *Gitanjali* period when Tagore seems to have felt the 'migratory impulse' in his creative 'wings' (Lago215). In a letter to Nirjharini Sarkar dated 22 Aswin 1318 (1911) Tagore writes, "The rivers, seas, hills and human habitations of the whole world are beckoning me. My mind is also bent on going out...." (my translation)(Bhattachayrya 215). About the writing of ডাকঘর Tagore is reported to have told Edward Thompson:

I was very restless, just as I am now. That gave me the idea of a child pining for freedom, and the world anxious to keep it in its bounds, for it has its duties there... I was anxious to know the world.... My restlessness became intolerable. I wrote *Dakghar* in three or four days. About the same time I wrote *Gitanjali* .

(Cited in Notes on Drama)(Chakravarty 384).

According to his Bengali biographer Prabhat Kumar Mukherjee, a “passionate feeling of wanting to go somewhere far away” made Tagore emotionally restless during this period and his ডাকঘর is the imaginative expression of this restlessness (Radice 5).

ডাকঘর (or, *The Post Office*) was first translated into English in 1914 by Debabrata Mukherjee who had inexplicably called the play “*The Message Office*”. Even though Edward Thompson had described the play as ‘one of his few works that are truthfully represented in the English text’, the fact remains that Tagore himself was not satisfied with the translation (Thompson 212). Though he had partially revised the translation of ডাকঘর, he remained expressly dissatisfied with it. In a letter to Ajit Kumar Chakraborty dated August 1912 he wrote: “His style was flamboyant and I had to tone it down. Even after that I am not satisfied.”(Lal 90) Despite Tagore’s dissatisfaction with the English rendering even after revising it himself, *The Post Office*, in its first ever English translation, has occupied a distinctive position across the globe as one of Tagore’s masterpieces. Rothenstein also informed Tagore (in a letter dated December 2, 1912) that Yeats considered *The Post Office* as ‘a masterpiece’ (Lago 71). Again, it has perhaps the rare distinction of being the only Tagore play which was successfully performed abroad before it was staged in India (The Irish Theatre staged it in London in 1914). The original Bengali version was performed late in 1917 before an audience which included Annie Besant, Tilak, Lalpat Rai, Malaviya, Mahatma Gandhi and many other dignitaries. Again, it was in 1940, the evening before Paris fell to the Nazis, that *The Post Office* in Andre Gide’s French translation was broadcast in Radio France. It is to be noted here that together with *The Gitanjali*, this play won an unprecedented international acclaim and played a very important role in Tagore’s reception in the West.

William Radice is the first British translator to have translated afresh Tagore’s ডাকঘর (*The Post Office*) in 1993. Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson also made another translation of *The Post Office* in 1996 which is its third translation in English till date. Radice’s translation was commissioned and supported by the Nehru Centre of the High Commission of India in London and the Tagore Centre U.K. It arose from the inspiring work,

as writer, director and teacher, of Jill Parvin, who tragically died in 2002. It is perhaps the first ever attempt to interpret the celebrated play against the inhuman scenario of the holocaust tragedy unleashed by the Nazi authority. Thus, Tagore's play has achieved a new relevance in a different socio-political context testifying to its universal appeal. It is now a historical fact that the Polish doctor Janusz Korczak staged *The Post Office* in 1942 in the Jewish ghetto of Warsaw, four days before the deportation of the Warsaw residents to the Nazi concentration camp. He chose a theatrical play in order to convey the message of 'the right to die with dignity' and to teach the children 'to accept the angel of death with composure'. He used the dramatic framework of the dying Amal of *The Post Office* as an analogy to drive home to the audience the agonized realization that 'the impending death of the children in fact symbolized their own' annihilation (Binwan et al. ~~Doren~~ 74-79). While directing *The Post Office* Jill Parvin seems to have in her mind the Janusz Korczak episode which she incorporates in the performance text as a play- within- the play in order to highlight its contemporary relevance and timeless appeal as a Tagore classic. In this connection Martin Kampchen rightly says, "The play's plot proved its universality by transcending its Bengali context and illuminating another context which was, originally, quite alien to it" (Statesman 3 Dec 2010:6).

It needs to be noted here that William Radice's translations of Tagore's *Card Country* and *The Post Office* were published in a double volume set by Visva-Bharati in 2008. But one needs to make a distinction between the two texts of *The Post Office*, one published by The Tagore Centre UK (1996) and the other, by Visva-Bharati (2008). The former edition contains the translation of the original 'dramatic text' as well as the 'performance text' whereas the latter one represents only the rendering of the 'dramatic text', as it came from Tagore. The Tagore Centre UK text of *The Post Office* is the joint work of William Radice and Jill Parvin. Radice translates the original Bengali text whereas Parvin prepares the theatre text incorporating the Janusz-Korczak episode as a play-within-the-play to demonstrate its relevance in the broader European perspective of Nazi regime. *The Post Office*, is, thus, taken away from its Bengali setting and posited against a broader Eurocentric scenario reinforcing its relevance irrespective of time and place.

Before we proceed to evaluate Radice's translation of 'ডাকঘর' (*The Post Office*), let us take a look at the theoretical aspects of translating dramatic texts in order to evaluate Radice's performance. André Lefevere regrets the dearth of theoretical literature on the translation of drama as acted and produced, and Patrice Pavis shows how questions of translation and performance have 'hardly been taken into consideration' (France 96). This dearth of theory has pre-occupied the drama theorists for a long time, just as the problem of the relationship between written text and performance has pre-occupied performance analysts. Susan Bassnett took up this most-neglected issue for discussion for the first time in her pioneering book *Translation Studies* (1980) and followed it up with several articles included in different books on translating dramatic texts. According to her, the translation of the dramatic texts poses a serious problem for the translator:

the dramatic text cannot be translated in the same way as the prose text. To begin with, a theatre text is read differently. It is read as something *incomplete*, rather than as a fully rounded unit, since it is only in performance that the full potential of the text is realized. And this presents the translator with a central problem: whether to translate the text as a purely literary text, or to try to translate it in its *function* as one element in another, more complex system.... Anne Ubersfeld, for example, points out how it is impossible to separate *text* from *performance*, since theatre consists of the dialectical relationship with both, and she also shows how an artificially created distinction between the two has led to the literary text acquiring a higher status.

(Bassnett120)

Pavis also warns that any discussion of the translation of a play text needs to take the performance dimension into consideration, since the play is not simply a literary text, written to be read, but a text that 'reaches the audience by way of the actors' bodies' (France *Ibid* 96). In other words, unlike a novel or a poem, the play text, far from being complete in itself, like a novel or a poem, forms part of the total equation that is the play in performance. The play as literature is distinctly different from the play in performance, though both are intimately connected (France 96). In "Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts" (1985) Susan Bassnett [formerly McGuire] also reminds us that "a theatre text exists in a dialectical relationship with the performance of that text. The two texts—written and performed—are coexistent and inseparable, and it is in this relationship that the paradox for the translator

lies” (Hermans87). What Bassnett here seems to suggest is that the play is written only to be spoken on the stage and is a kind of blueprint that actors use as the basis of their performance. Hence the translator needs to be more conscious of its inherent ‘performability’. The ultimate purpose of theatre translation seems to ensure that the translated play perform well on stage in the target language before a live audience. Bassnett, then, quotes approvingly from Jiri Veltrusky in her *Translation Studies* to show how dialogue unfolds both in time and space and is always integrated in the extralinguistic situation illuminating and often modifying it :

The relationship between the dialogue and the extralinguistic situation is intense and reciprocal. The situation often provides the dialogue with its subject matter. moreover, whatever the subject matter may be, the situation variously interferes in the dialogue, affects the way it unfolds, brings about shifts or reversals, and sometimes interrupts it altogether. In its turn, the dialogue progressively illuminates the situation and often modifies or even transforms it. The actual sense of the individual units of meaning depends as much on the extra-linguistic situation as on the linguistic context.

(Veltrusky cited in Bassnett 121)

Bassnett, then, quotes the following passage for our discussion from Robert Corrigan’s much-talked- about article on “Translating for Actors”:

The first law in translating for the theater is that every thing must be speakable. It is necessary at all times for the translator to hear the actor speaking in his mind’s ear. He must be conscious of the gestures of the voice that speaks – the rhythm, the cadence, the interval. He must also be conscious of the look, the feel, and the movement of the actor while he is speaking. He must, in short, render what might be called the whole gesture of the scene....Only in this way can the translator hear the words in such a way that they play upon each other in harmony, in conflict, and in pattern --- and hence as dramatic. (Arrowsmith and Shattuck 101)

According to Corrigan, the translator of the theatre text is required to hear the voice that speaks, visualize the ‘gesture of the language’ and capture the ‘cadence’, ‘rhythm’ and ‘pauses’ when the written text is spoken. Again, the theatre translator is also expected to

combine in himself the imaginative qualities so that he might be able 'to direct the play, act the play, and see the play while translating it'. (Ibid) Thus, the theatre text, written with a view to its performance, contains distinguishable structural features that make it 'performable', beyond the stage directions themselves. Consequently the task of the translator is to identify those structures and to translate them into the TL, even though this may lead to major shifts on the linguistic and stylistic planes (Bassnett122).

The problem of performability in translation is, again, complicated by changing concepts of performance of the time. As for example, a contemporary production of a Shakespearean play is bound to be influenced by the various developments in acting style, playing space, the role of the audience and the altered concepts of tragedy and comedy since Shakespeare's time. With the passage of time new interpretations of a play emerge which are obviously different from those of the Elizabethan period. Moreover, acting style and concepts of theatre also undergo change in different social and national contexts and the theatre translator is required to take them into consideration for translating theatre texts. A perusal of the English translations of Racine, the French classical dramatist, reveals one significant point----texts may have been translated singly (e.g. John Masefield's versions of *Esther* and *Berenice*) or as part of a volume of complete works (e.g. R.G.Boswell, the first translator of Racine's *oeuvre*). Single texts of Racine may have been translated with performance in mind whereas 'complete plays' have been rendered primarily for a reading public where literalness and linguistic fidelity remain the principal criteria(Bassnett 122-23).

According to Bassnett, the difficulty of translating theatre texts has given rise to two types of criticism, one of which attacks translation as 'too literal and unperformable' and the other as 'too free and deviant from the original'. Many renderings of Racine in English bear testimony to 'excessive literalness', but 'freedom' in theatre translation is really too elusive a concept to define properly. In "Translating Spatial Poetry: An Examination of Theatre Texts in Performance" (1978) Bassnett-McGuire suggested that there might be a 'gestural language' distinguishable within the written text. This view was based on work in theatre practice, where directors and actors distinguish physical signs to follow from off the printed page. She also suggested that this 'gestural language' might exist in a manner similar to the Stanislavskian sub-text that is decoded by the actor and encoded into gestural form. The

performance text, on the other hand, involves a range of sign systems that harmonize with the written text, extending it into space. So the written text is one code, one system in a complex set of codes that interact together in performance. The theatre translator is compelled to work on a text that is, as Anne Ubersfeld tells us, *troué*, not complete in itself (Hermans 94). His task is to complete and transform the written text visualizing and exploring its extralinguistic potentialities in performance in the TL. Consequently, the theatre text turns out to be the virtual extension and sort of intersemiotic transformation of the literary text. Discussing the nature of the theatre text Susan Bassnett comments pertinently in this connection:

[...] since the play text is written for voices, the literary text contains also a set of *paralinguistic* systems, where pitch, intonation, speed of delivery, accent, etc. are all signifiers. In addition, the play text contains within it the *undertext* or what we have called the *gestural text* that determines the movements an actor speaking that text can make. So it is not only the context but also the coded gestural patterning within the language itself that contributes to the actor's work, and the translator who ignores all systems outside the purely literary is running serious risks. ...One of the functions of the theatre is to operate on other levels than the strictly linguistic, and the role of the audience assumes a public dimension not shared by the individual reader whose contact with the text is essentially a private affair. A central consideration of the theatre translator must therefore be the performance aspect of the text and its relationship with an audience, and ... the translator must take into account the function of the text as an element for and of performance. (Bassnett132)

Since the theatre text is composed of *dialogue* and *stage directions*, the question of form merging with that of speech rhythms poses a tough problem for the translator. He is required to be aware of the naturalistic speech rhythms in the TL which belongs inevitably to a particular time. Brigitte Schultze asserts rightly that "the dual context of dramatic language -- oral communication with its markers of spontaneity and situation, and literature with its time-bound aesthetic codes --- is a permanent challenge for translators" (Muller-Vollmer and Irmcher177-196). Two critical challenges, therefore, face theatre translators. On the one hand, they are asked to be faithful to the original structure and dialogue of the play, leaving the dialogue as intact as possible, on the other, they are asked to be more concerned with communicability as well as "performability" for the sake of live audience and actors(Ibid).

But the term “performability”, so frequently used by theatre translators, is too vague a concept to define. According to Susan Bassnett, it is “ an attempt in the TL to create fluent speech rhythms and so (sic) produce a text that TL actors can speak without too much difficulty” (Hermans 90-91). Instead of accepting ‘performability’ as a criterion for translating she wants the translators to concentrate more closely on the linguistic structures of the text itself. For, it is only within the written text that the performance potentiality can be encoded and there can be infinite performance decodings from the playtext. That is why the theatre translator ought to be concerned only with the written text rather than with any ‘hypothetical performance’ (Hermans102). Philip Vellacott seems to have echoed Ms. Bassnett in the introduction to Aeschylus’s *The Oresteian Trilogy*, “ I have tried rather to concentrate on *fullness of meaning, interpretation, and suitability for performance* ; not attempting to represent either the peculiarities of Greek poetic diction or the highly individual style of Aeschylus, but hoping for *a direct, unconditional impact*” (emphasis added) (Watling17). Mr.Vellacott here makes a frank confession of the objectives he seeks to achieve in translating the plays of Aeschylus --- objectives that constitute the “performability” of a translated text. In the Translator’s Preface to *Aristophanes Plays I* Patric Dickinson seems to have suggested that the translator of a play should have an acquaintance with the basic knowledge of the theatre, “In translating plays I think the translator has to be *theatre-not study-minded*. He has to think in terms of an actor performing bodily in front of an audience and of the words each actor has naturally to say in accord with who he is (emphasis added) (Dickinson I).

