Recovering the First Shakespeare Adaptation in India: A Critical Re-examination of the Text and Previous Scholarship

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Abstract

Previous scholarship on the adaptation of The Taming of the Shrew, the first Shakespearean play to be adapted in a modern Indian language, relied heavily on the title of the adaptation in Gujarati to provide their commentary and interpretation, although the text was believed to be lost. This study uses Santoyo's (2006) approach of mapping and filling the blank spaces, gaps and mistakes, and Pym's (1998) idea of advancing translation research by providing a more evidence-based 'explanation' rather than mere criticism, to rectify the misrepresentation of the first adaptation in translation history in India and the larger claims made by previous scholarship. It also dwells on the methodological issues regarding translation history in India, considering the contemporary theoretical and methodological advancements in the field of translation history. In light of the inaccuracies which crept into the previous research, the study proposes to underscore the need for a rigorous and comprehensive translation history in India.

Keywords: Shakespeare Translation in India, Translation History, Adaptation History, Parsi Theatre.

Introduction

Translation is not "an isolated act, it is part of an ongoing process of intercultural transfer", and it does not "happen in a vacuum but in a continuum" (Bassnett & Trivedi 1999, p. 2). Moreover, translation also occurs in a "specific historical context" (St-Pierre, 1993, p. 62). Therefore, decoding a translation is fraught with risks. The obvious risk is to misread the continuum or misrepresent the historical context. At times, in the absence of the rigour and emphasis on

examination of evidence and archival data, translation criticism and research end up being what Pym terms "mostly impressionistic" (1992, p. 221), leading to gross inaccuracies and misrepresentations. In fact, translation history emerged as a systematic endeavour to map the continuum and shed light on the historical context. In the process of doing this, one of the important tasks has been to address "Gaps, holes, blank spaces…and *mistakes,* too, which must absolutely be amended" (Santoyo, 2006, p. 30). Thus, one of the key responsibilities "of today's historians is to denounce, correct, and eradicate the serious mistakes that have slipped into a good number of present-day texts" (p. 30).

This study is a case in point how "serious deficiencies in the sacrosanct rigour of historians" commenting on the first adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* in Gujarati, a modern Indian language, without, "exploration of primary historical sources" and relying exclusively on "indirect references" resulted into the serious misrepresentation of a key text in the translation history of Shakespeare translation in India (Bastin, 2006, p. 122). The first adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* was a theatre performance in Gujarati at Surat, Gujarat, in 1852. It has the distinction of being the first ever adaptation of a Shakespearean play in a modern Indian language. While it was well-documented in terms of its year and other details, the text, which was a script for a theatre performance, was considered to be lost, like many other adaptations (Mehta, 1964, p. 41). In the absence of the text of the adaptation, a number of Shakespeare scholars in India have commented on what the adaptation might have contained and might have aimed at accomplishing, without reading/accessing the text. The present study consists of the recovery and analysis of the text in the light of the interpretations that previous scholars had posited. While no previous Shakespeare scholar could have fathomed what such an adaptation might have contained, previous scholarship made unjustifiable assertions in the absence of primary sources, leading to a misrepresentation that this study seeks to rectify.

Previous Scholarship

The first adaptation attracted the attention of almost every known Shakespeare scholar and translation theorist in India. Every scholar who commented on Shakespeare translations in India referred to the first adaptation. However, it was C. C. Mehta's "Shakespeare and the Gujarati Stage", published in Sahitya Akademi's journal *Indian Literature* in 1964, that documented the first adaptation for the first time. At the beginning of the article, he rues the fact that most of the unprinted scripts of these adaptations were no longer available (p. 41). However, Mehta's article remains to date an authoritative account of Shakespeare's plays adapted and translated into Gujarati. It is also a profoundly insightful article on translation history when it comes to performances of Shakespeare's plays in Gujarati on stage. Starting from the first ever adaptation in 1852, Mehta provides a succinct documentation of all the translations and adaptations till the year of publication of his article. As regards the first adaptation, Mehta documented that a play called *'Nathari Firangiz Thekane Avi*' was performed in the Andrews Library in Surat in November 1852, "telling of 'How a bad Firangiz woman was brought to her senses'. It was evidently a Parsee version of *The Taming of the Shrew*" (1964, p. 41). 'How a bad Firangiz woman was brought to her senses' was a reverse translation of the Gujarati title of the play. It was subsequently used by every subsequent scholar in their commentary on the play to further their own interpretations.

