

Chapter – 3
Translation Theory : A Poetics of Culture

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Translation is an old activity that has been practiced by man since ancient times. So the relatively recent acceptance of the term 'Translation Studies' may perhaps surprise those who had always assumed that such a discipline existed in view of the wide spread use of the term 'translation', particularly in the process of foreign language learning. But the fact remains that the systematic study of translation is relatively a new development in the field of translation. It is because translation was earlier perceived as an intrinsic part of foreign language teaching process and was rarely studied for its own sake.

It was in 1972, James Holmes coined the term 'Translation Studies' in his pamphlet, *The Name And Nature of Translation Studies* (1972/5) and advocated for it as a legitimate field of research. Following the lead set by James Holmes, Andre Lefevere in 1978 proposed that the name 'Translation Studies' should be adopted for the discipline that concerns itself with 'the problems raised by the production and description of translation' (Lefevere, 1978 : 234) and thereby through 1980s and 90s Translation Studies gained recognition as a discipline in its own right. Along with this recognition came various forms of institutionalization : new journals and associations, international conferences in greater and greater numbers and graduate programmes in Translation Studies. As a result, over the last two or

three decades, translation has become a more prolific, more visible and more respectable activity than perhaps ever before.:

The 1980s was a decade of consolidation for the fledging discipline known as Translation Studies. Having emerged onto the world stage in the late 1970s, the subject began to be taken seriously, and was no longer seen as an unscientific field of enquiry of secondary importance. Throughout the 1980s interest in the theory and practice of translation grew steadily. Then, in the 1990s, Translation Studies finally came into its own, for this proved to be the decade of its global expansion. Once perceived as a marginal activity, translation began to be seen as a fundamental act of human exchange. Today, interest in the field has never been stronger and the study of translation is taking place alongside an increase in its practice all over the world (Bassnett, 2005 : 1).

The birth of Translation Studies as a discipline in England and in many other parts of Anglophone world was signaled by the publication of a book under the very title *Translation Studies* by Susan Bassnett–McGuire (now Susan Bassnett) in 1980. After being reprinted five times the book came out in its second edition in 1992 and updated third edition in 2002. The second edition was reprinted six times and the present third edition has also been reprinted repeatedly. The popularity and wide circulation of this handbook and the publication of several books, journals and encyclopedias of translation studies over the last few years suggest that the disciplinary status of the new field of Translation Studies has been

well established in our times. Mention may be made of the important encyclopedias of translation studies like the *Routhledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (1998), edited by Mona Baker; the *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* (2000), edited by Olive Classe; the *Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* (2000), edited by Peter France; the five volume *History of Literary Translation into English*, projected by the Oxford University Press and the seven volume *Encyclopedia* now in progress in Germany. To this list may be added the important anthologies of primary and critical materials of translation studies like *Theories of Translation : An Anthology of Essays From Dryden to Derrida* (1992) edited by Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet, *The Translation Studies Reader* (2000), edited by Lawrence Venuti, *Western Translation Theory : From Herodotus to Nietzsche* (2001) and *Becoming A Translator : An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Translation* (1997, updated edition 2003) by Douglas Robinson; *Contemporary Translation Theories* (1993, updated edition 2001) by Edwin Gentzler; *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (1997) by Mark Shuttleworth and Moira Cowie, and the new journals like *The Translator* and *Translation Studies* series launched by Routhledge. All this clearly shows the richness and scholarly lineage of the new discipline Translation Studies.

Before these new developments, the study of translation was subsumed under either of the two different disciplines : Linguistics and Contemporary Literature. Traditionally translation was seen as a segment of Linguistics on the basic premise that translation was a transaction between two languages. J.C. Catford's book *A Linguistic Theory of Translation : An Essay in Applied*

Linguistics (1965) was, perhaps, the last major work written on this assumption, in which he defined translation as being a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another language. Soon it began to be realized that literary texts were constituted not primarily of language but of culture, language being a vehicle of culture. In traditional discussions the terms which proved intractable in translation, were often described as being ‘culture-specific’, for example, *Kurta*, *dhoti*, *roti*, *dharma* etc. are peculiarly Indian items and not really like the western shirt, trousers, bread, religion etc. It was realized then that not only such particular items are culture-specific but indeed the whole language is specific to particular culture to which it belongs or from which it came, to some degree or the other. The increased valorization of diversity and plurality in cultural matters also lent strength to this new understanding of language and culture. Thus translation of a literary text has become a transaction not merely between two languages or Catfordian Linguistic ‘Substitution’ but a more-complex negotiation between two cultures. Harish Trivedi rightly says :

The unit of translation was no longer a word or a sentence or a paragraph or a page or even a text, but indeed the whole language and culture in which that text was constituted (Trivedi, 2005 : 254).

