A Critical Examination of Post-colonial Punjabi Shakespearean Translations

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Contents

The research and writing in this thesis have been undertaken by Kiran Singh. The research has been ethically approved.

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Abstract

Shakespearean adaptations written between 1999 and 2014 in the Punjabi language form the focus of this study. The way in which the writers translate Shakespeare's plays is significant because it provides an insight into how the writers use Shakespeare to interact with other literatures and how different approaches of translation have developed. Shakespeare's engagement with various Indian languages and cultural systems is well documented and has received much scholarly attention. However, the Punjabi language translations have not received any critical attention. This is partly because Shakespeare's work, in its entirety and as a collection, has only been published in Punjabi in the last 23 years.

The selected texts are diverse, ranging from Punjabi translations of *The Tempest* (*Jhakhkhar* and *Toofan*) and *Romeo and Juliet* (*Romio te Julit* and *Romeo atte Juliet*), as well as an adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors* (*Double di Trouble*). They demonstrate how the writers use indigenous techniques in their work and interact with other genres of literature, especially literature that is deeply embedded in Punjabi history, such as Sufi literature and Partition narratives. The diverse translations produced are located within different cultural, contemporary, fictional and historical contexts. The texts illustrate how the writers capitalise on inherent themes of the original plays for their own purposes whilst also replacing themes with those that are more relevant to the Punjabi audiences, since one of the foremost intentions of the translators has been to introduce Shakespeare to the Punjabi readership and audiences.

This thesis argues that the translations and adaptations can be read and interpreted using a critical framework that draws upon historical, cultural, political, and ideological perspectives and contexts. The research provides a new approach for analysing Punjabi Shakespeare in a way that does not confine the texts to Shakespeare studies or the Punjabi language. The theoretical and critical approaches that the study engages with are multi-disciplinary, which develop new ways of reading the translations. The notions of resettlement and belonging, as well as elements of Sufi literature are analysed and discussed in this thesis.

This study breaks new grounds as there is no other study which critically examines the selected Punjabi Shakespearean translations and does this through the lens of partition narratives and Sufi literature.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Opening

> 'We have no school of critics. Flatterers, back scratchers, yes. Slanderers, yes. Honest critics, no.'[1]

Khushwant Singh's Foreword to Mohinder Pal Kohli's *The Influence of the West on Punjabi literature* laments the lack of literary criticism in Punjabi literary studies, as quoted above. In the Foreword, Khushwant Singh suggests that Punjabi literature and literary studies have been influenced more by Western writing than the literary practices of South Asian languages. However, the practice of literary criticism, which is well established in Western canons, has not been inherited by the Punjabi writers. My thesis takes this as the starting point, the examination of the vacuum of literary critical perspectives while analysing the interrelation between both translations of Shakespeare and Partition writing/film, and intersections with Sufi literature.

This study argues that Shakespearean Punjabi translations can be analysed and read through a range of critical perspectives. First, the study focuses on four translations from the collections of post-colonial Punjabi Shakespearean translations, *Jhakhkhar,*

[1] Mohinder Pal Kohli*, The Influence of the West on Punjabi Literature*, self-published by the author (1969). Available online: ..:: Panjab Digital Library ::.. (panjabdigilib.org). Date accessed: 13/04/22, 21:13.

Romio te Julit[2]*, Toofan* and *Romeo atte Juliet*[3] written by Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh between 1999 and 2014. Second, the cinematic adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors* written and directed by Smeep Kang in 2014 is studied to provide another perspective of the spoken language as well as written translations.[4] The writers of the Punjabi translations aim to introduce Shakespeare to a Punjabi readership and audience, but this study shows that the Punjabi translations based on Shakespearean writing transcend these initial aims and can be read as new writing. Finally, this study considers a range of questions concerning the writer's aims to manipulate, rework or reimagine Shakespearean texts: How do pre-colonial literary traditions evolve in writing? What is the influence and impact of colonialism on indigenous language and writing? How is the post-colonial condition reflected in Shakespearean derived texts? How does the process of decolonisation transpire in post-colonial translation? How far do the adaptations harbour subversion? Why is self-representation (and the Other) important? Does recharacterisation enable the writers to decentre the original texts? The discussion chapters of this dissertation explore and answer these questions.

The central argument of this thesis is that Surjit Hans, Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang aim to introduce Shakespeare to their new Punjabi readership and audiences in a way which remains faithful to the original plays, however, in the process of translation, they resist Eurocentric readings which means that, instead they have space to develop new

[2] Surjit Hans, *Jhakhkhar* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1999) and Surjit Hans, *Romio te Julit* (Patiala, Punjabi University, 2005).