Since *The Post Office* (1993) has been commissioned by The Tagore Centre UK for production, Radice’s principal objective ostensibly is to prepare a readable and actable dramatic text, and not a line-for-line, word-for-word transcription of the original. Instead of translating ডাকঘর literally Radice interprets it in a contemporary language that can possibly be spoken as living English. He takes pains to render clichéd utterances or proverbial sayings by using appropriate contemporary equivalents. Thus, he has created a fluent ‘speech rhythm’ in the target language that the actors could speak on the stage without any difficulty. Commenting on the language of Tagore’s ডাকঘর Edward Thompson says, “The language is

of an unsurpassable naturalness, the speech of the streets purged of all its grossness yet robbed of not one drop of raciness. The dialogue flows in even unhurried stream” (Thompson214). According to Buddhadeva Bose, in *The Post Office* “Tagore achieves miraculous effects by purifying and elevating the merely natural” language (Bose 523). Radice has succeeded in capturing this ‘naturalness’ and ‘raciness’ of the original in translating the dialogue of *The Post Office*. A comparative study of the dialogues of the play translated by Debabrata Mukherjee and William Radice will be helpful for the purpose of our discussion. Extracts from the translations done by Mukherjee and Radice are given below:

- Dairyman. (lowering his yoke-pole). Whatever are you doing here, my child?
- Amal. The doctor says I’m not to be out, so I sit here all day long.
- Dairyman. My poor child, whatever has happened to you?
- Amal. I can’t tell. You see, I am not learned, so I don’t know what’s the matter with me. Say, Dairyman, where do you come from?
- Dairyman. From our village.
- Amal. Your village? Is it very far?
- Dairyman. Our village lies on the river Shamali at the foot of the Panch-mura hills.
- Amal. Panch-mura hills! Shamli river! I wonder. I may have seen your village. I can’t think when, though!
- Dairyman. Have you seen it? Been to the foot of those hills?
- Amal. Never. But I seem to remember having seen it. Your village is under some very old big trees, just by the side of the red road --- isn’t that so?
- Dairyman. That’s right, child.
- Amal. And on the slope of the hill cattle grazing.
- Dairyman. How wonderful! Cattle grazing in our village! Indeed there are!
- Amal. And your women with red sarees fill their pitchers from the river and carry them on their heads.
- Dairyman. Good, that’s right! Women from our dairy village do come and draw their water from the river; but then it isn’t every one who has a red saree to put on. But, my dear child, surely you must have been there for a walk some time.
- Amal. Really, Dairyman, never been there at all. But the first day doctor lets me go out, you are going to take me to your village.
- Dairyman. I will, my child, with pleasure.

(CPPRT Mukherjee 231-232)

CURD-SELLER (putting down his yoke) What are you doing sitting here, baba?

AMAL The Kabiraj has forbidden me to go out, so I sit here all day long.

CURD-SELLER That's a pity. What's the matter with you, baba?

AMAL I don't know. I haven't read anything, so I don't know what's the matter. Where have you come from, curd-seller?

CURD-SELLER I've come from our village.

AMAL Your village? From your village far, far away

CURD-SELLER Our village is at the foot of the Panchmura hills. By the Shamli river.

AMAL Panchmura hills—Shamli river-- who knows—maybe I've seen your village – but I don't remember when.

CURD-SELLER You've seen it ? Have you ever been to the foot of the hills?

AMAL No, I've never been there. But I feel as if I have : a village under huge ancient trees – by a red-coloured road. Right ?

CURD-SELLER Quite right, baba.

AMAL Where the cattle all graze on the sides of the hills.

CURD-SELLER Amazing ! You're quite right. Cattle graze in our village, they do indeed.

AMAL All the women carry water from the river in pots on their heads – and they wear red saris.

CURD-SELLER Well done ! You're right – in the milkman's quarter all our women certainly carry water from the river. They don't all wear red saris though –but really, baba, you must have been there sometime.

AMAL No, honestly, I've never been there. When the Kabiraj says I can go out, will you take me to your village ?

CURD-SELLER Of course, baba, of course I'll take you there.

(Radice 31-33)

Debabrata Mukherjee's dialogue does not have the fluidity and 'naturalness' of colloquial English. It is so 'flamboyant' and artificial that Tagore himself was not satisfied with the language, even after revising the translated text. By contrast, the dialogue in Radice's text has the dynamism and vibrancy of a living language. Since Radice translated *The Post Office* for the Parallel Existence 1993 production, he always seemed to have in view the performance potentiality of the dialogue. This made him adapt the dialogue to the requirements of the stage production which is why the dialogue in his play is so lively,

dynamic and theatre-oriented. Radice seems to have adopted here the principle that Dryden followed while translating Virgil into English. In the Preface to his translations from Virgil, issued in 1697, Dryden famously declares, “Yet I may presume to say... that, taking all the materials of this divine author, I have endeavoured to make Virgil speak such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age.” (Steiner 256). Similarly, Radice contemporarized Tagore making him speak the way he would have done had he been born in England and written *The Post Office* in English in the twenty-first century. Debabrata Mukherjee probably seemed to have failed to make Tagore a writer of the twentieth century, for he made him speak a language of a bygone era. Ananda Lal has listed some of the awkward and archaic words (such as “ humming bird”, “ tabor”, “ Gaffer”, “ By Jove” etc.) that Mr. Mukherjee used in an attempt to overcome the ‘regional and cultural differences’ and to ‘domesticate’ the Bengali play in the English language (Lal 90-91).

Fidelity to the original is an indispensable part of translation, *traduttori traditori* [“the translator is a traitor”] notwithstanding. While introducing his version of Brecht’s *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Eric Bentley seems to have this question of ‘fidelity’ at the back of his mind when he dwells on the business of translation: “Perhaps all good foreign plays should be published first in a very literal translation and subsequently in various attempts at a true equivalent, even, if necessary, in adaptations” (Bentley11). Since Tagore calls his renderings ‘rewriting’ rather than literal reproduction of the original, fidelity seems to be the main casualty in his own translation. As a Tagore translator, Radice’s main objective is to maintain fidelity to the original and to make Tagore ‘internationally credible as a *writer*, not just as a sage’ (Radice770). Accordingly, his primary task is to make as faithful a rendering of Tagore’s ডাকঘর (*The Post Office*) as possible in the English language, without making him look quaint and archaic.

The word ‘fidelity’ or ‘faithful’ has, of course, a wider implication in translation poetics. It implies rendering not only the matter but also the manner of the play – style as well as content. It also implies rendering not only the words but their emotive content or what Jackson Knight calls the ‘associative penumbra’ of the original(Arrowsmith and Shattuck 85). In *The Post Office* Radice generally tries to maintain a close correspondence between

Bengali and English. But when he fails to preserve the correspondence at the semantic level, he tries to maintain it at the interpretative level. Let us examine a few examples to drive home the point under discussion:

1. (A) অমল । না না , পিসেমশায় , তোমার দুটি পায়ে পড়ি, আমি পন্ডিত হব না --
পিসেমশায় আমি পন্ডিত হব না।
- (B) Amal. No, no, Uncle; I beg of you, by your dear feet – I don't want to be learned; I won't. [Mukherjee]
- (C) AMAL No, no, Uncle, I beg of you, I don't want to be a scholar – I don't want to be a scholar,Uncle. [Radice]

Radice does not maintain a word-for-word fidelity between Bengali original and its English counterpart, but Mukherjee retains this fidelity at the risk of being odd and ludicrous. Radice's translation of the above line is interpretative whereas Mukherjee's simply literal.

2. (A) সুধা -- বোলো যে , 'সুধা তোমাকে ভোলেনি ।
- (B) Sudha. Tell him Sudha has not forgotten him. [Mukherjee]
- (C) SUDHA Say, "Sudha has not forgotten you". [Radice]

Here Radice's translation is true to the original whereas Mukherjee's is not, for he has diluted the dramatic effect using indirect speech without any solid reason. Radice, on the other hand, has directly established "instant communicability" with the audience, by retaining the direct speech proposition and through this intensified the dramatic effect.

One of the problems the translators face is that of finding corresponding equivalents in the target language. In the introduction to *Sophocles: The Theban Plays* . the translator E. F. Watling says, " In fact, ... no translation is free of this difficulty --- the difficulty of non-corresponding terms"(Watling 17). What the translator needs to do in such a situation is to adopt a 'substitution', or to use a word from the target language 'analogous' to the original word, or to transfer the source language word intact to the receptor language especially when 'substitution' or 'analogy' is likely to put the semantic equivalence in danger. It is therefore not for nothing that Radice has retained a few Bengali words of the SLT in his translation of

Tagore's ডাকঘর (*The Post Office*) --- ঠাকুরদা (Mukherjee, Gaffer), ডাল (Mukherjee, lentil), মুড়ি-মুরকি (Mukherjee –'puffed rice'), বাবা (Mukherjee – 'my dear', 'my darling', 'dear'), 'ঢং ঢং ঢং' etc.). But what surprises one is Radice's use of the expression 'Holy Man' to describe the Bengali word 'ফকির'. While translating the Bengali word 'ফকির' into English he might have in his mind the Christian concept of 'Holy Ghost'. This explains why he interprets 'ফকির' as 'Holy Man'. Incidentally, Mukherjee retained the word 'ফকির' which has gained currency in the English language since Winston Churchill famously described Mahatma Gandhi as the 'naked fakir'. Instead of using 'curds, curds' for 'দই' Radice would have done better to retain the Bengali word 'দই' to produce instant dramatic effect. Given that Radice's stage direction before the curdseller's entry reads thus – 'Enter curd-seller with the traditional cry, 'দই- দই- দই!' (Bhattacharya 220-221), the Curd-seller's 'Curds, Curds' may produce an asymmetrical impression in the audience-cum-readers of the play.

Sometimes Radice's strategy of translation involves the interpretation of certain words on the basis of his subjective ideas or feelings of the original. His translation of the word 'কৌৰ্ণদীপ' provides an excellent example here. Radice's rendering of 'কৌৰ্ণদীপ' as the 'Curlew Island' seems closer to the original than Mukherjee's 'the Parrots' Isle'. According to Haricharan Bandhyapadhyaya, 'crownchya' is a species of herons, the 'কৌচবক', and 'কৌৰ্ণদীপ' is 'a particular island' (Bandhyapadhyay 699), perhaps inhabited by this species of herons. And this island has nothing to do with parrots. It is not therefore clear how Mr. Mukherjee renders 'কৌৰ্ণদীপ' as 'the Parrots' Isle'. Radice translates 'কৌৰ্ণদীপ' as 'The Curlew Island' in keeping with the dramatic context of the play. According to the *COD*, the word 'curlew' means "any wading bird of the genus Numenius, esp. N. arquatus, possessing a usu. long slender down-curved bill", and 'curlew island' is an island supposedly inhabited by this species of birds. It cannot be called 'Parrots' Isle' simply because this island, as its name indicates, is the favourite haunts of the 'কৌচবক', a species of a particular herons. If one takes ঠাকুরদার description of the island into consideration, The Curlew Island seems to be an imaginary land of heart's desire, somewhat akin to Yeats's *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*, having

no geographical location of its own. Radice's 'Curlew Island' is, therefore, closer to Tagore's 'কৌৰুদীপ' than Mr. Mukherjee's 'Parrots' Isle'. Radice, however, does not remain solid-footed as he stumbles on the word 'মালিনী'. Sudha introduces herself in the play as the daughter of a local মালিনী. Mukherjee translates the word as 'the flower-seller' whereas Radice renders it as 'the garland-woman'. But the word 'garland woman' does not convey any sense in Bengali and Bengali dictionary does not approve the existence of its counterpart. সংসদ বাঙ্গালা অভিধান defines the word 'মালিনী' as a 'garlanded woman' ('মাল্যভূষিত', 'a woman who supplies garlands, flowers etc.'). Mukherjee seems to be more faithful to the original than Radice in the interpretation of the word. The fairy tale of "Seven Champa Brothers" comes up in the course of Amal's conversation with Sudha. This fairy tale is so much popular in Bengal that the word *Seven- Champa- Brothers* has become almost a household word here. Mukherjee betrays an unpardonable ignorance of this story which is why he translates it as 'চাঁপা of the fairy tale and his six brothers'. But even a cursory glance at Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder's ঠাকুরমার ঝুলি will leave no one in doubt that the title of the story is "সাত ভাই চাঁপা" and Radice has rightly translated it as 'the seven Champa brothers'. Apparently the rendering of 'বোন পারুল' as 'flower-sister' is rather puzzling. As the story has it, *sister* পারুল is transformed into a flower plant that stands beside the seven Champa trees. We get 'Parul' flower as and when this flower plant is in bloom (Mitra & Ghosh 79-84) . Keeping the story in mind Radice rightly translates 'বোন পারুল' as 'sister-flower'. He tries to be faithful to the spirit of the story whereas Mukherjee is faithful to the story in its literal sense. Again, Radice's interpretation of the word ঢেলা as 'pupil' may be appropriate to the Western readers, but it fails to convey the subtle pejorative sense of the original word. Radice would have done better to retain the word ঢেলা in his translation, for the COD has long since recognized it as a loan word from Hindi. Mukherjee's rendering of the word ঢেলা as a 'follower' seems to be closer to the original than Radice's 'pupil'. The translation of the word মন্ত্র also deserves mention here. Mukherjee's rendering of the word as 'travellers' secrets' or 'magic' is definitely a departure from the meaning of the original word. Instead of

retaining the Bengali word মন্ত্র Radice attempts to interpret it as ‘magic spells’ or simply as ‘spells’ to enlighten the target readers on its significance in the source language.

Radice is also aware of the limitations of interpretative translations that can often distort the sense or focus of some words / sentences. In such cases, he opts for literal rather than interpretative translation to drive home to the target readers the focus of particular words / sentences. While describing ‘The Curlew Island’ Thakurda refers to a stream that trickles down like molten diamonds from the mountain and flows on unimpeded down to the sea. According to him, this stream is unstoppable; no one, ‘not even the *father* of a Kabiraj can stop it for a second’ (Radice) -- ‘কোনো কবিরাজের বাবার সাধ্য নেই তাকে এক দণ্ড কোথাও আটকে রাখে। Here Mukherjee is interpretative -- ‘ No devil of a doctor can stop them for a moment’ -- whereas Radice literal. Mukherjee seems to have deviated from the intended sense or focus of the original line but Radice remains faithful to the *signified* without any distortion of the *signifier*. The injunction of a কবিরাজের বাবা [i.e.,however omnipotent(!) he might be] cannot stop the free and spontaneous flow of a stream cascading from the bosom of Nature. Nor can it kill the fervent longing of a *schmsucht-struck* child cribbed, cabined and confined in a room. Tagore seems to affirm his firm belief that the claims of Nature, whether human or physical, always prevail over man-imposed inhibitions or injunctions, however stringent they might be. What Radice here seems to convey through the literal translation is the futility of man-made injunctions visa-vi human or physical nature -- ‘কোনো কবিরাজের বাবার সাধ্য নেই. Secondly, a literal rendering of this line by Radice seems to confirm the failure of interpretative translations to capture successfully the nuances of culture-specific colloquial expression. It is through the literal translation of this line that Radice seems to have agreed with Nobokov’s view that sometimes ‘... literal translation is a thousand times more useful than the prettiest paraphrase’ (Radice and Reynolds 89) or interpretative rendering.

According to the principle universally followed by the translators, any quotation from the source text is almost always kept intact in order to give the target readers a true ‘feel’ or ‘echo’ of the original text. In the exposition section of the play the Kabiraj is found quoting

from the Ayrvedashastra *ad nauseum*. Mukherjee gives the audience literal translation of the Kabiraj's quotations from the Ayurvedashastra :

Physician. "In wheezing, swooning, or in nervous fret,
In jaundice or leaden eyes ----- (Mukherjee).

But true to the principle of the translation poetics Radice retains the quotations in Sanskrit intact avoiding both the literal and free translations of the original.

Kabiraj [...] *apasmare jvare kase kamalayam halimake* – (Radice).

Thus, he successfully brings about the immediacy of the dramatic effect of the quotations that is so vital in drama translation.