This new awareness has been aptly described as “The cultural Turn in Translation Studies” in the title of a chapter jointly written by Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere in their book *Translation, History and Culture* (1990). This recognition of cultural turn in translation studies helped much to liberate translation studies from the comparatively mechanical linguistic analysis.

Around the same time Translation Studies also came out from the subservience to another discipline, Comparative Literature, of which it was for long considered a subsidiary and merely instrumental part. This has much to do with the decline of Comparative Literature itself, especially in the United States, as with the rise of Translation Studies. It was Susan Bassnett who for many years headed the only full-fledged Comparative Literature department in the U.K., at Warwick University, in her book *Comparative Literature* (1993) declared 'Comparative Literature is dead' and explained that the rise of Translation Studies had left comparative Literature bereft of much of its methodological preoccupations. As Harish Trivedi observes :

... comparative Studies of literature across languages have now become the concern of Translation Studies; it is the translational tail now that wags the comparative dog (Trivedi, 2005 : 254).

In the early years of establishing Translation Studies as a separate discipline, the advocates of translation studies positioned themselves against both linguists and literary scholars. They argued that linguists failed to take into account broader contextual dimensions and that literary scholars were obsessed with making pointless evaluative judgments. So it was considered important to move out the study of translation from under the umbrella of either comparative literature or applied linguistics. But such an evangelical position now seems outdated and today Translation Studies as a discipline is more comfortable with itself, better able to engage in borrowing from and lending techniques and methods to other disciplines. Translation Studies, which began with a fairly modest proposal of

focusing on the translations and better describing the process of translation, has discovered that the task is much more complex than it was initially conceived. Hence the literary scholars from a variety of fields agree upon a working methodology to unite their efforts to achieve the enormous goal of translation studies. The foundation laid by the translation research of J.C. Carford, Micheal Halliday, Peter Newmark and Eugene Nida was developed by the important translation scholars like Mona Baker, Roger Bell, Basil Hatim, Kathrina Reiss and Hans Vermeer who have 'done a great deal to break the boundaries between disciplines and to move translation studies on from a position of possible confrontation' (Bassnett, 2005 : 3). The establishment of a new series of alliances in the 1990s between Translation Studies and post-colonial theory, Translation Studies and corpus linguistics, Translation Studies and gender studies brought together research into the history, practice and philosophy of translation with other intellectual trends.

The expansion of Translation Studies as a discipline beyond the boundaries of Europe is a very important trend. The concerns of translation scholars and translators in Canada, India, Hongkong, China, Africa, Brazil and Latin America have diverged significantly from those of Europeans. Writers such as Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak, Tejaswani Niranjana and Eric Cheyfitz have placed more importance on the inequality of translation relationship. They argue that translation was effectively used in the past as an instrument of colonial domination. It was a means of depriving colonial peoples of their voice as because in the colonial model one culture dominated and the others were subservient. Hence in the 1990s two

contrasting images of the translator emerged – one, the translator as a creative artist who ensures the survival of writing across time and space, and the other, translation as a highly suspect activity in which an inequality of power relations is reflected in the mechanics of textual production.

The unequal power relations have characterized the translation process for long. In earlier centuries the original was considered as superior and the translated copy as inferior. In colonial notion of superior culture taking possession of an inferior one, the power relationship has been reversed as superior copy and inferior original. Again in the post colonial perception, as a reaction against the colonial cultural hegemony translation was doomed to exist in an inferior status in relation to the original from which it was derived. Ultimately, the inequality of status between original and translation has been rethought in the new post colonial perception. Now both original and translation are viewed as equally creative, though the task of the translator and the writer may be different as pointed out by Octavio Paz in his essay “Translation : Literature and Letters” (1992) and reiterated by Susan Bassnett in her “Preface to the Third Edition” of *Translation Studies* :

It is up to the writer to fix words in an ideal, unchangeable form and it is the task of the translator to liberate those words from the confines of their source language and allow them to live again in the language into which they are translated. In consequence, the old arguments about the need to be faithful to an original start to dissolve (Bassnett, 2005 : 5).