[3] Achhru Singh, *Toofan* in *Shakespeare dian kahaniya* - I (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2012) and Achhru Singh, *Romeo atte Juliet* in *Shakespeare dian kahaniya* – II (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2012).

[4] Smeep Kang (dir), *Double di Trouble* (White Hill, 2014)

interpretations of Shakespeare that engage with their new Punjabi readership and audience. Thus, the translations are inherently hybrid – essentially Shakespearean and Punjabi - since Hans, Achhru Singh and Kang draw on a diverse range of sources and genres to create adaptations that are at once Shakespearean but also reflect relevant concerns to the new Punjabi audiences. The contextual and historical engagement of the Punjab with Shakespeare's work helps to demonstrate why particular critical perspectives can be adopted to read the translations. In the process of analysis, it can be challenging to categorise the Punjabi texts to a specific genre or tradition of translation and adaptation. The different genres and traditions that the writers draw upon to inform their practice have implications for the reception and reading of the translations. In this study, this practice is viewed as a process that has enabled the development of different approaches for the translation of Punjabi Shakespeare, which draw upon pre-colonial traditions and weave in meta-narratives that are relevant to the Punjabi context. First, Hans' takes an approach that aims to maintain the form of Shakespearean writing whilst reworking character representations. Whilst the fidelity seen in Hans' translations is closer to older neo-colonial sentiments, at the same time, it challenges the colonial influence in Punjabi writing and reverts to pre-colonial traditions which makes this approach to translation subversive in its nature. This approach is radically different from the work of Achhru Singh who uses an approach that strives to relay the narrative of the Shakespearean play, rather than maintain the form. Achhru Singh's primary objective is to emphasise the major and minor narratives of each play in a way that becomes relevant and familiar to the Punjabi context. These two approaches to translation, in spite of their differences, overlap and at points merge with each other. This can be seen in the analysis of the film, *Double di Trouble*, which deploys aspects of both approaches,

although the film aligns more closely with Achhru Singh's approach. Achhru Singh's approach embeds political and contemporary debates into the narratives, which is also seen in Kang's film. Achhru Singh blends pre-colonial oral traditions with colonial imports of literary forms for his own purposes which also makes his approach to translation subversive. In a colonial context, Shakespearean adaptations have been used to introduce Shakespeare in an elevated position compared to indigenous writing, however, writers at the time injected their own forms of writing and styles into Shakespeare's work (discussed further in Chapter 2). This practice mars the intention of the colonial masters to elevate Shakespeare and makes the writers' work subversive of this colonial imposition.

This study uses Punjabi Partition literature, which is writing that concentrates on the partition experiences of the Punjabi community, and Punjabi Sufi writing, which is a pre-colonial tradition of writing, amongst other literary traditions, to unpack some of the writers' concerns (partition and pre-colonial traditions will be further contextualised in Chapter 2). It aims to contribute to the development of readings of the Punjabi adaptations of Shakespearean writing, theorise the critical perspectives that can be used to analyse Shakespeare's engagement with Punjabi language, and to widen the field of Punjabi literary criticism.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study which analyses the form and content of selected post-colonial Punjabi translations. The methodology of this thesis focusses primarily on critical analysis; however, the interweaving and application of disparate literary

theories and a diverse range of critical perspectives is necessary to gain an in-depth analysis and multiplicity of readings that move away from the simplification of reading the translations through a single perspective and acknowledge the translations as new work in their own right. Consequently, my research is illuminated with a range of critical perspectives and historical contexts that are Punjabi-orientated, as discussed in Chapter 2, as well as post-colonial theories in the ensuing chapters which discuss the Punjabi translations and film.

My approach has been inductive and inter-disciplinary because it draws upon literary theories, especially post-colonial literary theory, as well as the disciplines of translation studies and cultural studies. To maintain an inductive approach and minimise reading the Punjabi translations with pre-conceived ideas; I read the Punjabi translations and watched the film before engaging with the original Shakespearean plays (*The Tempest, Romeo and Juliet* and *The Comedy of Errors*), and reading the main body of criticism associated with each of the plays. However, I understand that an absolute inductive approach is not possible as researchers will always engage with their sources through the ideologies and contexts that they bring with them to the research but to reduce the potential of the analysis being conducted deductively I avoided any critical material that might be available in relation to the translations and original plays. However, I was aware of the original Shakespearean plays and had engaged with them previously. Once I had read the translations and watched the film, I noted the main themes that emerged from these Punjab versions. I then conducted a literature search using Google scholar and Ebsco host, but this did not return any results that were specifically about the translations that I had selected for the study. This online search did, however, yield a research paper by Kartar Singh Duggal which focussed