When Radice finds no correspondence between English and Bengali words, he has no other alternative but to interpret. Naturally his interpretation gives the target readers an 'echo' or an approximate idea about the original, for no translation can be 'identical' with the source text. According to Walter Benzamin, there is something 'unfathomable, mysterious and poetic' in every creative writing (Schulte and Biguenet 71) that defies translation. Faced with the 'incommunicable' words or ideas of a creative work, the task of a translator becomes extremely difficult. Consequently, the only option left for him is to interpret rather than translate word-for-word from one language to another. In *The Post Office* Radice also chooses to interpret some Bengali words as and when he faces 'the difficulty of non-corresponding terms'. In the course of his interaction with the Curd-Seller Amal tells him, "Hearing your call approaching from afar *makes me feel so strange*" (emphasis added).

Since there is no appropriate word in English equivalent to the Bengali expression মন কেমন করছে, Radice tries to interpret it [to 'make one feel strange'] according to its implied sense. As a result, he succeeds in giving the target language readers some idea about Amal's sullen state of mind. Again, like a poet Amal describes how the call of the Curd-Seller makes him

forget the immediate surroundings around him and wander into a world of imagination or make-believe:

অমল। না, না, ও আমার শুনতে খুব ভালো লাগে। আকাশের খুব শেখ থেকে যেমন
পাখির ডাক শুনলে মন উদাস হয়ে যায় -- তেমনি ঐ রাস্তার মোড় থেকে
ঐ গাছের সারির মধ্য দিয়ে যখন তোমার ডাক আসছিল, আমার মনে হচ্ছিল --
কী জানি কী মনে হচ্ছিল !

It is with the sensitivity and insight of a poet that Radice captures Amal's feelings in his translation and his language finds a lyrical cadence:

AMAL But I love listening to it. It's like when I hear a bird calling from the far edge of
the sky and *I feel so distant*: and when I heard your call approaching through
the trees from that bend in the road, I felt – I can't explain how I felt !

(emphasis added).

Radice seems to have found the Bengali word 'উদাস' untranslatable in English and that is why he interprets it as 'I feel so distant'. Mukherjee also interprets the same word as 'I can't tell you *how queer I feel* when I hear your cry'. (Italics added) Here Radice's interpretation of the word 'উদাস' appears to be closer in spirit to the original than Mukherjee's.

In his *Three Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* Ananda Lal observes that Tagore creates an enchanting ambience in his plays by the use of magical words, or through "the aura created by the words"(Lal111). That is why critics have accused Tagore of what Lal terms an 'apparent incommunicability' because of their inability to address this 'ineffable element in the plays'. According to some other critics, his plays are so poetic and imaginative that they cannot be successfully staged. Among the critics who have delved deeper into the issue, Lal quotes Dhurrjati Prosad Mukherjee's views in support of his contention: "In his dramas, there are two levels; one, that of the people, where the language is simple, responses the stock ones and the technique of presentation fairly firm, and the other, that of ideas of which the language is poetry, the interactions subtle, and the presentation sophisticated" (

Mukherjee¹²²). It is very often found that the two levels are so intimately intertwined that they cannot be separated in his plays. Regarding Tagore's handling of language in his plays Lal refers to the views held by Marjorie Sykes: "he has united in the closest harmony the homeliest and most familiar language of daily life with that of the most exalted mystical experience, so that the very words which on one man's lips are prosaic, on the lips of another are instinct with poetry"(Sykes. p.V). From the point of view of language let us examine first Tagore's handling of dialogues in *The Post Office*, and then evaluate how much success Radice has achieved in capturing and conveying them in English.

Thematically, *The Post Office* dramatizes the conflict of the finite and the infinite that remains the perpetual concern of Tagore's poetic career. And his life-long quest is to unite and harmonize the finite and the infinite in his creative works. His language, too, moves at these two levels ---the level of the ordinary and the homeliest and that of the imaginative and the poetic. In an interview given to a Calcuttan English daily Wolfram Mehring who directed the play (translated by Martin Kampchen) in Europe and India, rightly characterized *The Post Office* as "a play over 'Sehnsucht' or 'Yearning'" (*Statesman* 26 Jan 1992:15). According to this view, Amal, the protagonist of the play, is *Schmsucht* incarnate, a living embodiment of the 'yearning' for the unknown or infinite world. Ajit Kumar Chakravarty also thinks that this 'yearning' for the unseen and the farway constitutes the basic theme of the play. He quotes the following two lines of a well-known Tagore song to sum up the keynote of the play:

I am restless,
I am athirst for the faraway.
(Tr. Rabindranath Tagore) (Chakravarty¹²⁴)

Both Madhav Dutta and the Kabiraj who are ever anxious about Amal's physical well-being represent the unimaginative and materialistic world that always conspires to imprison human soul, imposing senseless restrictions on his movements. Madhav Dutta and the Kabiraj, with all their materialistic concerns, are not aware of the boundless imaginative horizons of life that go on beckoning Amal all the time. Thakurda goes on igniting his longing for the unknown by describing his imaginary visit to the Curlew Island; or by

unfolding before him an enchanting vision of the unknown or the faraway. But he is not allowed to go outside lest the onslaught of autumnal weather aggravates his illness. Both Madhav Dutta and the Kabiraj are so materialistic in their outlook that they do not have the imaginative vision to pierce through the ‘film of familiarity’ enveloping the world around us. And so they cannot see eye to eye with Amal and ‘the poetry of the earth’ that underlies the humdrum activities of life remains ever unattainable to them. Amal, with his imaginative vision, invests the panorama of life around him with a poetic beauty that is never on the land or the sea. That is why he wants to see the unseen and know the unknown that casts a hypnotic spell upon him. He wishes to go to the distant mountain that can be seen from his window. But Madhav Dutta, who is totally devoid of imaginative sensibility, dismisses his desire as ‘crazy talk’; for him the distant mountain stands only as a barrier to forbid men to go beyond it. In an almost epiphanic mood Amal declares, “I’ve a strong feeling that because the earth cannot talk, it cries out by raising its hands up into the blue sky like that. Those who sit far away alone by their windows at noon—they can hear that cry” (Radice 27). In this connection Dr. S.C. SenGupta rightly comments: “One of the most original and beautiful things in this drama is the way in which the poet discovers through Amal the inner romance in the humdrum activities of life” (SenGupta 176). The moment Amal’s mind flies to the faraway or the infinite, his language, too, begins to transcend the homely level and soar upward. The prosaic and the homely dialogues of the expository scene of the play gradually give way to the poetic and the imaginative. When Amal speaks, in a mood of *schnsucht*, or ‘yearning’, his language also becomes passionate, imaginative and poetic. Let us quote some of the impassioned utterances of Amal from the original along with their translations (by Radice) in English :

- (1) অমল । আমি, যা আছে সব দেখবো -- কেবলই দেখে বেড়াব।

I just want to see everything – I want to travel and see everything.

- (2) অমল । কত বাঁকা বাঁকা ঝরনার জলে আমি পা ডুবিয়ে ডুবিয়ে পার হতে হতে চলে যাব--
দুপুরবেলায় সবাই যখন ঘরে দরজা বন্ধ করে শুয়ে আছে, তখন আমি কোথায় কত দূরে কেবল
কাজ খুঁজে খুঁজে বেড়াতে বেড়াতে চলে যাব ।

I shall wade across stream after curving stream and go – when everyone
is resting indoors at noon, I shall just wander, wander off far in search of work.

- (3) অমল । না , না , আমি কক্ষনো পন্ডিত হব না । আমি তোমাদের রাঙা রাস্তার ধারে তোমাদের বুড়ো বটের তলায় গোয়ালপাড়া থেকে দই নিয়ে এসে দূরে দূরে গ্রামে গ্রামে বেচে বেরাব । কী রকম করে তুমি বল , দই দই-- ভালো দই । আমাকে সুরটা শিখিয়ে দাও ।

No, no, I shall never be a scholar. I shall fetch curds from your milkman's quarter under your old banyan tree next to your red road, and wander far from village to village selling them.

This is the very language of poetry, coming out spontaneously from the depth of a poetic mind. Being a poet, Radice projects himself into this poetic experience and captures this 'language of poetry' in the target language. Amal, as represented by Radice, is a reincarnation of the poetic character that Tagore conceived of in the original ডাকঘর.

Thus *The Post Office* begins with the simple, down-to-earth language, and the action of the play remains confined to the prosaic, homely level. But the language attains a poetic height when Amal, in a spirit of *schmsucht*, or an uncontrollable longing for the unknown, talks to the people at his window, bringing to him the message of the world beyond or the infinite. The language of his conversation with them, especially with the Curd-Seller coming from the distant Panchmura hills takes on a poetic character and this is evident in Radice's translation too. The Curd-Seller uses simple and elegant prose when he speaks to Amal. But the same language is tinged with poetry when Amal utters them:

অমল । পাঁচমুড়া পাহাড় -- শ্যামলী নদী -- কী জানি হয়তো তোমাদের গ্রাম দেখেছি -- কবে সে আমার মনে পড়ে না ।

AMAL Panchmura hills – Shamli river – who knows – maybe I've seen your village – but I don't remember when.

Amal seems to have uttered the above words in a dreamy state of mind and his impassioned longing for the unknown makes his language equally passionate and imaginative. It is also with the imagination of a poet that Radice re-creates the imaginative and dreamy qualities of dialogues given to Amal in the original. Interestingly, the language of the people Amal meets remains at the ordinary and homely level. It is through the dialectic of the poetic and the prosaic languages that Tagore seems to have expressed the dialectic of the finite and the infinite that lies at the heart of his creative world. And Radice has successfully captured,

through the dialogues of the play, the basic 'dialectic' that characterizes Tagore's creative works as a whole.

According to Plato, a drama, like any other literary work, is an imitation of an imitation. How much success, Philip Vellacott asks in his essay "Translating Greek Drama"⁽¹⁹⁸⁷⁾ can a translator hope to achieve whose work is basically an imitation of an imitation of an imitation? Recounting his experience of translating Greek tragedy he has tried to answer this question. To begin with he reminds us that "...drama, unlike other forms of writing, carries within itself something more than words. Its traffic is not only with our minds but with our eyes; its material is not only the voice but a group of mutually opposed voices, a pattern of bodies, costumes, objects, with music and scene, and with the mind of a director at work in his own interpretative art of composing all into a living organism" (Radice and Reynolds 200). According to Vellacott, the translator of a drama requires the twofold experience of 'close contact with the mind of the author and the free range of the English language' for successful translation of Greek tragedy into English (Ibid 202). To be precise, he seems to emphasize fidelity to the original (author) and a free and vibrant language for the rendering of a dramatic work into a foreign tongue. But what he fails to mention here is the creative imagination of the translator that is indispensable for a successful translation of literary works. In his essay "Euripides and Professor Murray"⁽¹⁹¹⁷⁾ T.S. Eliot takes up this vital issue for discussion and comes down heavily on Professor Murray for failing to bring Euripides alive in his translation; for he does not have the requisite 'creative instinct' to infuse life into the translation. This, in Eliot's view, is the reason why Professor Murray fails to transform his plays into a living organism and ends up leaving Euripides quite dead (Eliot77). Murray's failure to make Euripides re-live in English brings into focus the question of "equivalence" in translation. According to Eugene Nida, a translation can attain a fresh lease of life only when it achieves a "dynamic equivalence" in the target language. In other words, a translation needs to adapt itself to the linguistic demands and cultural expectations of the target readers failing which it cannot succeed as an independent work in the target language. Interestingly, Tagore's concept of 'reincarnation' or 're-birth' is essentially akin to Nida's "dynamic equivalence". Like Nida, Tagore lays stress on 'reincarnation' or 're-birth' of the original as a *sine qua non* for a successful translation in his much-quoted letter (dated 13 March 1913)

to Ajit Kumar Chakravarty (Sarkar 163-64). In other words, if the original is not reincarnated or re-born in the target language, a translation cannot conform to the demands and expectations of the readers of the receptor language. Now let us see how Radice succeeds in reincarnating Tagore's ডাকঘর as an independent play in the English language.

In the Preface to *The Post Office* (1914) W. B. Yeats lays stress on "deliverance" as the theme of the play. This theme of 'deliverance' finds an imaginative and poetic 'reincarnation' in Radice's translation of Tagore's ডাকঘর. Although the play ends with the death of Amal and the arrival of royal Physician brings the message of deliverance at the spiritual level, yet a good deal of the drama, as S.C. SenGupta points out, is about the earth also, about the stream of joy flowing around which Amal would drink to his heart's content once he is freed from the stringent restrictions imposed on him (SenGupta177). Radice's poetic imagination helps him to project himself imaginatively into Amal's poetic mind and all that he embodies and longs for. "Amal represents the man", Tagore writes about the play in a letter to C.F. Andrews, "whose soul has received the call of the open road --- he seeks freedom from the comfortable enclosure of habits sanctioned by the prudent and from walls of rigid opinion built for him by the respectable". But Madhab, the symbol of the worldly wise men, considers his restlessness to be a sign of a fatal malady; and his adviser, the physician, the custodian of conventional platitudes --- with his quotations from prescribed text-books full of maxims --- gravely nods his head and says that freedom is unsafe and every care should be taken to keep the sick man within walls (Tagore 2006:310)". Radice's translation of *The Post Office* conforms to the above interpretation of the play given by Tagore. He has re-created Amal and his world so convincingly in his translation that the play turns out to be an indictment of the narrow material existence and an apotheosis of the imaginative quest of life. Jill Parvin, the director of 1993 production, rightly sums up the play as upbraiding those who live 'a blinkered existence' and urging mankind to 'nurture' and cultivate an "imaginative life" in this material world (Parvin12). While making this comment on *The Post Office*, she seems to have in her mind Radice's translation of the play, not the original Bengali ডাকঘর. Herein lies the success and excellence of *The Post Office* translated by Radice.

Notes:

- I. All Bengali citations used in this chapter are from Rabindranath Tagore's ডাকঘর .
- II. All English citations from Rabindranath Tagore's *The Post Office* translated by William Radice are from The Tagore Centre UK (1996) edition.
- III. All English citations from Rabindranath Tagore's *The Post Office* (1915) translated by Devabrata Mukherjee are from *Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* (1967) Macmillan edition.

CHAPTER VIII

SELECTED SHORT STORIES OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

No translation, published as a book, is likely to give you just the translation. It is nearly always accompanied by an introduction, which is a form of criticism cum interpretation.

Andre Lefevere, "Why Waste Time on Rewrites", *The Manipulation of Literature*.