In the present world of global expansion, intercultural communication and media explosion, translation has become a fundamental act of human exchange. It is no more considered as the mere transfer of text from one language to another, rather it is rightly seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures. It is significant to note that Homi Bhabha goes further to use the term translation not to describe a transaction between texts and languages but in the etymological sense of being carried across from one place to another. To describe the condition of the contemporary world in which millions migrate and change their location every day, Bhabha uses the term 'translation' metaphorically:

We should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and renegotiation, the in-between space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture (Bhabha, 1994 : 38).

So the third world intellectuals like Said, Spivak, Bhabha and writers like Bharati Mukherjee, Bapsi Sidhwa, Yasmin Goonaratne, Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipal and their writings constantly negotiate between the worlds of their birth and origin and the world of their work :

Interrogation of the alien and the migrant, the self and the other is essentially a problem of language and translation, because the notion of interrogation is built upon the supposition that, the narratives and symbols of a particular culture can be translated into another, to make out finally a 'unitary sign' of human culture (Majumdar, 2006 : 166).

The diverse ways in which Translation Studies has developed through the last two / three decades are linked by the common threads like rejection of old terms as 'faithfulness' and 'betrayal' of an original, the importance of highlighting the visibility of translator and his / her manipulative power and the view of translation as a creative writing, as bridge building across space and time. Today, in the twenty first century, political, geographical and cultural boundaries have become more fluid and less constraining than ever before. In such a world translation is fundamental and the role of translator is of greater significance. Hence the bright future of Translation Studies as a discipline can well be expected.

Translation theory is the study of proper principles of translation. Since interest in translation is as old as civilization itself, there is a vast stock of competing theories and unresolved disagreements about how best to translate texts from one language to another. The famous debate over translation 'ad verbum' (word for word) and 'ad sensum' (sense for sense) originated in Roman times. The famous Roman statesman, orator and writer, Marcus Tullias Cicero (106 – 43 B.C.) translated many Greek works into Latin. His approach to translation was sense for sense and not word for word. Following him Horace (65 – 8 B.C.) also adopted sense for sense approach in translation. The views of both Cicero and Horace on translation greatly influenced the successive generations of translators :

Both Horace and Cicero, in their remarks on translation, make an important distinction between *word for word* translation and *sense for sense* (or *figure for figure*) translation. The underlying principle of enriching their native language and literature through translation

leads to a stress on the aesthetic criteria of the TL product rather than on more rigid notions of 'fidelity' (Bassnett, 2005 : 49).

Unlike Cicero and Horace, Pliny the Younger (62 – 113 AD) tended towards word for word translation, while practicing and propagating translation as literary technique. Again like Horace and Cicero, Jerom in the fourth century adopted the sense for sense method. But he advocated two different methods of translation depending on whether the original was a secular text or a sacred text. Jerom defended literal translation whenever a highly authoritative text such as the Bible was at issue. In the sixth century, Boethius adopted Jerom's method of literal translation while translating the works of renowned philosophers like Aristotle. This strategy was also followed by Johannes Scottus Eriugena who translated the philosophical and religious doctrines of the Greek Fathers into Latin.

The development of translation in the western world is integrately related to religion. The spread of Christianity necessitated the translation of Bible into different languages. In the words of Susan Bassnett :

With the spread of Christianity, translation came to acquire another role, that of disseminating the word of God. A religion as text-based as Christianity presented the translator with a mission that encompassed both aesthetic and evangelistic criteria. The history of Bible translation is accordingly a history of Western culture in microcosm (Bassnett, 2005 : 51).