The word 'Firangiz' in Gujarati stands for a European/foreigner. While the text of the adaptation was not available, Mehta went on to assert that the shrew in the adaptation was a European woman based on the word 'Firangiz' used in the title of the adaptation. Sisir Kumar Das (2005) was the next scholar to comment on this adaptation, but he went a step forward and elaborated on the idea as to why the shrew was not an Indian woman and tried to explain why the translator presented a European woman rather than an Indian woman in the adaptation.

While Das mentioned that the text was no longer extant, he still provided his interpretation of the play. He also reiterated that the play was titled *Nathari Firangiz Thekane Avi* (A bad European woman was brought to sense) (2005, p. 47). In his view, the

translator could not translate the word shrew properly and hence used the word '*nathari*'. He asserted that the translator could not either contextualise it in an Indian situation, particularly to place an Indian Kate on the stage and situate her "convincingly within the Indian social milieu". To him, Kate is diametrically opposite to the image of a woman in the Indian context. Das also remarks that since marriage is the "*dharma*" of the woman in Indian society, and Kate is revolutionary as she refuses to marry, Indian Kate would be unfit for the play. However, audiences were not averse to the idea of seeing a particular type of woman being tamed. This is where, according to Das, the European Kate comes in. In his view, the use of such a title was "a clever device" to leverage a story that satisfies "Indian male chauvinism without demeaning Indian womanhood, while underlining Indian criticism for European female". Das's interpretation was that it was necessary for the translator to remind his reader that "Kate was not an Indian but a Firangi."

Commenting on the "adaptative, indigenized staging of Shakespeare in India", Poonam Trivedi argued that the adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* in 1852 was the "very first *desi* Shakespeare" performed in an Indian language, entitled *Nathari Firangiz Thekani Avi* [A Bad Firangi Woman Brought to Sense]. She characterised it as "a critical adaptation, alert to the politics of relocation, for it distanced and labelled the shrew as non-Indian, a *firangi*/foreigner" (2005, p. 153).

Sangeeta Mohanty's *The Indian Response to Hamlet: Shakespeare's Reception in India and a Study of Hamlet in Sanskrit Poetics* (2010), which was a PhD dissertation at the University of Basel, cites Das's claims verbatim and makes use of the same arguments, perpetuating the idea of a European Kate in a Parsi adaptation (p. 50).

In *How Shakespeare Became Colonial: Editorial Tradition and the British Empire*, Leah H. Marcus (2017) makes rather far-reaching claims. Marcus reiterates not only that its title was *Nathari Firangiz Thekani Avi*, "A Bad Foreign [i.e., European] Woman Brought to Sense" but the text of the translation has "apparently not survived". However, Marcus asserts that "Katherine was cast as a prototypical British memsahib and that by staging her taming, the

Gujaratis were symbolically repudiating British culture — especially British efforts to reform what they haughtily identified as South Asian disrespect for womanhood" (p. 72).

In continuation, Vikram Singh Thakur, in his *Shakespeare and Indian Theatre: The Politics of Performance* (2020), reiterates Trivedi's comments on the first adaptation (p. 77).

The idea that the adaptation was about how a bad European woman was brought to her senses was reiterated in every commentary on the adaptation. These varied studies spread across a span of nearly 70 years constitute the scholarship regarding the first adaptation of a Shakespearean play in a modern Indian language. Each scholar had a theory of their own regarding how Kate was conceptualised in this adaptation. However, it should be remembered that each study relied on an interpretation of the title while the text was believed to be lost.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws its insights from a number of key ideas in the writings of various translation history theorists and scholars, such as Anthony Pym and Julio-César Santoyo. This study is based on Pym's distinction of three strands when it comes to translation history- translation archaeology, historical criticism and explanation. As far as translation archaeology is concerned, it relates to 'who translated what, how, where, when, for whom and with what effect?' (Pym, 1998, p. 5). Historical criticism, on the other hand, is not adequate as it tries to "assess the way translations help or hinder progress" (p. 5). "Explanation", the term posited by Pym, is vital because it "tries to say *why* archaeological artefacts occurred when and where they did, and how they were related to change" (p. 6). Explanation matters for translation history because it focuses on discovering "causation of such data" (p. 6). In other words, the explanation approach as suggested by Pym calls for asking the question "why?" rather than restricting the inquiry to "what?" and "who?". This is not to suggest that translation archaeology or historical criticism are not required. However, restricting or limiting translation history to archaeology or criticism does not allow us to reconstruct a fuller account of history.