Selected Short Stories of Rabindranath Tagore is a collection of thirty stories translated by William Radice. He has selected them from amongst the stories written by Tagore in the 1890s when he was living mostly in the villages--- Shilaida, Patisar, Shajadpur, and others --- of the East Bengal to look after their family estate. This 'rural sojourn' in East Bengal opened up before his eyes a new world that had remained so far unexplored and inaccessible to him --- a world that opened the floodgate of creativity in him, especially in the realms of short stories and poems. It was during this phase that his 'artistic self was virtually reborn by this passage from an urban elite existence to humble village life' (Ghosh 9). This phase is therefore considered to be the second important milestone in his creative career. In his poem 'বন্ধুর্ষাষাণন' from সোনার তরী Tagore expresses his fond desire to write 'story after story' about the simple and ordinary aspects of human life. He was the first among the Indian writers to introduce the short story as a literary art form, and to write, in this new-found *genre*, stories about the life of the common people he saw around him during his 'sojourn' in East Bengal. It is interesting to note that nobody before Tagore had written about the ordinary men and women, especially about the poor and the downtrodden with such psychological depth in Indian literature (Chakravarty46). The three volumes of গল্পগুচ্ছ, in which all but the very last few are collected, contain eighty-four stories. Over half of these were written between 1891 and 1895 during his first great creative period, usually referred to as the *Sadhana* period after the monthly magazine which he edited for some years. These stories were mostly written

when Tagore came into an intimate contact with the idyllic ambience of the riverine East Bengal and her ordinary people. They have their own 'freshness' and 'spontaneity' which distinguish them from his later stories marked by sophistication and psychological depth. A master in this *genre* almost from the beginning, Tagore follows no known model or pattern -- there is none in his country and its literary tradition (Kripalani 81). He is the first Indian writer to define, in the poem already referred to, the true nature of the short story and to elevate it to an artistic beauty and perfection never equaled or surpassed by anybody. Since Bengali prose was not so well- developed in the 1890s, he had to carve out his path for this new art-form and to create an adequate language for its artistic success. Accordingly, he adopts an 'artificial literary language' for the dialogue of his characters --- a language that is far removed from the daily speech of ordinary people (Sidhanta 291). Unlike Tagore, both Chekhov and Maupassant do not have to create their languages for their short stories; they are lucky enough to find their mother tongues ready for their creative use.

According to Krishna Kripalani, Tagore, in his early stories, is not primarily concerned with the 'development of character' but with 'depiction of a mood, creation of an atmosphere or sudden revelation of ...an aspect of character or motive' (Kripalani 83). Since he is basically a lyric poet, his lyrical genius responds quickly to each and every impression coming from the outside world and his imagination weaves story after story out of these impressions. Interestingly, Anton Chekhov's stories also show a similar tendency towards lyricism and most of his stories written in the eighteen nineties are equally "saturated with [an] inner lyricism" (Basu 97). Commenting on the lyricism of Tagore's short stories S.C. SenGupta rightly says, "Rabindranath seems to create a new literary genre in which the art of the lyric poem and that of the short story are united. They combine the element of surprise, so essential to the short story, with the rich emotionalism which is the soul of the lyric" (SenGupta 182). Even though Tagore rules out the existence of lyrical qualities in his short stories, they (the stories of গল্পগুচ্ছ) are basically the imaginative creations of an exceptional creative writer. The seeds of many short stories of গল্পগুচ্ছ are to be found scattered in the pages of his ছিন্নপত্রাবলী In an interview in May 1941 to the renowned writer-critic Buddhadeva Bose, Tagore stressed that his stories were true to life:

At one time I used to rove down Bengal's rivers, and I observed the wonderful ways of life of Bengal's villages....I wrote from what I saw, what I felt in my heart --- my direct experience....Those who say my stories are fanciful are wrong.

(Cited in Radice's Introduction to *Selected Short Stories*. p.13)

Recounting the experience of writing his short stories Tagore writes, "It is only this ['direct' or realistic experiences] that I have seen with my own eyes and created the rest imaginatively" (Dutta 218). This view is echoed in the comments of critics like Bose himself, who says that one can feel the pulse of Bengal, 'her living soul' as we 'turn the pages of গল্পগুচ্ছ' (Bose 60)

The history of Tagore translation began with the translation of his stories that came to appear from 1902 onwards in English journals like *New India* (edited by Bipin Chandra Pal) and *The Modern Review* (edited by Ramananda Chatterjee). These translations were undertaken by his friends and admirers to pave the way for his reception and popularity among the non-Bengali and non-Indian people who had no direct access to his literary works written in Bengali. But he was not satisfied with the translations of his Bengali poems done by them. He, therefore, took upon himself the task of translating them and did not mind others translating his non-poetical writings, particularly his short stories. His first collection of short stories in English entitled *Glimpses of Bengal* translated by Rajani Ranjan Sen appeared in 1913, a few months before the announcement of the Nobel Prize to him. The Swedish Academy is believed to have considered, among others, Rajani Ranjan Sen's book before arriving at the decision to award the Nobel Prize to Tagore (Das12). This volume by Sen contains thirteen short stories with an Introduction that distinguishes his work from the prestigious Macmillan publications which did not have any introduction to the stories. Besides, it was between December 1909 and June 1912 that translations of at least fifteen short stories of Tagore appeared in *The Modern Review*, the most well-known Calcutta journal of the time (Ibid 12). Both Sturge Moore and William Rothenstein came across some of the translations of Tagore's stories published in this journal; but they expressed their unhappiness about the poor quality of translation in unequivocal terms. Ernest Rhys also read Tagore's stories in the poor translations of Rajani Ranjan Sen and of others published in *The*

Modern Review and could not accept the claims of his admirers about the greatness of his stories. But he made no mistake in forming an intuitive idea of Tagore's genius as a short story writer. Accordingly, he included a chapter titled 'Rabindranath's Short Stories' in his biography of Tagore. Paying an eloquent tribute to his genius Rhys writes, '[...] as we read them[translations of his stories] we feel at once the touch of the born story-teller' in him.(Das18 Vol. II).

Tagore had an unpleasant experience over the granting of translation rights to Rajani Ranjan Sen who published the first collection of his stories, notwithstanding his strong objection. Naturally, from this time on, Tagore became extremely careful about granting the translation rights of his works and began to keep a close watch on the translation of his stories done by others (Das12, Vol.II). Surprisingly, Macmillan did not take any initiative to bring out any authoritative edition of Tagore's stories even after he became an international celebrity winning the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. The first authoritative volume of his stories from Macmillan, *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories* appeared in 1916 as a panic reaction to the rumour that an American publisher was going to publish an unauthorized collection of Tagore's stories translated by a non-resident Indian named Basanta Kumar Roy. This collection contains over a dozen stories, of which only "The Victory" is translated by the Tagore himself. Naturally the selection of the stories, like their translations, was the work of "several hands" but it contains no mention of the translators' names, let alone any introduction or preface. The second volume of Tagore stories, *Mashi and Other Stories* (1918) also did not mention the names of the translators. The next two volumes of stories, published in his lifetime from Macmillan such as *Stories from Tagore* (1918) and *Broken Ties and Other Stories* (1925), were translated from Bengali by several writers but their names were not mentioned. Visva-Bharati brought out an anthology of Tagore's stories entitled *The Runway and other stories* (1959) in English. It contains translations of Tagore's stories by many hands. Commenting on these collections of Tagore stories Mary Lago says, "The story collections leave an impression that the "various writers" whose translations were "revised by the author" each chose a favorite story or two and that the author added several others to legitimize the collection ... that he was dissatisfied, and that Macmillan must select and correct" (Lago 221). But Macmillan did not play the expected editorial role and the result

was disastrous for Tagore's reputation. Even Edward Thompson, with all his admiration for Tagore's genius as short story writer, criticizes the deliberate attempts made by the translators of the volume to 'westernize the stories and make them feeble copies of Kipling' (Das18). He also came down heavily on Tagore for requesting him to make a selection of his stories agreeable to the taste of the Western readers: "Please make your own selection, for it is difficult for me to know which of my things will be *palatable to English taste*" (Cited in Prasanta Pal12) (emphasis added). Tagore's willingness to sacrifice the culture-specific aspects of his stories and to adapt their translations to the tastes and expectations of the target readers made him, as Mahasweta SenGupta suggests, a victim of 'the politics of translation' (Bassnett and Lefevere 62). And translations of his works projected a distorted and fragmentary image of Tagore to the Western readers. In a recent interview with the বইয়ের দেশ (July-Sept 2012) Nabaneeta Dev Sen has described this image as his 'self-created effigy' স্বনির্মিত কুশপুঙলিকা] rather than a full-fledged image (বইয়ের দেশ111). Thompson felt the urgent need to present Tagore in the Western world as faithfully and credibly as possible in fresh translations. This was the reason why he called for retranslation of his works with all their characteristics for a proper evaluation of his genius as a creative writer:

He despaired ...of ever getting English readers to understand anything strange to them, and more and more he toned down in translation or omitted whatever was characteristically Indian, which often was also what was imaginative and gripping and powerful.... His poems will have to be drastically retranslated some day, and only then will his greatness and range be understood.

(Kundu *et al* 581).

The above views apply equally to his short stories as well. Posterity has proved Thompson right. In order to revive his reputation as a great writer the need for the retranslation of his works came to be felt right from the time of his birth centenary. Consequently, there appeared two collections of Tagore's short stories known as *The Housewarming and Other Selected Writings* (1965) and *Collected Stories* (1974). The former contains, *inter alia*, nineteen stories translated by Mary Lago, Tarun Gupta and Amiya Chakravarty. The latter,

published from Macmillan India, combines some of Tagore's more popular stories like the *Cabuliawalla* with lesser known ones like *The Son of Rashmani*. But the publication of the two collections of stories in the wake of Tagore centenary could not make much of an impact on the Western readers, let alone revive his reputation.

Radice's *Selected Stories* of Rabindranath Tagore (1991) is a fresh attempt in the post-modern age to attract the attention of the Western people who had turned their back on Tagore since the 1920s. The publication of this volume, preceded by *Selected Poems* (1985) of Rabindranath Tagore, goes a long way in kindling fresh interest about Tagore in the West. What distinguishes this volume from its earlier volumes of stories is its detailed introduction, elaborate appendices, minute bibliographical notes, alphabetical glossary of Indian and Bengali words, a family tree of the Tagores and a map of the Padma regions. Radice provides the readers with a series of select appendices from Tagore's *ছিন্নপত্রাবলী* in order to enable them to understand and visualize the geographical and psychological backgrounds of his short stories. In its 28 page-long introduction Radice makes a detailed discussion of the theme and content of the stories under the three headings of *সূলে* (on land), *জলপথে* (by water), and *ঘাটে* (at the ghat). It is almost axiomatic that a new translation begins with a critique of its preceding volumes in order to justify its appearance. Surprisingly, Radice here embarks on a critical reappraisal of Tagore's stories rather than a criticism of their earlier translations (Radice 1-28). This makes his introduction virtually a critique of Tagore's short stories rather than their earlier translations. Since the objective of the present study is the evaluation of Radice's Tagore translations, the consideration of this 'critique' remains outside the purview of our present discussion.

Apparently, translation of Tagore's short stories involves the rendering of Tagore's prose-texts into English. Postgates's classic formulation of rendering prose into prose and verse into ^{verse} may not be applicable to the translation of Tagore's short stories, even though they are written in prose. To consider Tagore's short stories as mere prose-texts is to deny their imaginative and creative beauty. In his essay "Translating Latin Prose" ⁽¹⁹⁸⁷⁾ Michael Grant subscribes to Dryden's concept of 'paraphrase' that permits the translator of prose to take

'some liberties' with the prose texts. In this connection Grant quotes Novalis approvingly, "successful translations simply cannot help being *verandernde*, metamorphic" (Radice and Reynolds 89). Apart from Grant's view, any translator of Tagore's short stories must keep in view the poetic and imaginative nature of the stories and their literary language while translating them. In his essay "Tagore and Bengali Prose" Buddhadeva Bose writes rightly, "Poetry is the elemental stuff in Tagore, and his prose is one of its manifestations" (Bose 517). What Bose seems to suggest is that Tagore's prose is essentially 'the prose of a great poet' (Ibid 531). Any attempt at rendering Tagore's prose stories ought to take his poetic prose into serious consideration and translate them accordingly. This requires the translator of his stories to appreciate them as creative works and to re-capture them in creative or imaginative prose. Tagore seems to be fully aware of this requirement and speaks of his own strategy of translating his stories in his letter to Rothenstein (dated 31 December 1915): "Macmillans are urging me to send them some translations of my stories but I am hesitating for the reason that the beauty of the originals can hardly be preserved in translation. They require *rewriting* in English, not *translating*" (emphasis added) (Lago 216). By 'rewriting' Tagore here means 'sense-for-sense' translation or imaginative re-creation of the original rather than mere 'word-for-word' translating. Even Radice is well aware of the 'challenge' of translating his prose: "In translating his prose, the challenge is no less great" (Radice 232). In his *Selected Short Stories* of Rabindranath Tagore, he seems to have followed almost the same strategy that Tagore adopted in translating his own stories.

In his "Confessions of a Poet-Translator"⁽²⁰⁰³⁾ Radice speaks of the 'scholarly' as well as the 'literary and creative' aspects of Tagore translations (Radice 138). This is true not only of the translation of his poetical works but also of his prose works, more particularly of his short stories. Radice provides the 'scholarly' aspects of his translation in the introduction, appendices and detailed notes of *Selected Short Stories* of Rabindranath Tagore. This 'scholarly' aspects of translation are conspicuously absent in the earlier collections of Tagore's stories, with the exception of Amiya Chakravarty's *A Tagore Reader* (1961) which seems to foreshadow Radice's *Selected Stories*. The 'literary' and 'creative' aspects of Tagore translation involve an imaginative re-creation of the original or representation of 'a comparable experience' (Brower 34) of the original in the target language. Let us now

examine some of the translations of Tagore stories by Radice and evaluate how they come alive in their English 'reincarnations'.

According to Sisir Kumar Das, the keynote of Tagore's stories is the loneliness or alienation of man (Das 86). In *The Postmaster* he explores this theme of loneliness or alienation of man through an apparently sentimental story of human relationship. The translation mode Radice chooses for the representation of the human predicament is definitely re-creative and interpretative rather than literal or word-for-word. Radice captures intuitively the loneliness and alienation of the Calcutta-bred postmaster gifted with a poetic sensibility, posted in a remote village. Being a poet himself, the postmaster has an imaginative communion with the forces of Nature. Tagore expresses this communion with natural forces in impassioned prose. It is also with the imagination of a poet that Radice re-creates this 'communion' with Nature in his translation and his language in this part of the story is also tinged with imagination. The unspeakable sorrow of the female heart that torments Ratan is exclusively her own, having no direct impact on the broad universe around her. Towards the end of the story this personal sorrow of the orphaned girl merges in the universal sorrow of human life which is full of 'separations', 'deaths' and heart-wrenching anguishes. While leaving the village the 'grief-stricken face' of a simple village girl haunted the postmaster's mind and seemed to speak to him an 'inarticulate universal sorrow' embedded in the whole universe. Since Radice is a poet at heart, he imaginatively captures this 'inarticulate' sorrow and conveys it as spontaneously in his translation as it is found in the original. As a result, his translation does not seem to be translation at all. It reads as fluent as the original.