The first translation of the complete Bible into English was the Wycliffite Bible produced between 1380 and 1384. The renowned Oxford theologian, John

Wycliffe (1330 – 84) put forward the theory of ‘dominion by grace’. According to this theory man is immediately responsible to God and His law (guidance of the Bible) and so each man should be granted access to the Bible in a language that he can understand. Though attacked as heretical, Wycliffe’s views attracted a circle of followers and the work he began continued to flourish even after his death. John Purvey a disciple of Wycliffe, revised the first edition of Wycliffe’s English version of the Bible some times before 1408. In his preface, Purvey states that the translator shall translate ‘after the sentence’ (meaning) and not after the words and aimed at producing an intelligible, idiomatic version which could be utilized by the layman.

With the advent of printing the history of Bible translation acquired new dimensions in the sixteenth century. The century saw the translation of the Bible into a large number of European languages, in both Protestant and Catholic versions. New translations and revised versions of the existing translations of the Bible continued to appear in English, Dutch, German and French. Following the Dutch humanist, Erasmus, William Tyndale (1494 – 1536) attacked the hypocrisy of church authorities who forbade common people’s access to the Bible. With the charge of heresy Tyndale was burned alive in 1536 but before that his English version of the New Testament, translated from Greek, and parts of the Old Testament from Hebrew had already appeared in 1525 which offered as clear and easy access as possible for the layman to the Bible. The public burning of Tyndale’s New Testament in 1526 by Protestants was followed by the appearance of Coverdale’s Bible in 1535, the Great Bible in 1539 and the Geneva Bible in

1560. Coverdale's version of Bible was also banned. But burning and banning could not stop the process of translation and retranslation of the Bible. However, Susan Bassnett generalized the aims of the sixteenth century Bible translators into the following three categories :

- (1). To clarify errors arising from previous versions, due to inadequate SL manuscripts or to linguistic incompetence
- (2) To produce an accessible and aesthetically satisfying vernacular style.
- (3) To clarify points of dogma and reduce the extent to which the scriptures were interpreted and represented to the lay people as a metatext (Bassnett, 2005 : 54).

One of the earliest attempts to establish a set of major rules or principles to be referred to in early literary translation was made by the French translator and humanist Etienne Dolet (1509 – 46), who was tried and executed with the charge of heresy for 'mistranslating' Plato's dialogues in a way to imply disbelief in immortality. Before his persecution, Dolet in 1540 published a short outline on 'how to translate well from one language into another' where he formulated the following five fundamental principles for translator :

- (1) The translator should fully understand the sense and meaning of the original author.
- (2) The translator should have perfect knowledge of both source language (SL) and target language (TL).

- (3) The translator should avoid the tendency to translate word for word, for it may destroy the meaning of the original and ruin the beauty of expression.
- (4) The translator should employ the forms of speech in common usage.
- (5) The translator should produce a total overall effect with appropriate tone through correct choice and order of words.

Despite the severity of the persecution of translators like Dolet, the succeeding scholars upheld certain views of their predecessors. In the late sixteenth century, George Chapman (1559 – 1634), the famous translator of Homer, reiterated Dolet's views in his dedication of the *Seven Books* (1598). In the "Epistle to the Reader" of his translation of *The Iliad*, Chapman clearly states that

- (1) Translators should avoid word for word rendering.
- (2) They should attempt to reach the 'spirit' of the original.
- (3) They should also avoid over loose translations.

The seventeenth century witnessed a spurt of translations of Greek, Latin and French classics into English. In 1611 King James-I commissioned scholars to translate a text of Bible that could be authorized for reading in the churches. James version of the Bible inserted a great influence on the English language and literature. Its collaborative effort provides a new aspect to translation. Abraham Cowley (1618 – 67) went a step further to advocate freedom in translation. He treated word for word translation as one mad man translating another. His contemporary, John Dryden (1631 – 1700) identified three types of translation :

- (1) Metaphrase : ‘Word by word’ and ‘line by line’ translation.
- (2) Paraphrase : ‘Sense for Sense’ translation.
- (3) Imitation : Abandoning the text of the original as the translator sees fit.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Alexander Fraser Tytler, the Scottish jurist and historian, published his celebrated volume *The Principles of Translation* in 1791, where he set up three basic principles :

- (1) The translator should give a complete transcript of the ideas and sentiments of the original work.
- (2) The translator should maintain the character of the manner and style of the original.
- (3) The translator should have the ease and flow of the original text.

Tytler’s open mindedness on quality assessment and his ideas on linguistic and cultural aspects in translation can give inspiration even to modern translators and scholars.