This is perhaps why Pym's "Shortcomings in the Historiography of Translation" is particularly relevant in the context of this study. In it, he argues that translation historiography is not criticism or archaeology because "neither archaeology nor criticism are adequately designed to formulate the basic historical question "why?"" (1992, p. 223). The problem arises when scholars and critics obsess with archaeology or criticism and ignore the question "why?" or the explanation part of translation history, which is exactly what happened in the case of the first adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew.* As far as the first adaptation is concerned, the previous scholarship resorted to a methodology that is best suited for archaeology or criticism and failed to ask the fundamental question "why" required for uncovering the explanation of why the adaptation occurred in the first place, and why it occurred in a particular form. None of the scholars bothered to ask why a translator would, first of all, select *The Taming of the Shrew* of all the plays for adaptation. It is neither a great tragedy nor a famed comedy. Secondly, none of them truly concerned themselves with the question of why a translator would portray a European woman in an adaptation which is usually expected to indigenize the story in the Indian context. Moreover, Pym also argues in "Humanizing Translation History" that we need to be able to make "narrative sense" of the relations between cultures, and we need more than "just raw data about texts, dates, places, and names" to accomplish the same (2009, p. 23). In his view, instead of focusing only on the data, we should be able to find a way to "string the isolated data into meaningful progressions" (p. 24). Only then, he argues, will we be able to explain the interaction between cultures. In this case, the previous scholarship developed a hypothesis based on merely the title of the adaptation and held on to it unquestioningly, which resulted in a grossly inaccurate account of how an Indian translator interacted with a Shakespearean play through adaptation. This led to a flawed representation of the adaptation in the larger history of translation in India. Therefore, the present study seeks to rectify it and make "narrative sense" of the adaptation in the Indian context.

Writing history is an arduous and tricky task. It involves interpretation and making claims based on the data one has at one's

disposal at the given point in time. At times, one does not have adequate data, and it can result in erroneous claims. Therefore, Santoyo (2006) argues that errors might have crept into the previous historical accounts and need to be rectified. (p. 30) Rectifying such errors is a significant part of translation history because it can remove all inaccuracies and help us make a better sense of history. Drawing from this idea, the present study attempts to undertake the re-examination of previous scholarship and rectify the errors in the representation of the first adaptation of a Shakespearean play in a modern Indian language.

Methodology

1. Archival Research

The study follows archival research methodology and investigates the claims made by the translation/Shakespeare scholars who commented on the first adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* in Gujarati. The study has used archival research because the primary source has been considered missing according to the published work on the first-ever adaptation of a Shakespearean play in a modern Indian language. Therefore, the study has relied on archival research to recover the text of the adaptation and set the record straight about the claim that the text is no longer extant. Moreover, recovery of the primary text was vital for verifying the claims of previous scholarship. It was also imperative to discover the crucial details regarding the characters and treatment of the key themes and ideas. Therefore, archival research has been significant for this study.

2. Textual Analysis

Having recovered the text using archival research, the study carries out a textual analysis of the adaptation in the light of comments and claims made by previous scholarship. The research also seeks to assess the elements that previous scholarship claimed to be present in the adaptation. For example, the previous scholarship asserted that the adaptation revolved around a European woman, although the adaptation was meant to adapt and align the plot to suit the Indian context. The textual analysis was also employed to answer the basic questions, which Pym considers more

important in historical research. The basic historical question when it comes to this adaptation is not "what" or "how" but "why". The study endeavours to find out the possible reasons for the selection of the text and discover why it was adapted in a particular way.