Though this interpretative approach helps Radice to be faithful to the spirit of the story, it results more often than not in loss of translation. In the original the postmaster gets his posting in a remote village or what in Bengali is called a 'গভগ্রাম'. Radice makes no effort to convey in his translation the impression of the গভগ্রাম of the original. His description of the location of the post office in 'a village like this' cannot produce the impression of remoteness normally associated with the 'গভগ্রাম' in Bengali. The eight-roofed hut that houses the post office becomes a 'thatched hut' in Radice's translation and the target readers are denied any

idea of what a Bengal's ' আটচালা ঘর ~~atchala-ghar~~' (eight-roofed hut) is like. Not far from the post office there is a hyacinth-pond (পানাপুকুর) which becomes simply an ordinary 'pond' in Radice's rendering. Had Radice rendered পানাপুকুর as a 'hyacinth-pond' the Western readers would have no difficulty in appreciating it; for, T.S. Eliot has already acquainted them with expressions like 'hyacinth girl', 'hyacinth garden' etc. in *The Waste Land*. (Eliot 28,35-37lines). Radice's translation of the Bauls' খোল-করতাল as 'drums and cymbals' is a case of mistranslation rather than interpretation. Both *Samsad Bengali English Dictionary* and *Bangla Academy English Bengali Dictionary* define 'খোল-করতাল as 'tomtom and cymbals'. Radice could have consulted Bengali English Dictionary before translating খোল-করতাল which are culture-specific musical instruments in Bengal. He fails to understand the distinction between tomtom,খোল and drum, ঢাক and wrongly renders ' খোল as 'drum'. This betrays his ignorance of Boul culture and ethos of Bengal, for normally the Bouls do not use 'drum' as a musical accompaniment. Again, Radice's rendering of নিঃসঙ্গ প্রবাস as 'isolated place' fails to give the target readers literally the impression of 'companionless sojourn' to which the postmaster was subjected. What Rabindranath tries to emphasize through the expression নিঃসঙ্গ প্রবাস is the alienated life of the postmaster in a remote village far from the madding crowd of Calcutta. Radiece's translation of his state of mind in the village as an 'isolated place' is an example of 'translation shift' and too poor an equivalent for Rabindranath's deeply suggestive expression নিঃসঙ্গ প্রবাস. In postmodern parlance Tagore is here talking about 'space' whereas Radice mistakes it for 'place'.

কাবুলিওয়লা is a moving story of paternal affection that transcends the narrow barriers of caste, creed and language. In spite of its sentimental overtones, this story shows 'the universality of the primal emotions and of the fundamental unity of man' (SenGupta: 189). The original story in Bengali is published in 1892 in the Nov-Dec. issue of সাধনা . Its first translation by G. Sharma is published in the *New India* in 1902 and the second one by Sister Nivedita appears in *The Modern Review* in 1912. Unlike others, Radice's tranaslation of

কাবুলিওয়ালা contains the mention of the publication dates of the original story and its translations.

Even though Radice's mode of translation is re-creative and interpretative, he retains certain Bengali words and expressions intact in his rendering for the sake of fidelity to the original. Mini is found informing his father that Ramdoyal the gatekeeper calls a crow a কাউয়া instead of a কাক Radice should have explained the difference between the two through an explanatory note. This device has been adopted by the translator (Madhuchchanda Karlekar) of the same story of *The Oxford Tagore Translations* (from now on *OTT*) series. The difference between the two has been explained as 'the Hindi and Bengali names respectively for a crow' and Ramdoyal identified as 'a Hindi-speaking north Indian' (Chaudhuri308). This information is conspicuously wanting in Radice's *Selected Stories*. Mini recites the first words of আগড়ুম বাগড়ুম while playing her knee-slapping game. Unlike the translator of কাবুলিওয়ালা of the *OTT* series, Radice does not provide any note to আগড়ুম বাগড়ুম. Another Bengali word that figures in the jokes of Mini and Kabuliwalais স্বসুর-বাড়ী *svasur-bari*. Radice does not care to enlighten the TL readers on the literal meaning or special significance of this word in the story. The translator of the same story in *OTT* attributes the phrase 'in-laws' to Mini which is self-explanatory. In reply to Mini's query about the contents of his huge bag Rahamat says 'হাঁতী with an unnecessary nasal stress on the word. But nowhere does Radice give any explanation about the difference between the two words. The *OTT* clarifies the word 'হাঁতী in the Notes as 'a distortion of the word হাঁতী elephant'(Chaudhuri309). Radice is, again, silent on the meaning of the wordখোকি *khonkhi*, though Rahamat addresses Mini affectionately with this very word. In the Notes to *OTT* the word has been explained as 'Rahamat's distorted pronunciation of খুকি, Bengali term of endearment for a small girl' (Chaudhuri, Ibid). The সানাই begins to play on the sad Bhairavi রাগ since the early hours of the day of Mini's marriage. In the Glossary Radice explains the word Bhairavi as a 'calm and pensive morning রাগ, named after Shiva's consort' (Radice 305). This information will not help the target readers to understand the role of this রাগ in this story. In

Notes to Kabuliwala in *OTT*, Rabindranath is reported to have associated this *raga* repeatedly with parting. Again, Rabindranath's letter of 21 November 1894 (ছিন্নপত্রাবলী *Chinnapatrabali*, letter no. 177) has been quoted in which he writes that "the Bhairavi releases the tears springing from 'perennial bereavement, perennial fear, perennial supplication' inherent in the relation between one human and another, and links our private pain with universal pain"(Chaudhuri, *Ibid*). This detailed information will help the Western readers to understand better the role assigned to the Bhairavi রাগ in Tagore's story.

Tagore was very much inclined to drop culture-specific references from his translations in order to make them agreeable to the taste of the Western people. Modern translation theorists lay stress on the transmission of cultural elements from SLT to TLT for maintaining fidelity to the source culture. Though Radice's avowed aim is to make his translations 'credible', he is supposed to 'carry across' the culture-specific elements to the TL culture and to explain their cultural significance with necessary notes and annotations. But contrary to the translation strategy followed in his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore Radice leaves two such cultural references unexplained in কাবুলিওয়াল।. The first one is Bhola's childish story of an elephant pouring water from the sky with his trunk. It reflects traditional mythic beliefs about elephants holding up the corners of the universe or refers to the story of ঐরাবত, the elephant of Indra, the king of gods and god of rain. The second one is about Rahamat's daughter who has been equated in the original with 'mountain-dwelling Parvati'. According to Hindu scripture, the name পাবর্তী Parvati means 'daughter of the mountain', or দুর্গা. In Hindu culture a daughter has been identified with পাবর্তী or দুর্গা since time immemorial. Radice uses the expression 'mountain-dwelling পাবর্তী' without any explanatory notes. The foreign readers unacquainted with Bengali culture are very likely to be confused by this culture-specific expression.

Translation tends to be interpretative when the translator feels the need to "improve" the original as Fitzgerald has done in the case of Omar Khayyam (Nair 258), or when he or she is required to adapt his rendering to the tastes or demands of the target readers. Radice strives, to use Venuti's word, to 'domesticate' Tagore in the West through his translations.

Accordingly, he moves away, from time to time, from the accepted meanings of Bengali words interpreting them for his target readers keeping in view their linguistic demands and cultural expectations. His rendering of Mini's 'ক্ষুদ্র আঁচল' as 'the fold of her [Mini's] little sari' is an appropriate case in point. In the introduction to *I Won't Let You Go* Ketaki Kushari Dyson defines sari's আঁচল as 'the end of the sari, the part that goes over the shoulder and hangs from there, or is brought round to the front again and tucked into the waist' (Dyson47). Radice's translation of 'আঁচল' as 'the fold' of the sari does not conjure up the same image of 'আঁচল' as depicted by Dyson. The rendering of Mini's 'ক্ষুদ্র আঁচল' as 'the train of her little sari [that] had been tucked into her waist' by the translator of *OTT* series conforms, to a great extent, to the traditional Bengali concept আঁচল. P. Lal translates 'কালো আঁচল' as 'black *anchal*' [... today she wore a black silk sari, / her face framed in black *anchal*"] in his translation of Tagore's 'হঠা দেখা' or *Chance Meeting* (Lal 16). Had Radice retained the Bengali word আঁচল as he had done in some cases noted above, his translation would have been more faithful to the original.

His translation of the line 'সে উদ্ধর্ষাসে অন্তপুরে দৌড় দিল' as 'Mini gasped and ran into the inner rooms' may be literally faithful but not aesthetically satisfying. Neither Sister Nivedita nor Madhuchchhanda Karlekar (*OTT*) renders the line so awkwardly as Radice does. (1. "she was overcome by terror, fled to her mother's protection, and disappeared" (Nivedita 47); 2. "Mini turned tail and ran off into the house"— (Karlekar 98). Again, the rendering of 'মিনি ক্রন্দনের উপক্রম করিয়া কহিল --- 'said Mini tearfully' --- does not convey the right impression. The intended meaning of the Bengali line is that Mini was 'on the verge of tears, when she said'. With her coming of age, Mini is no more intimate with her father as she was before. A spell of what is called in Bengali 'আড়ি' came over their relation: 'আমি তো তাহার সহিত একপ্রকার আড়ি করিয়াছি. Radice's translation of this line – 'And I, in a sense, dropped her'—is not apparently in consonance with the original whereas Karlekar's rendering --- "We were practically not on talking terms any more" --- seems to be closer to the original. But if we probe a bit deeper into the meaning of the word 'dropped', it becomes clear to us that Radice uses the word interpretatively in the sense of 'stopping seeing (sb)' (*OALD372*).

Translation is very likely to become poetic and interpretative when the original itself is imaginative and written in poetic prose. But it all depends on the temperament of the translator. If the translator is a poet, the translation is very likely to be different from that of a non-poet. Rabindranath's imagination catches fire when he is beckoned by the call of the Far and the Unknown as in the case of Amal of ডাকঘর (or *The Post Office*). And prose written in such an imaginative mood is invariably tinged with a note of poetry. Here is such a passage from Rabindranath's original *Kabuliwala*:

Radice's poetic mind helps him to capture Rabindranath's creative mood and to represent it through his interpretative mode:

আমি কলিকাতা ছাড়িয়া কখনো কোথাও যাই নাই, কিন্তু সেইজন্যই আমার মনটা পৃথিবীময় ঘুরিয়া বেড়ায়। আমি যেন আমার ঘরের কোণে চিরপ্রবাসী, বাহিরের পৃথিবীর জন্য আমার সবদা মন কেমন করে। একটা বিদেশের নাম শুনিলেই অমনি আমার চিত্ত ছুটিয়া যায়, তেমনি বিদেশের লোক দেখিলেই অমনি নদী পর্বত অরণ্যের মধ্যে একটা কুটিরের দৃশ্য মনে উদয় হয়, এবং একটা উল্লাসপূর্ণ স্বাধীন জীবনযাত্রার কথা কল্পনায় জাগিয়া উঠে।

I have never been away from Calcutta; precisely because of that, my mind roves all over the world . I seem to be condemned to my house, but I constantly yearn for the world outside. If I hear the name of a foreign land , at once my heart races towards it; and if I see a foreigner, at once an image of a cottage on some far bank or wooded mountainside forms in my mind, and I think of the free and pleasant life I would lead there.

(Radice).

Again, Rabindranath is at his poetic best when he describes the beautiful ambience of autumn in Bengal and the plaintive strains of the Bhairaviরাগ on the সানাই wafted all round by the gentle breeze of autumn.

প্রভাতটি অতি সুন্দর উদয় হইয়াছে। বর্ষার পরে এই শরতের নূতন যৌত রৌদ্র যেন সোহাগায় গলানো নিমল সোনার মতো রঙ ধরিয়াছে। এমন কি কলিকাতার গলির ভিতরকার ইষ্টকজ্জর অপরিচ্ছন্ন ঘেষঘেষি বাড়িগুলির উপরেও এই রৌদ্রের আভা একটি অপরূপ লাভন্য বিস্তার করিয়াছে। আমার ঘরে আজ রাত্রি শেষ হইতে না হইতে সানাই বাজিতেছে। সে বাশি যেন আমার বুকের পন্জরের হাড়ের মধ্য হইতে কাদিয়া কাদিয়া বাজিয়া উঠিতেছে। করুণ ভৈরবী রাগিনীতে আমার আসন্ন বিচ্ছেদব্যাথাকে শরতের রৌদ্রের সহিত সমস্ত বিশ্বজগৎময় ব্যপ্ত করিয়া দিতেছে। আজ আমার মিনির বিবাহ।

Radice captures in poetic prose the imaginative description of autumnal Nature and the impact of the Bhairavi *raga* on the natural ambience:

It was a most beautiful morning. Sunlight, washed clean by monsoon rains, seemed to shine with the purity of smelted gold. Its radiance lent an extraordinary grace to Calcutta's back-streets, with their squalid, tumbledown, cheek-by-jowl dwellings. The *sanai* started to play in our house when night was scarcely over. Its wailing vibrations seemed to rise from deep within my rib-cage. Its sad Bhairavi *raga* joined forces with the autumn sunshine, in spreading through the world the grief of my imminent separation. Today my Mini would be married.

(Radice).

One finds here an excellent translation of an equally excellent description of autumnal beauty in poetic prose. None but a poet is capable of translating this type of poetic prose written by a great poet like Rabindranath.

In some of Rabindranath's stories 'Nature comes into more intimate contact with human life, and that is why these stories have a lyrical beauty which we do not find in stories that are more analytical' (SenGupta192). One such story is এক রাত্রি which is first published in সাধনা (May-June) in 1892. and its first translation (' The Supreme Night') by Jadunath Sarkar appears in *The Modern Review* in 1912. It is a sad story of love in which the hero pursues the elusive dream of being a Garibaldi sacrificing his more realistic dream of a happy married life with Surabala. Rabindranath brings the estranged hero and the heroine of the story face to

face on a single night in the midst of natural calamity making their silent encounter perennially etched in their memories. The deep sigh that remains eternally present in their life pervades the whole story. Radice communicates through his translation the all-pervading sigh and the unutterable sadness that constitutes the essence of the original story.

In এক রাত্রি (or A Single Night) the story is told by an anonymous first person speaker and Radice renders it on the basis of his impression of the original. This accounts for the interpretation of certain words or expressions that run counter to their accepted meanings in the original. To the anonymous narrator of the story the legal officers of Bengal appear to be 'new miniature editions of her millions of gods'. Apparently, there is nothing wrong with the rendering of this sarcastic remark but it would be more reader-friendly^{if} it were accompanied by an explanatory note. The Western readers can have no idea about the 330 million gods of the Hindu pantheon, and a translator should remember that translation is not merely a transaction between two languages but also a negotiation between two cultures. This explains his interpretation of this culture-specific expression without any detailed note. . His translation of 'সিদ্ধিদাতা গনেশ' as 'bountiful গনেশ' would have been rather confusing had he not explained 'গনেশ' in the Glossary. Literally, the word 'সিদ্ধিদাতা' means 'success-giver' and 'গনেশ' refers to the 'Elephant-headed god, son of Shiva and Parvati, bringer of good luck and prosperity' (Radice308). The interpretation of the expression 'bountiful গনেশ ' now becomes abundantly clear in the proper context of the story. Radice seems to have explained the word 'বঙ্গাল' as people having 'rural naivety'. But 'rural naivety' is definitely a distinguishing trait of the East Bengal people who are called বঙ্গাল in a pejorative sense. Radice's interpretation of this word as persons having 'rural naivety' tends to overlook the traditional Ghati-Bangal divide that is also a distinguishing mark of Bengali culture. His rendering of the word বঙ্গাল betrays his ignorance of a particular aspect of Bengali culture. The interpretation of 'বড় আটচালা সঙলগ্ন চালা' as 'large, thatched school-building' shows his ignorance of rural houses. The আটচালা ঘর which is ordinarily built of straw, reeds, palm-leaves and even tins ^{হাস} is a eight-roofed house frequently seen in the villages. But Radice's expression 'large, thatched house'

does not necessarily mean ‘আটচালা ঘর’. It is very likely that Radice might not have seen an ‘আটচালা ঘর’ or an *eight-roofed house*. It is surprising how even the translator of *A Single Night* of *OTT* series renders ‘আটচালা ঘর’ as ‘*thatched house*’. He renders the line ‘বানের ডাক শোনা গেল—সমুদ্র ছুটিয়া আসিতেছে’ as ‘the roar of floodwaters became audible --- a tidal wave was approaching from the sea’. Radice’s interpretation of ‘বানের ডাক’ as the ‘roar of floodwaters’ and ‘সমুদ্র ছুটিয়া আসিতেছে’ as ‘a tidal wave from the sea’ approaching are, no doubt, good. But the translator of *OTT* series renders the former as ‘huge roar’ and the latter as ‘floodwater rushing in’. The point at issue here is flood caused by torrential rain and the question of ‘tidal wave’ coming from the ‘sea’ does not arise. Radice’s interpretation is therefore a bit far-fetched in comparison with that of *OTT series*.

