# 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 *interprete* 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 *uber-setzen*. 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 *uber-setzen* 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

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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 Damascus 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"(Nida13). 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".

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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 [ traslator's ] freedom regarding : (1) shifts of word order; (2) employment of model 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 17$^{th}$ and 18$^{th}$ 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

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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.(Edmonott 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 :

> ( I) *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. (Bassnett 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 *Erklarung* ( explation ). Semantically, *Erklarung* 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 6 3).

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 Englsh*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

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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* since1950.

( 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"( Bassnett73-74) 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 Chienese poetry, George Kennedy, a famous Sinologist, says that his rendering is fine as poetry but bad as translation.

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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 Chakravarrty [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 Benzamin 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" Benzamin 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)Intralingual translation, or *rewording* ( an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language ).

( 2 ) Interlingual translation or translation proper ( an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language ).

(3)Intersemiotic 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

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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'.( Nida159) 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 'literalistists', 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 ( Lago216).

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"(Ramanujan222)  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 traditory*, [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

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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"( France S-6). 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"(1970) 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.

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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)

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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"(Hermans11). 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.