on Punjabi Shakespearean translations between 1911 to 1961. Whilst I had already selected the translations for my study, this paper did provide a very useful historical background on Shakespearean translation in the Punjab which I used as a comparative tool for the more recent translations that I had selected. I was aware that these search tools may not have been the most appropriate because I do not know how likely it is that Punjabi scholars would publish their research in traditional mainstream journals. However, as I was unable to travel during the period of study due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I needed to use online search tools, and these were the tools that I initially selected for the literature search but as they did not yield any useful results, I sought alternative online search tools. I then tried online search tools that I deemed to be more Punjabi-orientated such as Apna.org and Punjabidigilib.org which are both online Punjabi-language book and article depositories. However, similar to the previous searches, the searches on these online depositories did not return any results that were specific to the translations that I had selected for the study. I then conducted a comparative study between the original plays and their translations. I have compared two translations with the original plays, from the collections written by Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh, these are based on *The Tempest* and *Romeo and Juliet*. I have also compared a Punjabi film, *Double di Trouble*, which is based on Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* with the original play. The film is written and directed by Smeep Kang, the plot and direction of the film will be considered in the analysis, as well as the actors' interpretation of the script and narrative. When analysing the translations, I have read the texts, prefaces and footnotes to inform my findings. Whereas I have made comparisons between the thematic concerns of the translations and film, it is important to state that I have not read a script of the film as this has not been available to me. Therefore, my analysis of the film is solely

dependent on the actor's interpretation of the script and the director's decisions in directing the performance of the actors. When comparing across the translations themselves, I examined connections to previously written translations. I compared and analysed form, narrative, characters, and themes in an inductive way. I recorded the differences and similarities in themes and characters between the originals and translations. I followed this up with critical analysis of why these differences and similarities may exist; to do this, I have researched historical and cultural contexts related to the Punjab; Punjabi translations; and Punjabi literature, especially Sufi literature, and Partition narratives. Using this analysis, I have developed an argument which shows that the writers have taken different approaches when translating the plays into Punjabi. I argue that these approaches can be used to read and view the translations and film through specific perspectives. Where I have discussed how the writers make their translations different to the originals, it is because these are the points at which new readings of the translations can be gained and not because I am in any way criticising the translations for lack of fidelity to the originals. Comparing the differences also means that I can view the translations as work in their own right, which is where they interrogate and reinterpret the source material to create new versions of the originals. In the process of doing this, I have translated the Punjabi translations back into English to be able to discuss the analysis in this thesis. In relation to this double translation, Gayatri Spivak's work on translation, which will also be discussed in Chapter 2, serves as a reminder that there is an ethical element to the process of translation, which asserts that 'cultural translation' is very much dependent on the translator's position. She uses the example of *Foe* written by J.M. Coetzee, in which the book 'represents the impropriety of the dominant's desire to give voice to the

native.'[5] She concludes that 'you cannot translate from a position of monolinguist superiority.'[6] In light of this, my translation of the Punjabi writers' translations of Shakespeare back into English should be culturally accurate since I am not working from a position of 'monolinguist superiority' or through the 'dominant's desire' but from a position which has knowledge of both English and Punjabi (this position is further explained in the opening of Chapter 2). Spivak states:

> 'Let us learn the lesson of translation from these brilliant inside/outsiders and translate it into the situation of other languages.'[7]

and

> 'I want to show how the post-colonial as the outside/insider translated white theory as she reads, so that she can discriminate on the terrain of the original. She wants to use what is useful.'[8]

Therefore, although Spivak's discussion is about the reading of theory by a post-colonial, I have positioned myself as an 'outside/insider' when translating the Punjabi

[5] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), p. 218. Date accessed April 30, 2023.

[6] Ibid, p. 218.

[7] Ibid, p. 221.

[8] Ibid, p. 221.

translations back into English because whatever I have read prior to translating will seep into the process of my translation.

The other main challenges in this study have been:

a) How to approach the form of the translations, i.e., as performance or as literary drama
b) How, as a second-generation British Asian woman living in the diaspora and working on Punjabi translations written by writers living in the Punjab, do I ensure that I achieve an understanding of the critical expectations of both literary cultures, diasporic and Punjabi.