এক রাত্রি (*or A Single Night*) centres round the silent agony of loneliness or alienation from which both the hero and the heroine suffer. Radice imaginatively re-creates the silent agony of their ‘enlisted’ existence and poetry comes to permeate his decoding of the text as effortlessly as it comes to the original story writer. Tagore invests the homely and ordinary aspects of day-to-day life with exquisite poetry and Radice follows suit in translating them in poetic English. The ‘soft tinkling of bangles’, the ‘rustle of garments’, the tender sound of footsteps, and furtive glances from ‘inquisitive eyes’ produce the same poetic effect in the translation as in the original. Radice’s translation becomes interpretative and poetic when the gentle breeze wafting the smell of নিম trees at mid-day evokes in the poetically-inclined hero’s mind a ‘yearning’ for something unknown or when the ‘meaningless rustle’ of the betel-nut and coconut trees at evening arouses in him a philosophic reflection about the ‘baffling tangle’ of human life. Radice, quite in keeping with the demand of the context, makes his English rather mundane and unimaginative.

Radice’s rendering of the events in the run up to the ‘supreme’ night is really excellent. The language here is so natural and vibrant that they do not convey the impression of translation at all. The hero of the story meets Surobala face-to-face on the desolate bank of a pond resembling an island and that too against the background of an unprecedented natural

calamity. Radice captures imaginatively the poetic sensibility of the hero as well as the ambience of the natural scenario. The hero experiences an epiphanic 'revelation', and Radice conveys it excellently in his translation: "I stood for a single night on the shore of the apocalypse, and tasted eternal joy". This revelation transforms a single night into an 'eternity', like expression 'The instant made eternity' in Browning's *Last Ride Together* (Young 64) and Radice succeeds in capturing this poetic vision of the hero in his translation: "In my entire life, only once ---for a brief single night --- did I touch Eternity. Only on that night, out of all my days and nights, out of all my days and nights, was my trivial existence fulfilled". One interesting aspect about Radice's translation is that he brings in the biblical association of 'apocalypse' to make his interpretation intelligible to the Western people. On the other hand, the translator of *OTT* series of *A Single Night* interprets the whole scene as one of 'deluge' and maintains the secular spirit of the original as it comes from Rabindranath.

The most well-known and the most imaginative of Rabindranath's short stories is ক্ষুধিত পাষাণ or *The Hungry Stones* in which 'romance has breathed the spell of a past crowded with apparitions and [...] half-realizable memories'(Rhys, 196). It is during his stay in the Shahibag palace in Ahmedabad that Tagore conceives the plot of " ক্ষুধিত পাষাণ (*The Hungry Stones*). Edward Thompson, writing on Tagore's famous poem, "Taj Mahal," refers to " The Hungry Stones" : " The Mughal Empire always touches his imagination, and we find an atmosphere as eerie and glamorous as that of 'Hungry Stones' "(Thompson 237). Radice re-creates the whole story with all its imperial grandeur and uncanny atmosphere maintaining the beauty and majesty of the original.

In ক্ষুধিত পাষাণ Rabindranath places the fantastic and other-worldly story within an ordinary, realistic frame in order to make it credible. The surface story deals with the narrator and his relative meeting a strange fellow on their way back home .The supernatural story is told by this fellow they meet in a rail junction. Since the supernatural incidents are enacted in the world of imagination and dream, Rabindranath need not create the Coleridgean sense of 'willing suspension of disbelief' to ensure its credibility. As a translator, Radice seems to have followed a dual strategy for translating the original story. So long as the story remains on the realistic, humdrum plane, he tries to ensure an 'accurate representation of the original'

(Radice 143). Though he does not follow literal or word-for-word fidelity in translation, he tries to remain true to the spirit of the story. This is why his translation in the surface story phase is faithful and down-to-earth. But when the cotton tax collector begins his supernatural story, Rabindranath imaginatively traverses the splendid era of Maughal Empire or visualizes the majestic courtly pageants of সহস্র এক আরাব্য রজনী. Naturally, his language transcends the surface level of humdrum life entering the grand sublimity of imperial past. Radice's imagination, like Tagore's, seems to have caught fire in this imperial atmosphere and his translation becomes imaginative and intuitive.

The supernatural incidents in the story begin in the Maughal palace at Barich. The narrator begins his story with a description of Barich. It is portrayed as a picturesque place where there is a majestic historical palace known for its scenic beauty. In Radice's translation, Barich is described as 'a most romantic place' where a 'pleasure-dome' was built by Shah Mahmud about 250 years ago. His interpretation of the palace as a 'pleasure-dome' brings to our mind 'the pleasure-dome' of Coleridge's famous poem *Kubla Khan*: "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan / A stately pleasure-dome decree" (Coleridge 297). His association of the 'pleasure-dome' at Barich with that of Kubla Khan in Xanadu seems to lend an exotic aura to the palace in the story. It may be mentioned here that Radice is indebted to Panna Lal Basu who uses the word 'pleasure-dome' perhaps for the first time about the palace at Barich (Chakravarty 63). While representing the meandering course of the Shusta river like a skilful dancer he employs the 'snake' image that helps the readers to visualize the zig-zag course of the river. His rendering of তরুণী পারসিক রমণীগণ as 'young Persian concubines' throws light on the status of the resident women and the immoral sexual revelry perpetrated in the 'pleasure-dome'. Again, his use of the word 'concubine' in stead of the 'young women' conjures up the image of a *harem* housed in the 'pleasure-dome'. Here Radice may have deviated from the original in his rendering of ভোগবিলাসের প্রসাদ and তরুণী পারসিক রমণীগণ but yet he maintains a commendable fidelity to the spirit of the story through his interpretative translation. He also captures in his translations the supernatural 'pageants' and 'hallucinations' that are enacted in the nocturnal dream or wakeful imagination of the narrator.

The cotton tax collector in Rabindranath's ক্ষুধিত পাষণ has his first experience of 'the invisible pageant' from a world of 250 years ago ---a pageant that comes alive in his lively imagination. Radice makes us relive the supernatural 'pageants' with all their uncanny sensations and eerie ambience in his excellent translation.

ঘোড়ায় চড়িয়া একবার ছুটিয়া বেড়াইয়া আসিব মনে করিয়া উঠিব-উঠিব
করিতেছি, এমন সময়ে সিঁড়িতে পায়ের শব্দ শনিতে পাইলাম। পিছনে
ফিরিয়া দেখিলাম—কেহ নাই.....। যদিও আমার সম্মুখে কোনো মূর্তি
ছিল না তথাপি স্পষ্ট প্রত্যক্ষবত মনে হইল যে, এই গ্রীষ্মের সায়াহ্নে একদল
প্রমোদচঞ্চল নারী শস্তার জলের মধ্যে স্নান করিতে নামিয়াছে। যদিও সেই
সন্ধ্যাকালে নিস্তব্ধ গিরিতটে, নদীতীরে নির্জন প্রাসাদে কোথাও কিছুমাত্র শব্দ
ছিল না, তথাপি আমি যেন স্পষ্ট শনিতে পাইলাম নির্ঝর শতধারার মতো
সকৌতুক কলহাস্যের সহিত পরস্পরের দ্রুত অনুধাবন করিয়া আমার পার্শ্ব
দিয়া স্নানাধিনীরা চলিয়া গেল.....। নদী পূর্ববত সির ছিল, কিন্তু আমার
নিকট স্পষ্ট বোধ হইল, স্বচ্ছতোয়ার অগভীর শ্রোত অনেকগুলি বলয়শিজিত
বাহুবিক্ষেপে বিক্ষুব্ধ হইয়া উঠিয়াছে.....।।

I was about to mount my horse and ride away, when I heard footsteps on the
stairway. I turned round but there was no one there. ...Even though there was no
physical presence before me, I had a clear impression of a crowd of jubilant
women rushing down the steps this summer evening to bathe in the Shusta.
There was no actual sound this evening on the silent slopes and river-bank or
inside the empty palace, but I could none the less hear bathers passing me,
chasing one another with merry laughter like the waters of a spring. ...The river
was as undisturbed as before, but I had a clear feeling that its shallow stream
was being ruffled by jingling, braceleted arms, ...

Here the translation brings before our mind's eyes the supernatural 'pageants' helping us to visualize them vividly. When Radice represents the hallucinatory court pageants relived by the tax collector turned- narrator in his imagination, his translation is permeated with a note

of imagination and uncanny feelings. It is through his poetic imagination that he re-captures the 'music of the dead' world in his translation and makes us attuned to this spectral world of the 'scent of age-old shampoo and atar', 'the gush of fountains', 'the sound of a sitar', 'the tinkle of gold ornaments', 'the jingle of anklets', the 'আলাপ on a সানাই' or 'the song of a caged nightingale' of a by-gone age. This is where lies the success of Radice's translation that is capable of re-incarnating the disembodied world of the original. Like Rabindranath's original, his translations transport the readers imaginatively into the world of the dead and send an uncanny shiver down their spines. They are left stupefied in the world of imagination, wondering, "Was it a vision, or a waking dream?" (Keats 1980:361) This world possesses the cotton tax collector so much so that it keeps haunting his mind and drawing him to the palace with an irresistible power. It is through the magic of his poetic imagination that Radice opens out the door to this dream-world floating from the pages of সহস্র এক আৰব্য রজনী. The imaginative prose that flows spontaneously from Rabindranath's pen to capture the supernatural world has been successfully translated into poetic and imaginative English prose by Radice. But this does not mean that he has made his translation 'identical' with the original. "A translation", says Tagore, "may be a re-incarnation but it cannot be identical" (Lal 110). *The Hungry Stones* is not identical with ক্ষুধিত পাষণ, but it is undoubtedly 'a re-incarnation' of the original.

Rabindranath's stories of the first phase might have created the impression among the Western readers that they are the creative works of a lyric poet having no connection with contemporary life. The poet-turned story teller is aggrieved when critics accuse him of writing 'unrealistic' and 'poeticized' stories. In a private conversation with Buddhadeva Bose in May 1941 he stresses that his stories are true to life:

I have written innumerable short lyrics – maybe no other poet in the world has written so many --- but I feel surprised when you say that my stories are poetical. At one time I used to rove down Bengal's rivers, and I observed the wonderful way of life of Bengal's villages... I would say there is no lack of realism in my stories. I wrote from what I saw, what I felt in my heart –my direct experience.

(Cited in Radice 13)

On another occasion, comparing the stories of his first phase with those of his last phase, Tagore declares frankly in an interview with the English journal *Forward* :

My earlier stories have ...the freshness of youth,...My later stories have not got that freshness, though they have greater psychological value and they deal with problems. Happily I had no social or political problems before my mind when I was quite young...Now there are a number of problems of all kinds and they crop up unconsciously when I write a story... (Cited in Chaudhuri 24).

In spite of Tagore's categorical declaration, his early stories were by no means devoid of social or political problems. But these problems find their expressions in some of his stories of 1890s that do not yield to poetical treatment. In some of them Rabindranath's primary concern is with some burning social or political issues of contemporary society whereas in some others his purpose is to weave a story against the background of his reflections on a particular problem, social or otherwise. *দেনাপাওনা* is one such a satirical story of the first category dealing with the curses of child-marriage and dowry system of the time. It is first published in the *হিতবাদী* (1891) patrika and its first translation '*Debts and Dues*' (1960) done by Sheila Chatterjee came out in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. The story revolves round the trials and tribulations of a hapless father and the tragedy of his innocent daughter caused by the inhuman dowry system of contemporary society. Radice's interpretation of the title of the story as *Profit and Loss* is an indictment of the mercenary considerations surrounding the institution of marriage. Since the story dwells on one of the burning issues of contemporary society, Rabindranath, as a conscious artist, deliberately uses down-to-earth rather than imaginative prose here to capture it. It has none of the poetic outpourings or emotional outbursts that characterize his imaginative and poetic stories of the first phase. In his translation of *দেনাপাওনা* Radice also steers clear of the poetic or imaginative language using consciously a straightforward and businesslike prose as part of his narrative technique. Despite his primary concern with a social problem of the time, Radice follows a free or interpretative rather than literal or word-for-word mode of translation in this story.

In *Profit and Loss* Radice interprets the original following the linguistic and cultural demands of the target language. This is the reason why he deviates, from time to time, from the accepted or conventional meanings of certain words or expressions. His renderings of the words বেয়াই, বেয়াইবাড়ী, পঞ্চমী or ষষ্ঠী are appropriate cases in point. Since the Bengali word *beaiye* does not have any corresponding word in English, he interprets the word as ‘the daughter’s father-in-law’, ‘*beyai badi*’ as ‘house of daughter’s father-in-law’. Again, the word পঞ্চমী or ষষ্ঠী literally means fifth or sixth day of a fortnight, be it one of full moon or black moon. But the two above words have specific cultural connotations in Bengali; they refer to the *fifth or sixth day of the Durga Puza fortnight*. Nirupama’s name is selected ‘affectionately’ by her parents but Radice uses the word ‘dotingly’ instead of ‘affectionately’ to underscore the depth of her parents’ affection for her. There is perhaps no word in English equivalent to the Bengali word সৌখিন and this explains why he translates সৌখিন নাম as ‘high-flown name’. Incidentally, one may here refer to Kanta Babu’s সৌখিন বেজাজ in Rabindranath’s poem ‘বঁশি’ [Flute-music] and its rendering by Radice as ‘Cultivated tastes’ (Radice:1985:98). The difference in interpretation of the same word in two places is probably caused depending on the contexts. Moreover, as the Bengali word অভিমান does not have its counterpart in English, Radice has no other alternative but to interpret the word in English as ‘taking offence’. Finally, the house of her in-laws becomes ‘a bed of nails’ for Nirupama. The original contains the word ‘শরশয্যা’ which literally translates as ‘a bed of arrows’. This word reminds one of the *Mahabharata*’s Bhiswama lying on ‘a bed of arrows’. Instead of translating the expression literally, Radice interprets it as ‘a bed of nails’ which conjures up the image of crucified Jesus. This interpretation will be readily ‘palatable’ to the Western readers. Radice ^{thus} adapts and manipulates the original to suit the cultural expectations of his target readers.