Recovery of the Text and Analysis of Textual Evidence

The study commenced with a nationwide search for the text at various libraries and archives. When the archival research led to the recovery of the text of the adaptation, the text defied all the assertions made by previous scholarship. To start with, it challenges Das's (2005, 47) claim that the text is "no longer extant". While it was a widely held belief that the text of the adaptation was lost, the fact is that it was neither damaged nor lost. In fact, it was preserved quite well. Contrary to the idea that it was lost, the fact is that the text was serialised in a Parsi women's magazine called *Stri Bodh* in 1861, after the performance in 1852. In fact, a large number of the issues of the magazine called *Stri Bodh* have been preserved at the B. J. Institute of Learning and Research, Ahmedabad. It is also available in the archives of the Forbes Gujarati Sabha situated in Mumbai. Since Mumbai was the hub of Parsi theatre and Gujarati literature and culture in the 19th and 20th centuries, a curious researcher would have easily found a copy of the adaptation in Mumbai. In any case, the text is available since it was neither damaged nor destroyed. In one way or another, the text remained available, not in some remote and interior part of the world but in the two thriving centres of literature and culture- Mumbai and Ahmedabad. The fact that it was serialised in 1861 proves that a copy of the adaptation existed in some part of the country.

Ever since C. C. Mehta mentioned that *Nathari Firangiz Thekane Avi* is about how a bad *firangi* (European) woman was brought to sense, every scholar who came after him seems to have blindly accepted it as the ultimate truth. As to the claims made by previous scholarship that there was a European woman portrayed as Kate in this adaptation, the textual analysis revealed otherwise. A careful examination of the title of the adaptation in the actual text shows that it is spelt slightly differently from the one mentioned by Mehta and the rest.

The title mentioned by Mehta and others:

- *Nathari Firangiz Thekane Avi*

The correct title, as mentioned in the text:

- *Nathari Farangij Thekane Avi*

The previous scholars have mentioned "*Firangiz*", whereas the title contained in the text mentions "*Farangij*". The real issue here is not that of a variation in the spelling of the title. The issue is that Firangiz or Farangij does not refer to a European/foreign woman in the text. The actual discrepancy is that instead of being a European woman, "Farangij" is the name of an Indian/Parsi girl in this adaptation, which is about a Parsi family. All the characters are Parsi, and so is Firangiz/Farangij. She is an Indian/Parsi girl and not a European woman, as the previous scholars have made us believe so far.

The text starts with a list of principal characters that definitively establishes the Indian/Parsi identity of all characters:

- Godrej - An eminent businessman
- Farangij- Godrej's elder daughter
- Meherbanu- Godrej's younger daughter

This evidence fundamentally contradicts previous scholars' assumptions about the adaptation's treatment of character and plot. There was no European Kate in the adaptation. It was the story of "Farangij", a Parsi girl adapted to suit the Indian context and particularly the Parsi context. The title was also misrepresented in all the scholarly writings regarding the adaptation. While every scholar interpreted the word "Firangiz" in the title as "Foreigner" or "European", "Farangij" is the name of the Parsi girl who resembles Kate in her refusal to marry. It was an adaptation that centred upon a Parsi family. The idea that there was a European woman in the play was merely a conception derived from the misspelt title. However, the evidence refutes all the claims of male chauvinism, the translator's inability to present an Indian Kate on the stage, and the adaptation being a critical adaptation, distanced from the context, etc. It also turns the claim on its head that Katherine was "a

prototypical British memsahib" and that the Gujaratis were trying to convey a message by taming her (Marcus, 2017, p. 72). These claims were the extrapolation of the scholars, based on their assumptions regarding what the play might have contained. To add to this, the fact remains that the title of the adaptation cited by the scholars was also incorrect.

As to the basic historical question of why the translator selected *The Taming of the Shrew* for adaptation and adapted the way he/she did, the previous scholars did not offer any answers. The text recovered through archival research explains. Plays performed by Parsi theatre were commercial productions and meant largely for entertainment. While this play must have been no less entertaining as a theatre performance, the text reveals that the translator sought to convey a social message. For this, the comments contained towards the end of the play should suffice. The play ends with a long speech by Farangij, who apparently comes to her 'senses' at the end of the play. In the last part of the play, she addresses her friend and comments on the roles and responsibilities of a woman towards her husband. She remarks that when a woman refutes her husband and disobeys his orders, she crosses a line and violates the code of a woman's behaviour. She argues that the husband works day and night to provide for her and protect her, and all he expects is that she should follow his instructions unquestioningly. Hence, when a woman disobeys and thus misbehaves in this way, it deeply hurts the man. She further argues that women are weak physically and mentally, and they tend to get carried away at times. In fact, she goes on to say that there is nothing worse in a woman's behaviour than trying to disobey the man and dominate him. She ends the speech by saying that she will pray to God that He grants the wisdom to all the women to realise their true duties towards their husbands and follow them sincerely. The play ends on the note that listening to Farangij talking about all this created a particular fervour among other women present there to follow their duties, and they dispersed after some discussion (1861, p. 165).