I have addressed these issues as systematically as possible. I have approached the translations as literary drama because the translations that I selected for the study have not yet been performed. My searches returned no record of stage or film performance of Hans' or Achhru Singh's translations, thus the only way for me to analyse the translations would be as literary drama. So, it would not have been possible to analyse performative elements of Punjabi Shakespearean drama without a performance. Thus, to provide another approach, I have analysed a film, where spoken Punjabi can also be considered alongside the written Punjabi translations. This enabled me to analyse the actors' interpretation of a Shakespearean play adapted for Punjabi cinema. To gain an overall understanding of Punjabi Shakespearean translation, I compare across these different forms. To ensure I achieve an understanding of critical expectations of both literary cultures I have engaged with the Punjabi writers' explanations of their process of translation, Punjabi writers and

theorists, and post-colonial theorists. My bibliography is selective, including Punjabi and diasporic authors, critics, and theorists whose discourse situate them in a Punjabi post-colonialist position.

Another challenge was to select which translations to study from the collections because it would not have been possible to do an in-depth study of 59 plays. However, I chose to study the Punjabi translations of those plays written by Hans and Achhru Singh, *The Tempest* and *Romeo and Juliet,* which had not previously been published in Punjabi by other writers. My searches concluded that there was only one Punjabi film adaptation of Shakespeare, and I included this in the study to demonstrate how the film was deploying different approaches to translation and how it had been successful in reaching out to the Punjabi audience compared to the written translations. I was unable to study stage productions, as there were no current shows or available recordings of past productions.

A final point about my methodological approach is in regard to terminology. I have used the terms ‘translation’, ‘reworking’ and ‘adaptation’ for the translations because they all denote a transformation of the texts from one language into another. However, I am aware that these terms have different meanings; to translate is to transfer from a source language to a target language; to rework is to manipulate and change; and to adapt is to repurpose. The translations do all of this, so where I have referred to them as ‘translations’ it is because the writers are transforming the plays from English into Punjabi; where I use ‘reworking’ is where the writers are changing the plays to give new meanings; and I have used ‘adaptation’ when the writers recontextualise and

repurpose the plays for a Punjabi readership. I have also used the term 'adaptation' for the film because the play has been adapted from the stage for the screen, and this aligns with the terminology for film studies. I have used the term 'recharacterisation' in line with Lyn Whitaker's discussion about recharacterisation novels. She states that this is a:

> 'Interpretive-creative process in which writers borrow a character from an earlier text and make her or him the protagonist of their novels, giving those characters an afterlife in which they exist anew. Whether these novels change the source texts character/s only some or a great deal, the fictional personae are thus recharacterised.'[9]

Whitaker's statement aligns closely to the way in which Surjit Hans writes his characters in the translations.

Originality and significance of research

The originality of this thesis emanates from my linking together and applying of discrete theories and critical perspectives to provide two approaches to translation, for reading and interpreting Punjabi Shakespearean translations. Surjit Hans', Achhru Singh's and Smeep Kang's voyages into Shakespeare through the Punjabi language

[9] Lynn Whitaker, 'The Afterlives of Fictional Characters: Recharacterization, Copyright, and Postmodern Literary Practice' (2015). Available online: whittaker_lynn_e_201505_phd.pdf (uga.edu) Date accessed 26/03/22, 8:09.

are important since they speak of how Punjabis are situated in relation to Shakespeare after the colonial encounter.

Poonam Trivedi and Dennis Bartholomeusz, in their book, *India's Shakespeare: Translation, Interpretation and Performance*[10]*,* note that critical accord is yet to be attributed to 'India's Shakespeare'. This is despite the availability of an extensive range of Shakespeare adaptations available in numerous Indian languages, for example, in Bengali, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Sindhi, Urdu, and even, Sanskrit. Trivedi and Bartholomeusz, therefore, explore and examine the adaptations and works available in various Indian languages but there is no mention, exploration or comparison of Shakespearean translations in Punjabi.

Punjabi is a regional language which originated in the Northern area of Punjab in India. The area of Punjab is divided into two separate parts by the India-Pakistan border and for this reason Punjabi is spoken by a multitude of religious groups: Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Following the colonisation of India, in which the population of India experienced in varying degrees the effects of colonisation and independence, different regions have rewritten, reworked and reimagined Shakespeare in indigenous languages. Due to colonial history, Punjabi is also believed to be the most common language among British Asians and is now the third most spoken language in Britain, it was the second most spoken for a long time but has been taken over by Polish due

[10] Poonam Trivedi and Dennis Bartholomeusz, *India's Shakespeare: Translation, Interpretation and Performance* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).

to intense migration within Europe in the last twenty years.[11] Despite this, there is very little evidence of scholarly engagement with the translation and reception of Shakespeare in Punjabi. My research proposes combing these unexplored areas and therefore, this study will compare and examine Shakespearean translation in Punjabi which has not previously been attempted.