In his translation of *দেবপাওনা* Radice maintains the satirical tone of the whole story from the beginning to end. Rabindranath’s Nirupama emerges as a rebel in the original story against the inhuman treatment meted out to woman in the society of the time. As a representative of the women tortured in society, she tells her father in a tone of rebellion:

টাকা যদি দাও তবেই অপমান। তোমার মেয়ের কি কোনো মযাদী নেই। আমি কি কেবল একটা টাকার খলি, যতক্ষণ টাকা আছে ততক্ষণ আমার দাম ! না বাবা, এ টাকা দিয়ে তুমি আমাকে অপমান করো না । তা ছাড়া আমার স্বামী তো এ টাকা চান না ।

Nirupama's rebellion finds an eloquent expression in Radice's fluent prose translation:

'The shame will be greater if you pay the money', said Nirupama. 'Do you think I have no honour? Do you think I am just a money-bag, the more money in it the higher my value? No, Father, don't shame me by paying this money. My husband doesn't want it anyway.'

The story ends on a mocking note of irony characteristic of the stories of Maupassant. Radice succeeds in capturing the 'mocking note of irony' in his translation of *দেনাপাঁওনা* ^a And the language of his translation of *দেনাপাঁওনা* together with other problem stories of the 1890s comes down on the ordinary plane of simple and unadorned prose from the exalted height of Tagore's imaginative prose. Though in the dialogue of this story Rabindranath tries to come closer to 'the daily speech' of ordinary life, he still remains far removed from it. This subtle movement of Rabindranath's dialogue from the *sadhubhasa* to the *chhalitabhasa* is something untranslatable in any foreign tongue. Radice fails to convey in his translation this subtle transition from the exalted height of his *sadhubhasa* to humble plane of the *chhalitabhasa* simply because the co-existence of the two is something foreign to his mother tongue. One finds occasional flashes of the dialogue in the *chhalitabhasa* in Rabindranath's stories of the 1890s and the above speech of Nirupama contains one of such 'flashes'. But Radice fails to convey it in his rendering because it lies beyond the limits of translation. In Chapter II of *A Study of Tagore's Red Oleanders* (2005) Basudeb Chakraborti mentions how "... poets writing in Bengali very often mix colloquial expressions with formal expressions" (Chakraborti 65). This is called in Bengali *guruchandali dos*, or poetic licence (?) which is permissible in poetry. Mr. Chakraborti cites the examples of Rabindranath and Jibanananda who make profuse use of it in their poems. He makes a special mention of the first line of Jibanananda's famous poem 'Banalata Sen' [হাজার বছর ধরে আমি পথ হাঁটিতেছি পৃথিবীর পশু]

which mixes the colloquial inflection ধরে with তেছি . The linguistic convention of the Bengali language allows the poet to exercise this 'poetic licence'. But this 'poetic licence' which is the prerogative of a poet is denied to a prose writer. The translator of a prose text is naturally expected to find the linguistic equivalent of both the *sadhubhasa* and *chalitbhasa* for his rendering. Faced with the untranslability of the formal language and colloquial languages of Tagore's short story Radice finds no other alternative but to take a creative and interpretative approach to it.

Notes:

- I. All citations in Bengali in this chapter are from Tagore's গল্পগুচ্ছ , বিশ্বভারতী।
- II. All citations in English from Tagore's stories, unless otherwise indicated, are from Rabindranath Tagore: *Selected Short Stories* published by Penguin Books India (2000).

CHAPTER IX

EPILOGUE

I

Tagore's reputation as a predominantly 'mystic' poet should be exorcised...The West knows Tagore only as the author of *Gitanjali* and believes this to be his greatest work; it is great indeed but representative of only one aspect of Tagore's poetical greatness. Till the other aspects are revealed to them Western readers will not know the real greatness of Rabindranath.

Pierre Fallon s.j. "Tagore in the West" in *The Centenary Volume To Rabindranath Tagore* (1961).

Radice seems to have taken upon himself the task of exorcising Tagore's reputation by revealing his genius as a versatile poet rather than a 'mystic' through a selection of poems for translation from his *oeuvre*. Edward Thompson made the first ever attempt in this direction in *The Augustan Book of Modern Poetry* (1924) edited by him but failed to make much of an impact in this respect. Tagore himself wanted to dispel the wrong impression that gained ground about him as a 'mystic' poet in the West after the publication of *Gitanjali* (1912). The *CPPRT* (1936) published by Macmillan under his initiative failed to remove the wrong impression about him and to demonstrate his many-sided genius as a poet. Even *OPRT* (1966) edited by Humayun Kabir on the occasion of Tagore centenary in 1961 could not make the desired effect in this respect. Radice's *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore seems to have appeared as a long-awaited anthology, as envisioned by Fallon, to exorcise the so-called 'mystic' image of Rabindranath Tagore and to reveal his many-sided genius as a poet. It is a selection of Tagore poems that Radice translated representing chronologically the diverse phases of his poetic career excepting the songs and the last poems. According to Radice's Notes to the poem "Brahma, Visnu, Siva", he has taken the 'first two-thirds' of poems from Tagore's সঞ্চয়িতা for inclusion in the *Selected Poems* (1985) and the rest comes from his other books of verses (Radice 128). In his attempt to dissociate himself from

Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) he chose for his selection only those poems that highlight the classical and humanistic rather than the spiritual strains of Tagore's poetry (Radice 136-137). Interestingly, he retained from Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) the only poem "Arrival" [আগমন] which was actually the very first poem that Radice translated. Initially he did not know that the poem was from *Gitanjali*, because it comes not from the Bengali book of that name but from ফেরা ["The Ferry-boat"]. Speaking of the 'aim' of his anthology Radice says, "My aim ... was to establish *his reputation and credibility as great poet in Bengali, with an output far more complex and variegated than one could tell* from his own English translations" (emphasis added) (Biswas et al 279).

Radice tried to demonstrate the versatility of Tagore as a great poet through a selection of 48 poems representing almost his whole creative life. These poems seem to have represented the incredible diversity and "the spirit of perpetual progress of Tagore" (Radice). Besides, he wrote an extensive introduction of more than 20 pages about the cultural and historical background of Tagore for the Westerners. Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1912) made him famous as a 'mystic' poet in the West and mysticism is admittedly one of the many aspects of his poetry. To describe him merely as a 'mystic' poet is to do great injustice to his genius. According to Radice, Tagore's *Gitanjali* gives one a 'partial, inadequate and uninformative impression' about his poetic genius, an impression that amounts to great injustice to him (Bhattacharyya and Chakraborty 283). But some of his Western admirers were well-aware of this 'injustice' done to Tagore. In letter to Tagore [29 June 1914] Rothenstein writes "*It is always as mystic that the reviewers treat you, but to me you seem so much more* (emphasis added) (Lago 168). The discovery of Tagore as a great writer ['much more'] rather than a 'mystic' became the sole concern of Radice's 'translation project' that he intuitively conceived from his experience of translating Tagore poems. It needs to be mentioned here that he referred to this 'translation project' for the first time in his "Confessions of a Poet-Translator"^(২০০৩). The translations that followed *Selected Poems* of Tagore seem to have established and confirmed his reputation and credibility as a multifaceted writer rather than a 'mystic'. As an academic, Radice dwelt on the 'nuts and bolts' of Tagore translations from time to time in his lectures and essays. His *Poetry and Community* (2003): Lectures and Essays 1991-2001 is a collection of fifteen essays, five of which deal with Tagore translations. A look at Radice's

website convinces one of his sincere and dedicated efforts that have gone into rendering Tagore and expressing his myriad-minded creative genius.

II

There is no denying the fact that Tagore's meteoric success in the West in the first two decades of the twentieth century was followed by a sharp decline from which neither his death nor the centennial celebrations could revive the interest of the Western people in him. According to Radice, Tagore himself did great injustice to his creative genius in his own translations of his Bengali works. Having examined Tagore's translations in his lecture "Translating Tagore" (2003) † Radice identified the following four shortcomings from which they suffered: " (1) they lacked *context and information* (2) they failed to represent *the range and variety* of his work (3) they *gave no impression of his technical virtuosity* (4) they failed to *convey his poetic intellect*" (emphasis added) (Radice 230). In his translations Radice made the first-ever conscious effort to do justice to Tagore's genius by having those 'shortcomings' rectified. He brought about a change in the nature and technique of Tagore translations following the principles and ideals of Penguin Classics Translation series that he seemed to have imbibed from his mother Betty Radice. He also played a pioneering role to 'globalize' Tagore once again in the last decades of the twentieth century through his translations backed up by his essays and lectures on the experience of translating him.

Following the principles of the Penguin Classics Translations series Radice has provided a detailed introduction to Tagore's writings translated by him for the Western readership largely ignorant of his cultural and historical background. This background information is necessary to locate Tagore in his proper perspective and to understand his cultural and literary lineage. The *CPPRT* (1936) as published by Macmillan & Co. provides us no such information about Tagore and his socio-cultural background. The *CPPRT* does not give one the vital information that Tagore writes in Bengali and that this volume is the English translation of his original works. *A Tagore Reader* (1961) edited by Amiya Chakravarty is basically a selection of translations that made a belated attempt to give a comprehensive view of Tagore's versatile creative power. The editor of the volume provided individual

introduction to each section that includes relevant information about the context, a brief account of the contents of each section and necessary facts concerning translations and their publications. This volume did not find the world-wide publicity that the *CPPRT* found. Consequently, the Western readers could not have the access to the necessary background information about Tagore's socio-cultural perspective. Though the Sahitya Akademi edition of The *EWRT* has this failing corrected, this edition is not easily available outside India (Radice 230). Radice is the first Tagore translator who felt the need for incorporating an elaborate introduction that would help the reception and appreciation of Tagore in the foreign countries. In his essay "The Challenge of Translating Tagore" (2012) he declares unambiguously, "When I started working on my *Selected Poems* of Tagore for Penguin books, it quickly became clear to me that the book would have to be *far more than a translation*. If I was to give a new and credible impression of Tagore's range and power as a poet, I would have to select poems from the whole span of his output, I would have to annotate them carefully, and I would have to write an extensive Introduction. The wind in my sails would have to be carefully and meticulously directed and controlled by scholarly effort' (emphasts added)(Chakravarty 457). The introduction that Radice adds to his each book of Tagore translation gives the target readers a credible idea about Tagore's socio-cultural background. Again, this introduction is more often than not directed and controlled by the translator for a critical and interpretative purpose. In his essay "Why Waste Time on Rewrites"(1985) Andre Lefevere says, "No translation, published as a book, is likely to give you just the translation. *It is nearly always accompanied by an introduction, which is a form of criticism and interpretation*" (emphasis added) (Hermans 234). In his introduction he combines, from time to time, the background information about Tagore with critical views and interpretative comments about his creative works. But this practice does not always seem to be consistent with the aim of his translation project. Tagore played a pioneering role in the art of writing short stories in Bengal. He is also acclaimed as one of the great short story writers of the world. But Radice's dismissal of the art of Tagore's short stories in the Introduction to Rabindranath Tagore : *Selected Short Stories* is sure to evoke sharp criticism from the Bengali intelligentsia: "His short stories are his most vulnerable productions of all, and some of them attracted scathing comments when they first appeared"(Radice 26). If Radice's aim of translating Tagore was to make him 'credible' as a great writer and to do

justice to him, why did he translate his short stories knowing well that they are his “most vulnerable productions of all”?¹

With the publication of Radice’s *Selected Poems* of Tagore it became abundantly clear that *Gitanjali* and its successors, predominantly based on songs and short lyrics rather than Tagore’s more elaborate poems, and focusing on the devotional strains, represented a very narrow segment of his creative works. Tagore had been widely acclaimed in Bengal as a great writer of wide range, infinite variety and opulent quantity. According to Buddhadev Bose, “the only European with whom we can compare him, and who offers a fair analogy to him is Goethe” (Bose 427). Radice conveyed through the translations of Tagore’s poems something of his range and variety as a poet. The *CPPRT* (1936) published by Macmillan could not give the Western readers a clear idea of his range and variety; this volume only served to consolidate his reputation as a ‘mystic’ poet highlighting the devotional notes of his poems. The translations that followed Radice’s *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore represented the diverse manifestation of his creative power in short stories, dramas, brief poems and songs. They have undoubtedly given the Western readers some idea of Tagore’s ‘achievement’ as one of the great creative writers of the world.

Thirdly, Radice decision of rendering Tagore’s poetry into poetry made him face the greatest challenge as a Tagore translator. He believed that prose translation could not capture the imaginative depth and poetic vision of Tagore’s poems. In his view, a poetic translation of his poems involved the re-creation or reincarnation of the ‘feelings and sentiments’ of the original together with its technical aspects. Tagore was “a perpetual innovator” constantly creating new forms and styles in his poetry (Radice 20) and he would not have been a great poet if he were not also a brilliant technician. Radice showed an ‘equal inventiveness’ to find or create equivalents in English to Tagore’s techniques in Bengali for representing his wonderful range of verse-forms, metres and structural devices in his translations. This involved the imaginative fusion of the verse technique and the ‘bhava’, ‘emotional idea’, or the unity of form and content of the original in his Tagore translations. Radice was perhaps the first translator who attached as much importance to the content as to the forms and techniques of Tagore’s poetry in his translations. He intuitively learnt the art of ‘poetic

engineering' from Tagore's originals and tried to capture it in his translations of Tagore's poems. Acknowledging his indebtedness to Tagore he says, "[...] all my translations of Rabindranath have been lessons learnt from him" (Radice 41).

In his lecture "Poetic Engineering: Lessons Learnt from Tagore" (2003)³ Radice had touched upon some of the technical aspects of Tagore poems that he integrated into his translations. In this lecture he identifies 'momentum' or 'inevitability' as one of the distinguishing qualities of Rabindranath's greatness as a poet and of great poetry in general. He then goes on to mention some of the technical ways in which Rabindranath achieves his effects of 'momentum' or 'inevitability' in his poetry. As the interpreter of Tagore, Radice employed the following technical devices in his renderings to capture the effects of 'momentum' or 'inevitability' of the original:

- (1) Long lines. While rendering Rabindranath's poems of long lines, Radice tried to match the lines with the originals. গানভঙ্গ ('Broken Song'), দুই বিঘা জমি ('A Half-acre of Land') and সিকুপারে ('On the Edge of the Sea') are well-known poems of long lines. Rabindranath used rhyme in the originals (the lines are rhymed in couplets); but Radice made sure that the lines he used in his renderings were 'end-stopped'. This is how he tried to capture in his translation something of the 'inevitability' of the original.
- (2) Gaps: Another characteristic technique of Tagore's poetic art is his use of gaps in the lines which contributes to momentum or inevitability in his poems. He started the practice of representing the gaps visually in his poems and made them a characteristic verse technique in his poems. In his rendering of Tagore's poems that have gaps, Radice tried to preserve them to bring out the rhythm clearly. Rabindranath's সোনার তরী ('The Golden Boat') has gap in the third line of each five-line verse, and Radice preserved it in his translation:

গগনে গরজে মেঘ, ঘন বরষা ।
 কূলে একা বসে আছি নাহি ভরসা ।
 রাশি রাশি ভাড়া ভাড়া ধান কাটা হল সারা,
 ভরা নদী ^{স্বি}ক্খুরধারা খরপরশা ----
 কাটিতে কাটিতে ধান এল বরষা ।

Clouds rumbling in the sky; teeming rain.
 I sat on the river-bank, sad and alone.
 The sheaves lie gathered, harvest has ended,
 The river is swollen and fierce in its flow.
 As we cut the paddy it started to rain.