As the last part of the play indicates, the play was intended to carry and convey a social message over and above the entertainment that a typical Parsi play would generally provide. This explains why

The Taming of the Shrew was selected instead of other Shakespearean plays because it had aspects that perhaps resonated with the social situation in the Parsi community. The Parsi theatre group used the play as a trope to reinforce the social and gender roles of women in the community and society. If it were not the case, the play could have ended where Farangij agrees to marry. It ends with this elaborate sermon by Farangij to other women, which indicates why the play was selected, because it had the potential to convey a particular message to the Parsi community and society at large. To further support this argument, one should dwell a bit on where and why it was serialised after the performance. It was serialised in *Stri Bodh,* which was a women's magazine edited by Parsis. It carried instructional and educational material for women in general and Parsi women in particular. The title itself is suggestive. "*Stri Bodh*" stands for "instruction/wisdom for women". The magazine carried the dictum by Napoleon Bonaparte on the front page, right under the title. It roughly translates to this- "The best way to reform a nation is to make women more knowledgeable." If serialisation of the text in this kind of a magazine by itself does not prove the instructional message, it would be apt to cite what the editor of the magazine had to offer as a commentary at the end of the play. When the play ends in a particular issue of the magazine as a part of the series, the editor of *Stri Bodh*, the Parsi magazine, wrote a note as follows:

"Dear Women Readers. The story of how a quarrelsome Farangij was brought to sense comes to an end here. Those readers who must have read it from the beginning to end must have observed how Farangij was obnoxious and quarrelsome and how she turned out to be a good woman at the end. You must have noted one more point that how quarrelsome people suffer and how one has to try several tricks to bring them to sense. In that sense, apart from the humour, we can learn several things from the story. At the end, we too pray to God much like Farangij does at the end of the play that may God grant the good sense to the women who do not realise their duties towards their husband to carry out their duties sincerely." (p. 165, my translation)

It is pertinent to note that Farangij's speech was not merely addressed to her friend but also to the other women present. Going beyond the context of the play, it seems to extend a message even to the audience. Recognising the relevance of the social message, the editor of the magazine also serialised it with the same intention. The note written by the editor is evidence of the social connotations derived from the speech. This should suffice to explain why *The Taming of the Shrew* was best suited for adaptation in a community and society that intended to reinforce gender roles for women, 'reform' them, and put them in their place. The adaptation probably served as an instrument to drive the message home that women would do well to stick to their duties as wives and follow their husbands' instructions unquestioningly, else there would be unpleasant social consequences.

Approaches to Translation History Research and Previous Scholarship

Over time, approaches to translation history research have evolved and made translation history research more robust as an exercise. While the previous scholarship tried to address an important text in the history of translation, their methodology could have benefited from more rigorous approaches required in translation research in general and translation history research in particular. To start with, as Pym (1998, 20) asserts, translation history must seek to answer an important question, or as Outi (2013, 215) argues, "history is also written to study a determined period from the point of view of a specific research question, such as censorship or literary influences, for example". It is hard to fathom what kind of research questions the previous scholarship attempted to address regarding the first adaptation. It is quite evident that the vexing questions regarding a number of crucial aspects, such as the selection of the text, the particular treatment of the characters, and the supposedly European woman in the play, were left unexplored. The previous scholarship merely extended the thesis of a firangi/European woman with their own arguments based exclusively on the title. One could argue that they offered this kind of commentary as they did not have access to the text. However, it is not advisable to comment on a text that is

believed to be lost or one that is not accessible. It is perhaps possible to explain away some things or provide an explanation for the way the previous scholarship chose to go about the first adaptation. However, the fact remains that translation history accounts, such as the one regarding the first adaptation, indicate an approach that is less based on evidence and did not involve the exploration of archival data. Such a methodology has its limitations because it undermines archival research in an age where archival research is increasingly gaining ground worldwide.