Thesis structure

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1, which has already been presented, includes the main questions which the study aims to answer. Chapter 2 is a discussion of the main critical perspectives used in the analysis of the translations. Hence, it begins by discussing translation. It raises the key points that translation involves more than the transfer of language. This suggests that translation is a complex process in which the ideologies, world views and material positions of the writers play a big part. Hence, I also examine what they have said themselves about the process of translation which provides further insights about how the translations can be read. However, bearing this complexity in mind, I have been careful not to seek one true reading of the translations, instead I examined them using a diverse range of critical perspectives.

[11] 'Punjabi is third-most spoken language in England' (2013). Available online: Wales: Punjabi is third-most spoken language in England - The Economic Times (indiatimes.com). Date accessed: 17/07/22, 12:09.

Whilst the intimate involvement of the writers in the process of translation provides ways of reading the translations, there are also some historical contexts which influence the way in which the translations are developed and produced. I argue that the impact of colonialism on Punjabi education and literature is one such context. When English, as a medium for education and as a subject, was introduced in the Punjab it influenced the writers who were then students that received an 'English' education. Not only did they now have the English language as a new outlet for writing but when taught English literature, they were introduced to new forms and styles. I demonstrate that this influenced Punjabi literature because it instigated a collaboration of pre-colonial traditions and English forms that were new to the writers. During this period, there were some staunch advocates of the English language becoming the primary language in the Punjab, on the other hand, there was also a significant amount of resistance to this. This ensued in a drive to retain Punjab's own pre-colonial writing traditions and literature, so they became very well preserved and embedded in contemporary Punjabi literature. I have argued that this has impacted the translations, because not only do they incorporate pre-colonial traditions when using Shakespearean form, but they also stage the same resistance as their predecessors.

The advent of English literature as a subject in Punjabi universities meant that Shakespeare, as the 'epitome' of English literature, was introduced to the Punjab. In Chapter 2, I have argued that the way in which Punjabi literary circles engaged with Shakespeare has provided, for the writers examined on this study, an archive of early Shakespearean translation upon which to build their work. The early engagement with Shakespeare produced a range of translations and adaptations in the Punjab and my analysis shows that the writers take up similar concerns and use the same techniques

and strategies as the early translations, as well as deploying new perspectives. I have developed a form of categorisation for the early translations and used this to develop the idea that there are different approaches to the Punjabi Shakespearean translation that have grown from Punjab's initial engagement with Shakespeare. This is the basis upon which I argue that there are different approaches to the contemporary translation of Shakespeare in Punjabi.

In Chapter 2, I have also provided an overview of aspects of Partition literature and Sufi literature. I conducted my study of the translations using an inductive approach, and this produced themes and concerns that were present in the translations, some of these were elements of Partition and Sufi traditions of writing. The writers use the same writing strategies and characteristic representations as these traditions. I have discussed how Partition literature has been developed since the partition took place and the place that it now occupies in Punjabi writing. I argue that the translations can be described as post-partition Shakespeare because they use the Shakespearean translations as a space to discuss the concerns of partition and develop the themes presented in partition literature. I have also addressed the lack of critical attention that Punjabi partition writing has received.

In the final section of Chapter 2, I have discussed Punjabi Sufi writing and the elements of this that are relevant to the Shakespearean translations, namely Punjabi Sufi poetry and the *Qissa* narratives. I argue that the writers use pre-colonial traditions in their translations of Shakespeare's work to make it more recognisable for the Punjabi readers and as a way of preserving their heritage.

Chapter 3 demonstrates how Hans has maintained a strong fidelity to the original by examining the form and narrative of the translations in comparison to the originals. I discuss the challenges of this process for Hans and how it could have produced a sense of alienation for the Punjabi readers. However, Hans used a variety of writing strategies to make his translations more familiar and relevant to the Punjabi readers which domesticates and repurposes Shakespeare. I analyse how Hans' use of appropriation recontextualises the play into a Punjabi context, making it more relevant to the Punjabi readers. This was important for Hans because his main intention was to get Punjabi readers to read Shakespeare, whereby they may not have engaged with it if it had not been available in Punjabi. I have also shown that this appropriation also relocates Hans' geographically in the Punjab. I examine how the recontextualization and relocation work together to stage a resistance through writing, when Hans refuses to accept and deploy western cultural impositions in his translation.

I have also examined the hybridity achieved in Hans' translations through the renaming of the characters and code switching. I argue that this is a reminder of the duality of the text, essentially signifying that the translations are the products of two languages at once. I end chapter 3 by discussing how Hans' recharacterisation of the characters, through the use of Sufi poetry and archetypes, has meant that he blends pre-colonial traditions with Shakespearean form and narrative. I argue that this subverts the original plays because Hans uses Shakespeare for his own purposes.