The gaps in the lines are also found in the traditional Somali verse-form. A teacher of the School of Oriental and African Studies translated Somali poetry in this verse-form at Radice's suggestion. Although Anglo-Saxon poetry has precedent of this verse technique, it entered English poetry through translations from Tagore and Somali language (Radice 8)

(3) Sari-poems – According to Radice, Tagore's 'sari-poems' show his individual style of writing *vers libre* with varying line-lengths that 'walk across the page' to create a characteristic visual pattern. Their shape is rather like that of a woman's sari, asymmetrical, 'wrapped round' the basic structure or conception of the poem. Tagore's শা-জাহান (1916) from বলাকা and অপঘাত ('Bombshell') from সানাই (1940) are poems of this type that Radice has famously described as the 'sari-poems'. In his translation of poems like শা-জাহান or অপঘাত Radice tried to convey the effect of the rhymes by using mostly half-rhymes. They do not always form couplets, but every end-word has another one echoing it in sound at the end of some other line.

The sinking sun extends its late afternoon glow.
 The wind has dozed away.
 An ox-cart laden with paddy-straw bound
 For far-off Nadiya market crawls across the empty open land,
 Calf following, tied on behind.

Over towards the Rajbanshi quarter Banamali Pandit's
Eldest son sits
On the edge of a tank, fishing all day.

He made use of the 'sari-poem' style in his book *Gifts*.

In "Tagore's Poetic Greatness" (2003) Radice demonstrates how verse-form, rhythm, structure etc. and the 'feeling' or the 'emotional idea' of a poem are fused into an organic unity by the 'craftsmanship' of a great poet. It was this 'craftsmanship' that he found lacking in the existing translations, including Tagore's own.

It is needless to say that Rabindranath used a wide variety of technical devices in his poetry and his posthumous collection *সুকলিঙ্গ*, for example, contains 198 poems written in a plethora of verse techniques. What is most remarkable about this collection of Tagore's 'brief poems' is that even two poems are not written in the same verse form. According to Radice, his *Selected Poems* of Tagore and complete brief poems of *PJS* are a veritable storehouse of verse-forms and technical devices that might enrich and enhance the technical resources of English poetry. As he confidently says in his lecture "Tagore's Poetic Greatness" (2003), "[...] in translating a great poet who possesses a whole range of techniques that are novel in English one can enhance English poetry's technical resources" (Radice 8). As a practicing English poet, Radice makes use of the diverse verse-forms and technical devices in his own poems. As a translator of Tagore, he feels a strong inclination to make his 'importation' [to use Brower's words] acceptable to the present generation of English poets. Accordingly, he expected the English poets to learn from Tagore's endless variety of technical forms, "[...] I believe that other English poets may in time be able to learn from him too" (Radice 41). It is for the posterity to determine whether Tagore's technical innovations would have any impact on the future course of English poetry.

Fourthly, the question of 'poetic talent' is closely linked with that of 'poetic engineering' or 'craftsmanship' already discussed in the two lectures quoted above. In his own translations Tagore did not have the 'craftsmanship' or 'poetic talent' to achieve the organic unity of form and content, the fusion of the verse technique and the *bhava* or 'the emotional idea'.

According to Radice, Tagore's *Gitanjali*, however 'profound' and 'moving', does not convey any 'poetic talent' (Radice 231). But his Bengali poems convey it fusing the content and form into an organic unity. In his translation Radice tried to integrate the *bhava*, or 'emotional idea' and the verse-form of the original into an organic whole in order to make Tagore 'credible' as a great poet.

Radice, thus, built Tagore translations on a sound foundation turning his [Tagore's] 'shortcomings' into his [Radice's] characteristic strength. With the appearance of his *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore, his translation won an unprecedented popularity and opened the floodgate of new Tagore translations. Ananda Lal's *Three Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* (1957) that followed Radice's *Selected Poems* of Tagore also contained an introduction, notes, appendices and bibliography. Lal admitted that with Tagore's 50th death anniversary in 1991, there came 'a veritable flood' of Tagore translations (Lal35). To substantiate his point Lal rightly referred to Radice's *Selected Short Stories*, Ketaki Kushari Dyson's *I Won't Let You Go*, and *Selected Short Stories* translated by Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago. All these books acquainted the readers with introductory plus secondary materials to enable them to form a concrete idea about Tagore and his achievements. The *EWRT* edited by Sisir Kumar Das was and the *OTT* published under the editorship of Sukanta Chaudhuri represent the 'flood' unleashed by Radice's translations. Radice is therefore a pioneering translator who had exercised a tremendous influence on Tagore translations moulding and shaping its very nature and course since his emergence in 1985 as a Tagore translator. The post-Radice Tagore translations therefore represent the continuation, enlargement and extension of the novel and imaginative approach that Radice introduced and popularized through his translation efforts.

III

In "The Challenge of Translating Tagore" (2012) Radice claims that he is by nature 'a practitioner, not a critic or scholar' (Chakravarty 457). There is no denying the fact that Radice is a sincere and tireless translator of Tagore having an intuitive translation project of his own. But what often escapes our attention is that when he speaks of his experience of

translating Tagore, he appears to be a theorist of creative translation. After the publication of *Gitanjali* (1912) Rabindranath had to discuss his translation thoughts from time to time in response to the numerous queries made by his acquaintances or strangers. Unlike Tagore Radice did not have to face such a situation. After the publication of *Selected Poems* (1985) of Tagore he took upon himself the task of explaining what he introduced in his translations by writing essays or delivering lectures about his experience of translating Tagore. He formed his own translation views intuitively on the basis of his first-hand experience of translating Tagore, though he never expressed ^{them} ~~it~~ as a theoretical treatise.

A practitioner of creative translation, Radice finds no difference between creative writing and translation; for they proceed from the same intuition and groping process of creativity (Radice 137). Thus, translating turns out to be as creative a job as the writing of poetry is. Reflecting on how he translates a poem Radice highlights the creative aspect of translation, “When I read a new poem by Rabindranath, instantly its form and sound and rhythm start to grow in my mind like a seed. In some ways, the act of creative translation requires a relaxation of the mind, rather than a conscious act of will. As in the writing of a poem of one’s own, one has to sit back and let the seed grow in a natural and spontaneous way, so that it emerges as a complete and convincing poem” (Ibid 455) As a poet Tagore showed an extraordinary gift for creating an incredible range of metres and verse-forms which are organically bound up with the *bhava* or ‘emotional idea’ of the original. Radice characterized this gift for achieving organic unity between form and content as ‘poetic engineering’ or as the art of ‘craftsmanship’ which is the *sine quo non* for a translator of Tagore. His essays and lectures that revolve round his experience of translating Tagore seemed to have paved the way for his emergence as a theorist of Tagore translation.

As a creative translator Radice had to face some ‘agonizing dilemmas’ that have been universally confronted by the translators down the ages. In his essay “Confessions of a Poet-Translator” (2003) he mentions two common problems that he faced as a creative translator. Since his approach to Tagore translation is essentially ‘imaginative and intuitive’, he finds it difficult to subject his translating efforts to constant ‘self-correction’ and ‘scholarly self-monitoring’. This results very often in unpardonable mistakes or ‘misreading’ of the original

that a conscious and cerebral translator would always try to avoid. Radice explained this point a bit elaborately in “The Challenge of Translating Tagore” (2012): “The mistakes can also arise because my own creative energy takes over: the poem, if it appeals to me, implants itself so strongly in my mind that my imaginative conception of it, even though it may be wrong-headed, takes over” (Chakravarty 455). He seems to imply here that when he is translating poetry in an essentially creative way, he is carried away by the creative force and his ‘conscious act of will’ remains paralyzed for the time being. In such a creative state of mind the translator cannot carry out the act of ‘self-correction’ and intellectual ‘self-monitoring’ which is the prerogative of a cerebral translator (Radice130). Secondly, it is really hard for him to be ‘self-critical’ and ‘scholarly’ even when he is creative and imaginative in his translations. These ‘dilemmas’ seem to have explained some of the mistakes that crept into Radice’s poetry translations unconsciously. But they cannot account for some of the translation mistakes that he commits in his prose renderings because of his ignorance of Bengali culture and Bengali linguistics. In “The Postmaster”, for example, the postmaster gets his posting in a remote village in Bengal and Tagore refers to it as a ‘গন্ডগ্রাম’ in the story. In his translation Radice makes no attempt to convey the impression of ‘গন্ডগ্রাম’ of the original and the Western readers cannot be expected to realize why the postmaster feels like ‘a fish out of water’. Not far from the post office there is a ‘পানাপুকুর’, hyacinth-pond, surrounded by jungle all around, and he translates it simply as a ‘pond’. The proximity of the post office to the ‘pond’ in ‘a village like this’ cannot give the Western people any idea about the unhygienic atmosphere of the village. Tagore builds up the unhygienic rural ambience in a few strokes but Radice fails to capture it in his translation. Secondly, Radice’s rendering of the ‘খোল-করতাল’ as ‘drums and cymbals’ betrays his ignorance of the culture and ethos of the Boudhs. Both *Samsad Bengali English Dictionary* and *Bangla Academy English Bengali Dictionary* define ‘খোল-করতাল’ as ‘tomtom and cymbals’ rather than ‘drums and cymbals’. Radice could have consulted Bengali English Dictionary before translating ‘খোল-করতাল’ which are culture-specific musical instruments in Bengal. In “~~Ek-Ratri~~” Radice’s rendering of the word ‘Bengal’ as ‘rural naivety’ shows his ignorance of the traditional Ghati-Bangal divide of Bengali culture. Again, his translation of ‘~~baner dak shona~~ ^{বানরের ডাকে শোনা} galo – samudra chhutiya asitechhe’ as ‘the roar of floodwaters became audible – a tidal wave

was approaching from the sea' is misleading. A careful reading of the story reveals no reference to the sea in the original text and the question of 'tidal wave' coming from the 'sea' betrays Radice's ignorance of the topography of the story. Thus, the translation mistakes are caused by Radice's ignorance of the subtle nuances of Bengali linguistics and Bengali culture. They also raise the vital question of 'rightness' or accuracy in a translation ---a question which is integrally connected with the literal or word-for-word translation. According to Radice, the 'rightness' or accuracy that a translator tries to achieve in a translation is not the rightness of 'literal accuracy' (Radice 140). Even though in the Preface to *Selected Poems* (1994 Reprint) Radice says, "Accuracy in translation is always my goal", he is, in fact, concerned with the aesthetic accuracy of a literary work rather than its literal accuracy. A translation can achieve an aesthetic effect only when it is creative and interpretative rather than literal or word-for-word. Accordingly, Radice considers a translation accurate and successful only when it is 'creatively right' and produces an aesthetic effect (Radice 138).

Again, the 'agonizing dilemmas' that Radice mentions in the above essay are the same dilemmas that France has characterized as the 'translator's dilemmas' in the introduction to *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*: "Any translator is faced with the competing demands of the desire, on the one hand, to be as faithful as possible to the original and, on the other, to produce a version which communicates well and is a pleasure to read" (Radice xiv-xv). Radice succeeded more often than not in reconciling the demands of 'accuracy' and 'fluency' in his Tagore translations. This made him one of the most 'felicitous' interpreters of Tagore in recent times and his interpretation has been nuanced by the shaping spirit of his creative imagination.

There are two methods described by Goethe and Schleiermacher for carrying across a literary work from one language to another. "They are", said Goethe in his eulogy of Wieland, "two maxims for translators; one demands that the author belonging to some other nation should be brought over to us, so that we can regard him as our own; the other demands of us that we should go across to the stranger and accustom ourselves to his circumstances, his manner of speaking, his peculiarities" (Cited in Praver 75). This formulation is strikingly similar to a

better-known later pronouncement by Friedrich Schleiermacher, “A translator either leaves the author as much alone as is possible and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader as much alone as is possible and moves the author towards him” (Ibid 75). The method of moving a foreign author towards the target readers has subsequently been rechristened by Lawrence Venuti as the process of ‘domesticating’ an author in an alien language and culture. Radice adopts the process of ‘domesticating’ Tagore as one of the cardinal principles of his translation ‘project’. According to Theo Hermans, “From the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies *a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose*”(emphasis added) (Hermans 11). In his Tagore translations Radice ‘manipulates’ the original in order to ‘domesticate Tagore in an alien culture and language. In spite of his best efforts Tagore fails to ‘domesticate’ his translations in the West and Edward Thompson finds ‘a velation--- a cloud between his poetry and the Western public’ (Thompson 264). Radice tries to make sure that there remains no such ‘velation’ or ‘cloud’ between his poetry and the Western public. It is for this purpose that he remains faithful to his original in *bhava*, simile, image, structure and poetic forms and at the same time tries to ‘domesticate’ him in an alien culture, language and literary tradition by importing in his translation some linguistic and cultural concepts or ideas to ensure their readability and acculturation. Buddhadeva Basu also follows a similar method in translating Baudelaire in Bengali. In his introduction to শার্ল বোদলেয়ার তাঁর কবিতা he affirms that nowhere has his translation deviated from Baudelaire’s thoughts or purposes and is always faithful to the original in similes, images or poetic forms. Further, he has made every effort to make his poems readable as independent poems in Bengali (Basu 10). Radice also follows this dual process of ‘fidelity’ to the original and its ‘domestication’ in the culture, language and literary ethos of the target readership. In “Ten Rules for translating Tagore” (1986) Radice claims to have made Tagore “a little stranger and less familiar to the Bengali readers” in his translations. Again, in “Tagore’s Poetic Greatness” (2003) he specifically says what he intends to do in his translation, “[...] the last thing I want in translating a great foreign poet [read Tagore] is that he should end up seeming like a familiar English poet” (Radice 10). It was the process of ‘domestication’ as well as the imaginative interpretation of Tagore against the background of two cultural contexts that made him a bit ‘stranger’ and ‘less familiar’ to the Bengali readers and at the same time a ‘familiar’ poet to the Western people. This is how

Radice projects the image of '(an) other' Tagore which is somewhat different from the Bengali Rabindranath and the English Tagore. This 'Tagore' is conceived and re-created by Radice in the light of his imaginative and intuitive interpretation of his original works together with his 'domestication' in the West. Edward Thompson finds in Tagore's own translation 'a cloud' between Tagore and the English people and Radice seems to have ~~to~~ dispelled this 'cloud' by re-creating and 'domesticating' him in the Western world. Harish Trivedi seems to have this 'recreated' or 'domesticated' Tagore in mind when he complimented Radice on creating 'a third Tagore' in his Tagore translations (Radice76).

Note:

1. I am grateful to Mr. Ranajit SenGupta for this point.

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