The previous scholarship could not or did not access the primary sources, at least to infer anything, whereas methodological approaches to translation history research involve a far more rigorous exploration, even beyond the primary sources. Researching translation requires pre-textual material (i.e. drafts) or extra-textual material (e.g. interviews or paratextual commentary). In the absence of such pre-textual material and extra-textual material, as Munday (2014, p. 65) argues, any study that "limits itself to the primary text product remains rooted in an analysis of that product and dependent on the analyst's more or less subjective deduction of the process which underpinned it". In other words, focusing only on translation may not provide a coherent explanation about the historical context of its production and circulation. It calls for a lot more data to make the analysis more objective. As Gomez (2017, p. 57) asserts, "this new model of historical inquiry" has to go beyond the study of the traditional primary sources (source and target texts), examining "extra-textual sources such as statements from translators, editors and publishers, archives, manuscripts, letters, translator papers, post-hoc accounts and interviews". Translation research in general and translation history research in particular have become far more rigorous, and the previous scholarship did not seem to make use of any of these approaches, including accessing the primary source in their analysis of the first adaptation. The idea of consulting archival sources, which an increasing number of scholars have recommended, could have altered the history of continued commentary and unsupported arguments in the case of the first adaptation. With a growing emphasis on archival research and methodological sophistication, translation history research has

evolved into a much more complex pursuit that cannot be undertaken based solely on one's subjective interpretation of a text or its title.

With its link to history, a translation is no longer considered an isolated phenomenon occurring in a vacuum. Commenting on a translation is tantamount to commenting on a period of history and its historical, cultural and social context. An adverse comment unsupported by evidence can show a particular community or faith in a poor light and distort history. In the case of the first adaptation, the commentary by the previous scholarship has the potential to present Parsi theatre or community in a particular light. Therefore, as Malena (2011, 87) expects, it is imperative that "translation scholars "doing history" to be familiar with methods used by historians and the debates about them". Translation researchers, therefore, need to carry out their work keeping their role in mind as translation historians, which is no less sacred than the work of historians proper. Therefore, translation history researchers may need to integrate these approaches that lead to evidence-based, archival research.

Previous Scholarships' Assertions and their Performance Viability

While the previous scholarship did not access the primary sources to make the assertions of a European/foreign woman playing the role of Kate in the first Shakespeare adaptation in a modern Indian language, they also did not consider what these assertions will mean for the performance of the play. It should be borne in mind that primarily the adaptation was meant for the stage. It was performed in the Andrews Library at Surat, Gujarat. Parsi theatre was known for theatre performances of Shakespeare's plays adapted to the Indian context. In this context, before making those assertions about a European woman playing Kate in a Gujarati adaptation of a Shakespearean play, the previous scholarship should have considered the performance viability of such assertions. In fact, even if they did not have access to the text of the adaptation, considering the performance implications of their assertions would have prevented them from making those assertions. To start with, the question is, if the play was adapted in Gujarati, which is a modern

Indian language and if the character playing Kate was a European/foreigner, how would she communicate with other characters in the play? It would be good to keep in mind that the adaptation was set in a typical Parsi family and Indian context, and the language of the text was Gujarati. Performed in Surat, the audience was also going to be Gujarati, and they could not have followed anything if a character were to articulate dialogues in a language other than Gujarati. If the character playing Kate articulated her lines in English, no communication would be possible between her and the other characters in the play. Moreover, even if the characters in the play understood what an English-speaking European Kate said, the audience would most certainly not have followed what she had to say. If the European Kate spoke in Gujarati, how would that appear on stage? A play containing European characters talking in Gujarati mixed with elements of the Parsi language, it would seem absurd and laughable for all the wrong reasons. This thought alone should have prevented the previous scholarship from making those assertions regarding Kate being a European or a foreigner.

Even if one were to assume for a moment that the character playing Kate was a European/foreigner, how would she fit into the plot of the play? What was a European woman doing in a Parsi/Indian household? Secondly, *The Taming of the Shrew* is about two sisters, and the headstrong Kate is compared with her sister. It is a study in contrast. The Indian adaptation can be no different, and it should also have two sisters- one of them being quarrelsome and unpleasant. If the character of Kate were played by a European/foreigner, how would the plot have two sisters, and how would it work on stage? How can we have one girl who is European/foreigner and her sister is an Indian? How can the comparison be made between a European and a Parsi girl? The contrast could only be created between two sisters from a similar social context. This is a theatrical impossibility that the previous scholarship did not stop to ponder before making assertions of a European Kate in an Indian adaptation. As the text reveals, the Indian adaptation also had two sisters- Farangij and Meherbanu. Both were a part of a typical Parsi family that the audience could

relate to. A European Kate in this Parsi adaptation had no theatrical basis.