Chapter 4 demonstrates, through literary analysis, that Achhru Singh's translations can be read as post-partition Shakespeare. I show where themes and concerns are presented in the translations that regularly appear in partition literature, and how this refocusses the plays. I argue that this decentres the translations and thus, Achhru Singh resists regurgitating Eurocentric interpretations of the plays.

I also argue that Achhru Singh's translations are similar to Han's translations because they both borrow from pre-colonial traditions in their writing. Singh deploys the techniques of story-telling that belong to the *Qissa* tradition. I argue that this builds upon the work of writers who also do this in partition writing and creates a sense of familiarity for the Punjabi audiences. Whilst Singh uses elements of pre-colonial traditions in his work, at the same time he also uses narrative forms that were introduced to the Punjab during the colonial period. I argue that this demonstrates the hybridity of the translations and reflects the impact that Western literature and colonialism has had on the Punjabi writing.

I also argue that Achhru Singh's approach in translating Shakespeare into Punjabi differs from Hans' because the aims vary; Singh's utmost intention is to introduce the narratives of the Shakespearean plays rather than the Shakespearean form. Also, Hans recharacterises his characters so that they become more familiar and recognisable to the new Punjabi readers, whereby, Achhru Singh works in a similar way, but it is the themes and concerns that he refocuses rather than the characters of his translations.

In Chapter 5, I examined a Punjabi-language film entitled *Double di Trouble*, which has been written and directed by Smeep Kang. The film is an adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors*. I argue that the film can be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare. I argue that Kang's adaptation is more successful at reaching a Punjabi audience than Hans' and Achhru Singh's translations have been, this is partly due to the global reach of Punjabi regional cinema. I also demonstrate that Kang's film takes elements of both the approaches that Hans and Achhru Singh have used in translating Shakespeare into Punjabi. Kang introduces Shakespeare as the inspiration for the film from the outset and so like Hans foregrounds Shakespeare. I argue that this reminds us of the hybridity and duality of Shakespearean translation. Kang also refocuses the themes of the film, so they align with the concerns and debates that are relevant to the partition. Kang contributes the debate about gendered reconstruction of the partition by including the voices of one woman but not of the remaining female characters.

In Chapter 6, I conclude that there are two main approaches that the writers have taken in translating Shakespeare into Punjabi. I demonstrated how these approaches are different to each other, but also that they include a considerable amount of overlap. I theorised what these approaches look like and how this contributes to reading the translations through a diverse range of critical perspectives. I acknowledged the limits of my study and indicated areas for possible further research.

Chapter 2

Using diverse critical perspectives to read Punjabi Shakespearean translations

Opening

Since 1999, two writers, Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh, have published collections of Shakespeare's plays in the Punjabi language; Hans has published each of the plays separately and Singh has published two volumes of the plays. This literary activity by the writers has given new meaning and perspective to the concept of Shakespearean translation in Punjabi. This chapter discusses the critical frameworks and historical context through which the translations have been analysed and to define and understand translation in a Punjabi context. Thus, in this chapter, I discuss how Punjabi translation has developed and the way in which this contributes to how we can examine the translations.

However, before I discuss the critical perspectives that I have used in interpreting the translations, I believe it is important to discuss my positionality in relation to the research undertaken and translations analysed for this study. My relationship to the Punjabi language and the state of Punjab, pre-exists this study. My grandparents, maternal and paternal, were born in the Punjab and my parents, whilst not born in the Punjab, both identified themselves as Punjabi. Furthermore, as a child, I grew up in a household which was steeped in Punjabi culture and ideology, from the food ate every day to the language spoken in the house, and the customs observed during rites of passage as well as dress and behaviours. Furthermore, I was taught to read and write Punjabi from the age of 5, and I am a fluent Punjabi speaker. Thus, I am able, to not only examine the translations from a linguistic point of view, but also to examine them

from a cultural perspective and world view that is specific to the Punjab and Punjabi. I am able to detect the cultural and societal intricacies that emerge in the translations due to my position as a Punjabi. However, as well as identifying as Punjabi, I also identify as British. I am a second-generation British Indian of Punjabi heritage because I was born in England; all my academic education has taken place in England, and my undergraduate degree is in English literature. Thus, the formal education I have received is Eurocentric in its content and ideological approach. This places me in a privileged position which has enabled me to analyse the translations using both a Punjabi world view and understanding of Punjabi literature but also having an awareness of the Eurocentric aspect of the translations and English literary theory.