A serious approach to translation theory was inaugurated in 1960s in the works of Eugene A. Nida. A Protestant in faith, Nida’s interests were missionary by nature in the communication of Christian faith through translation. In his 1960 book *Message and Mission : The Communication of Christian Faith*, Nida puts forward the view that biblical translators should not take communication for granted, but should bring it about, employing all the resources of linguistics and communication theory to aid in their task :

Nida drew on extensive field work that showed that the religious message often failed to be communicated because of different cultural contexts and world views. Thus Nida came to understand that meaning can not be divorced from the personal experience and the conceptual framework of the person receiving the message. He concluded that ideas “must be modified” to fit with the conceptual map of experience of the different context (Gentzler, 1993 : 52).

In 1965 linguist Nida claimed to separate translation studies from linguistics since one can translate without knowing anything about linguistics, in the same manner as one can speak in a language fluently without being a student of the science of that language. However, knowledge of the linguistics and stylistic characteristics of language varieties can greatly help a translator to search for an equivalent variety in the target language, to find out its main characteristics and to reproduce them in the translated version. The methodology of translation given by Nida in his book *Towards Science of Translating* (1964) can be summarized as follows :-

It is both scientifically and practically more efficient –

- (1) To reduce the source text to its structurally simplest and most semantically evident Kernels.
- (2) To transfer the meaning from source language to receptor language on structurally simple level, and
- (3) To generate the stylistically and semantically equivalent expression in the receptor language.

According to Nida, in addition to enjoying complete knowledge of the source, the translator should have the same 'empathetic' spirit of the author and the ability to impersonate the author's demeanor, speech and ways with the utmost verisimilitude (Nida, 1964 : 151). Nida goes on to argue that the translator should have the same cultural background, the same talent and present the same joy to the reader that is given by the original. And the translator will miss the original message and the way it functions, if these requirements are not fulfilled. But the practical problem with Nida's such requirement can be felt with the realization of the fact often what a literary work says and what the author intended become two different things. Hence perfect affinity of the translator with the author of the source text, what Nida emphasized, is practically impossible. Moreover, Nida's method can not be accommodated within the ambit of contemporary theoretical development.

Itamar Even-Zohar developed the polysystem hypothesis in a series of papers written from 1970 to 1977 and collected in 1978 as *Papers in Historical Poetics*. Gideon Toury, one of the several scholars at Tel Aviv University, who participated in various field studies, 'testing' Even-Zohar's hypothesis, adopted the polysystem concept, isolated and defined certain translation 'norms' that influence translation decisions, and incorporated these factors in the large framework of a comprehensive theory of translation published in *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (1980). The papers presented at two Translation Studies Conferences – the first in 1978 in Tel Aviv, whose proceedings appeared in a special issue of *Poetics Today* (Summer–Autumn 1981), and the second in 1980 in Andwerp,

whose proceedings were published in a special translation issue of *Disposition* (1982) – illustrate the merging of the polysystem theory with Translation Studies.

The system approach pioneered by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury dominated Translation Studies until the end of 1980s. It was a radical development in the history of translation studies as it shifted the focus of attention away from arid debates about 'faithfulness' and 'equivalence' towards an examination of the role of the translated text in its new context. Filling up the gap between linguistics and literary studies, polysystem theory provided the base upon which the new interdisciplinary translation studies could build. The central emphasis was given on the poetics of the target culture. To ascertain the polysystem hypothesis, that it is possible to predict the conditions under which translations might occur and kind of strategies translators might employ, and to establish fundamental principles, case studies of translations across time were acquired which resulted the emergence of descriptive studies in translation. Jose Lambert's descriptive research during the eighties made him more aware of the cultural complexities involved in defining and describing translation which in turn served to reemphasize the need for systematic research.

Gideon Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995) reassessed the polysystem approach, which was disliked by some scholars for its over emphasis on the target system. Toury maintains that it is logical to make the target system the object of study since a translation is designed primarily to fill a need in the target culture. He also points out the need to establish patterns of regularity of translational behaviour. The new approach took a different line,

seeking not to evaluate what had been 'lost' or 'betrayed' in translation process but to understand the shift of emphasis that had taken place during the transfer of texts from one literary system to another.