As Sujata Iyengar argues, theatre groups adapted Shakespeare, making use of "hyper-local ways" rendering him, "foreign but neighbourly" (2022, p. 135). Parsi theatre was no different; it was primarily a commercial enterprise that entertained the audiences, remaking Shakespeare in a way that indigenised his tales. In other words, they knew the pulse of the audience and adapted plays in a way that the adaptations would resonate with the audience. They crafted plays which would deal with issues that Indian audiences would be able to relate to. As regards the first adaptation, it is obvious how the Indian/Parsi audience would find it nearly impossible to relate to a European Kate. In fact, the play is about invoking the idea that women should play their typical gender role and follow the patriarchal system obediently. Moreover, the audience would be able to relate only if an Indian woman is being tamed and if the play reinforces the Indian social order, where women are meek and surrender to the social code of conduct. They would find it hard to relate to a European woman being tamed. Invoking the basic historical question "why" has profound implications for translation history in general, and translation history in India, in particular.

Methodological Insights for Translation History

As the revelations of the text of the first adaptation vis-à-vis the assertions of previous scholarship indicate, there is a need to rework the theoretical framework and methodology of translation history in India. It is a case study of how the methodology regarding translation history in India needs to be revamped when it comes to situating a translation in its historical context. It cannot be based on one's instinctive interpretations without textual or archival evidence to support the claims. Secondly, it is also high time that one started critically looking at previous scholarship and examined it objectively, rather than blindly accepting everything and building on the claims of previous scholarship. It is disappointing that not a single subsequent scholar bothered to critically analyse the claims of previous scholarship and simply accepted them as the ultimate truth.

In fact, every successive scholar ratified the previous claims and added their own similar claims that extended the original thesis provided by previous scholarship.

Instead, as the study suggests, the approach to translation history should be evidence-based. It should be carried out like a proper historical endeavour. In historical research, one cannot make unfounded assumptions. With an open mind, one must go where facts take them. Secondly, there is a long list of theorists who have given key ideas on how translation history should be approached. Any endeavour on translation history in India should be based on the ideas of key theorists who have charted the methodology for translation history. Starting from Paul St-Pierre to Andrew Lefevere, from Lieven D'hulst to Anthony Pym and Georges L. Bastin and Paul F. Bandia to Christopher Rundle, each one provided significant insights on how translation history should be explored. In India, there is a dire need to rework the methodology and align it to the insights provided by previous and contemporary scholarship. Moreover, there should be a greater emphasis on archival research that leads to the recovery of texts and secondary data that throws new light on translation in India. Merely citing previous scholars to make new claims, as happened in the case of the first adaptation, does not suffice to carry out rigorous translation history research. Translation history must have a component of archival research that lays the ground for newer interpretations and fresh insights on existing perspectives on translation and its history in India. The present study illustrates how archival research can transform the existing narratives and provide a new way of looking at translation in India.

Conclusion

Translation history is inherently an intercultural area of research. The previous scholarship disregarded what Pym asserts, "Translators are not *within* a culture; they always act *on the boundaries* of cultures; their work is thus always *intercultural*" (1992, p. 232). If this is true, translations are tricky as intercultural artefacts because there is a danger of completely misunderstanding them and the underlying objective that made the translation possible. To add to

this, as Pym (2009, p. 23) argues, the true objective of Translation Studies is to improve relations between cultures and make narrative sense of the relations between those cultures. In fact, if we were to continue the methodology of the previous scholarship, we would have a narrative that ends up making a flawed case for relations between these two cultures. Instead, we should look for a methodology that brings to the fore the true nature of transactions between cultures.

As Santoyo (2006, p. 13) states, many parts of the translation history are "well-charted", but there are "vast unknown territories" that are yet to be explored. It is particularly true in the case of India. In India, large quantities of archival data lie in wait for translation historians. An archival and evidence-based approach may illuminate the vast unknown territories. This will help us uncover insights that may be valuable, not only for translation history but also for history proper.

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