As a student of English literature and a researcher, it is important for me to analyse the Punjabi translations of Shakespeare's plays because these translations have been neglected by Shakespearean scholars who have studied Shakespeare in other Indian languages. My study is intended to create a discussion about the Punjabi translations and give them the same prominence as Shakespeare in other Indian regional languages. To enable a conversation about the Punjabi translations that is authentic and rooted in Punjabi ideology, I have endeavoured to use critics and theorists who have specifically worked on Punjabi literature and language, and who would be familiar with a Punjabi context, either through their heritage or because they reside in the Punjab. However, this approach has its limitations because the majority of seminal Punjabi literary criticism was written between fifty and seventy years ago, so, significant changes that have taken place in the Punjab since then have not been explored. For example, the impact of the partition and independence from colonial rule on Punjabi literature and Punjabi writing have not been critically evaluated, therefore,

I have also had to use and adapt other critical discourses to frame my discussions in this study. The post-colonial framework has been the most relevant and apt in enabling me to critically evaluate the translations. Post-colonial theories and debates are well developed in relation to the conditions that I want to explore in the translations, in comparison to the nascent Punjabi critical discourse that currently exists. However, to position myself as a Punjabi critic, I have used post-colonial critical discourses in ways that are relevant for the Punjabi translations rather than rely on them alone. This also means that I can use the post-colonial discourse, which is well established, as a foundation, to then further develop the Punjabi critical discourse which is crucial in evaluating the Punjabi translations.

Translation studies, Post-colonial translation and Punjabi translation

This study can be categorised, amongst other things, as a study of translation since the focus of the study is the translation of Shakespeare's plays, the source texts, into the target language of Punjabi. Therefore, the discipline of translation studies as a critical framework can be applied in the analyses of the translations and film selected for this study. However, it is important to recognise that different cultures, languages, and communities have their own concept of translation and its study, and this should also be considered rather than apply a generalised and broad framework to the study. This is especially pertinent to this study because Jeremy Munday argues that:

> ‘Much of translation theory has until recently also been written from a western perspective and initially derived from the study of Classical Greek and Latin and from Biblical practice.’[12]

Thus, it would be remiss of me as a researcher to simply apply broad and generalised translation theories and frameworks to my study, especially as this study focusses on post-colonial Punjabi translations, and one of the aims of post-colonial studies is to resist western imposition. For example, Munday states, ‘The European translator is imposing a pro-western ideology and discourse on the recounting of the history of the Americas,’[13] so this would be counter-intuitive to the aims of this thesis. Nonetheless, there are some useful concepts and arguments that can be taken from the discipline of translation studies as a starting point for this study. For example, some of my analysis of the translations includes the debate about how closely the translations try to repeat the original structures, words and sentences of the source text that is prevalent in translation studies. In accordance with this, Munday states:

> ‘In these poles can be seen the origin of both the ‘literal vs. free’ and ‘form vs. content’ debate that has continued until modern times.’[14]

[12] Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies; Theories and Applications* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 10.

[13] Ibid, p. 157.

[14] Ibid, p. 32.

Whilst, in my study I have not advocated for either type of translation, literal or free, or confined myself to study either form or content, I have drawn on some of the issues around this to analyse the translations. For example, in Chapter 3, I discuss how Surjit Hans, in translating the Shakespearean plays, uses an approach which adheres closely to the original play structure and form, as well as using a significant amount of transliteration to be able to closely capture the spirit of the original play. I argue that this has implications for the way in which the translations can be received and perceived by the Punjabi readers. Surjit Hans also deploys strategies which address some of the implications of this reception.

Furthermore, my analyses of the translations are based on the premise that translation does not occur in a vacuum, and this is something that Munday sets out early in his book too. He states:

> 'Linguistic transfer of course still occurs within a sociocultural and historical context and institutional environment that place their own constraints on the process'.[15]

[15] Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies; Theories and Applications* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 24.

This is a really important point for this study because I have used various socio-historical concepts to analyse the translations, for example, I have used the colonial encounter and the partition of the Punjab to analyse how writers merge forms in their translations and shift the focus of the plays. Nonetheless, I see this as less of a 'constraint' and more of a way in which the writers enrich their translations.

Thus, whilst drawing on translations studies as a broad discipline is useful to an extent, it is more valuable to use the work of critics like Tejaswini Niranjana, Gayatri Spivak, Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi as a backdrop to my study because they concentrate on post-colonial translation specifically. For example, Niranjana's book, *Siting Translation*, draws on the particulars of post-colonial translation that make it a site for resistance and transformation.[16] Niranjana states:

> 'In a post-colonial context the problematic of *translation* becomes a significant site for raising questions of representation, power and historicity. The context is one of contesting and contested stories attempting to account for, to recount, the asymmetry and inequality of relations between peoples, races, languages.'[17]

[16] Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1992).