This broadening of the object of Translation Studies led to a division within the group of translation scholars loosely associated with the polysystem approach. Scholars like Theo Hermans and Gideon Toury sought to establish theoretical and methodological parameters, and others such as Andre Lefevere and Lawrence Venuti began to explore the implications of translation in a much broader cultural and historical frame. Rejecting any linear notion of the translation process, Lefevere first developed his idea of translation as 'refraction' rather than reflection and thus offered a more complex model than the old idea of translation as a mirror of the original. Expanding his notion of translation Lefevere suggested in his later work "Composing the Other" that 'problems in translating are caused at least as much by discrepancies in conceptual and textual grids as by discrepancies in languages.' (Lefevere, 1999 : 76). Lefevere argues, these cultural grids highlight the creativity of the translator, for he / she is inevitably engaged in a complex creative process. Lawrence Venuti also insisted upon the creativity and visibility of the translator. According to him translation with its allegiance both to source and target culture is 'a reminder that no act of interpretation can be definitive' (Venuti, 1998 : 46). The figure of subservient translator has been thus replaced in 1990s with visibly manipulative translator, a creative artist mediating between two cultures, two languages and two paradigms of mind.

Contemporary development in the theoretical approach to literature and cultural studies has dismantled the primacy of the source text and subservient nature of translated versions. Translation is often perceived as a mode of communication that connects incommensurable partners rather than mediating stock binary configuration of the East and the West or vice-versa. As Naoki Sakai, the Japanese scholar puts it, translation is basically a hetero-lingual mode of address for both speakers of the languages involved and which produces a mixed or non-aggregate, rather than a unified community of scholars. Translation becomes a model for negotiating with the linguistic and cultural 'other' in terms of fluctuating knowledge and mutual ignorance. Therefore, theories of Translation can not be profitably grounded on notions of universal applicability but in directing attention to context, contingency and limitations. Sukanta Chaudhuri was perhaps thinking of something similar when he said :

The source text, a semiotic construct of indeterminate range, is negotiated by seizing on a feasible, tractable part of its range and imposing upon it a similar segment of another indeterminate construct in another language. The circle is sought to be squared, but the exercise demonstrates its own impossibility: We pass through a contextually restricted corridor from one expansive verbal system into another (Chaudhuri, 2002 : 03).

Developing from the linguistic approach of the 1960s, through the textual focus of the 70s, to the culturally based approach of the 80s, modern translation

theory has come a long way to the present position of an ‘intellectual activity’ to traffic with the increasing complex cultural scenario of twenty first century world of global expansion. Translation has now become an essential activity of life which endlessly extends and defers the implications of the original and thus suggests that there is always more. As Susan Bassnett in her “Preface to the Third Edition” of *Translation Studies* says:

Jacques Derrida’s rereading of Walter Benjamin opened the flood-gates to a re-evaluation of the importance of translation not only as a form of communication but also as continuity. Translation, it is argued, ensures the survival of a text. The translation effectively becomes the after-life of a text, a new ‘original’ in another language. This positive view of translation serves to reinforce the importance of translating as an act both of inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication (Bassnett, 2005 : 9).

It should be mentioned here that theories of translation that are basically ‘Western’ in both ordinance and methodology do not help much in the process of translation of an Indian text into English. While translating an Indian text into English, one hardly feels the necessity of following Nida’s application of generative grammar or Itamar Even-Zohar’s polysystem approach. Perhaps, this is why Sujit Mukherjee, a modern Tagore translator, was against following any theory in the act of translation :

He (Sujit Mukherjee) had a strong distaste for arid and superior theory and firmly believed that only those who actually practiced

had a right to preach or perhaps even to open their mouths (Trivedi, 2004 : 14).

Despite his 'strong distaste' for theory and open declaration:

I have no theory of translation. I leave such theories to those who do not translate (Mukherjee, 2004 : 39),

Mukherjee's appeals to the reviewers of translations to be familiar with the source text and to the translators not to fall into the 'trap' of improving the original, provide a basis for theoretical formulations. However, it is not important whether the translators of Indian literary texts, novels of Tagore in particular, were aware of theoretical position or not, for theoretical approach helps us to understand the translation process at work and gives us insight into areas like cultural transference, idiomatic compatibility and the effective translation of the inherent narrative strategy.

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