[17] Ibid, p. 1.

The issues of inequality that Niranjana mentions are important to this study because they align with my discussion about how the writers champion the Punjabi language positing it as an equal to the English language. Furthermore, in line with Niranjana's arguments, I have demonstrated that there are specific points in the Punjabi Shakespearean translations where the writers resist colonial impositions and the temptations to perpetuate Eurocentric interpretations through the strategies that they deploy to rewrite the Shakespearean narratives. On this basis, I argue that the Punjabi writers deconstruct notions of inequality and western power.

Gayatri Spivak has also written about post-colonial translation in her book *Outside in the Teaching Machine*.[18] Whilst Spivak's discussion concentrates on translation between women writers and from indigenous languages into English, Spivak recognises that her arguments can apply more broadly, therefore, they are useful in understanding translatory practice from a post-colonial perspective.[19] Spivak, like Niranjana, carves out translation as a space that can present and reproduce inequalities. For example, she states:

[18] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), Date accessed April 30 2023.

[19] Spivak states 'Although I have used examples of women all along, the arguments apply across the board. It is just that women's rhetoricity may be doubly obscured'. Ibid, p. 216.

> ‘The status of a language in the world is what one must consider when teasing out the politics of translation.’[20]

Spivak’s use of ‘status’ infers that the writers must grapple with hierarchical relationships between the source language and target language during the process of translation. This is a relevant point for this study as I argue that the writers try to promote and champion Punjabi idiosyncrasies through the strategies that they use in translating Shakespeare into Punjabi.

Furthermore, Spivak’s recognition of translation as more than the transfer of text from one language to another is an important point for the arguments that I have made in this dissertation about the way particular languages, English and Punjabi, share dense historical contexts and thus the writer’s socio-historical contexts come into play in the process of translation, as well as the socio-historical contexts of the languages themselves. Spivak states the following about what can impact the process of translation:

> ‘The history of the language, the history of the author’s moment, the history of the language-in-and-as-translation, must figure in the weaving as well.’[21]

[20]Ibid, p. 214.

[21] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), p. 209. Date accessed April 30, 2023.

Thus, I have used the theories and discussions by Niranjana and Spivak to think about how the Punjabi Shakespearean translations feed into post-colonial translation. So, as well as translation studies, this study can also be categorised as a study of post-colonial translation. Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi have also written about post-colonial translation, they state:

> 'the act of translation always involves much more than language. Translations are always embedded in cultural and political systems, and in history. For too long translation was seen as purely an aesthetic act, and ideological problems were disregarded. Yet the strategies employed by translators reflect the context in which texts are produced'[22]

Like Bassnett and Trivedi, I agree that translation is more than a process that only includes language, thus, in this dissertation, I use the critical perspectives of culture, history, politics and ideology as a starting point to read and interpret the translations. Bassnett and Trivedi also discuss an argument that has been thoroughly debated in translation studies, the notion that the original texts are superior to the translations. They debunk this idea, stating that is a relatively modern notion, owing to European

[22] Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi (ed.), *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 6.

colonisation which saw the colonies as copies of the original.[23] I have argued in the discussion chapters of this study, that the Punjabi writers use strategies in their translations to disturb this hierarchical relationship. For example, they privilege a Punjabi context rather than translate the plays through a Eurocentric perspective, an approach that enables a view that the Punjabi Shakespeare is just as valuable as English Shakespeare. In effect, they repurpose Shakespeare so that Shakespeare is used to relay Punjabi stories, such as those related to the partition of the Punjab, rather than repeat the narrative in the original Shakespearean play; this decentres the notion that the original English play is immovable.

Whilst it is important to understand how this study can be categorised as translation and post-colonial translation studies, at the same time it is fundamental for the approach of this study to recognise that Punjabi translation has its own intricacies. Ravinder Singh, in his article 'Historiography of Translation in Punjabi', argues that translation in Punjabi has developed from the need to translate religion.[24] Singh argues that an early form of religious translation existed in India, he states:

> 'Ancient scriptures and literary knowledge texts were preserved as *mantras* and later those ideas were retold in commonly spoken language to transfer knowledge and in the process the

[23] Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi (ed.), *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 4.

[24] Ravinder Singh, 'Historiography of Translation in Punjabi' (2021). Available online: (PDF) Historiography of Translation in Punjabi (researchgate.net). Date accessed: 23/06/22, 10:20.

> focal point of original renderings were taken care of to be kept intact while practicing retelling. This process itself was an earlier form of translation in India.'[25]

Ravinder Singh's arguments lead me to conclude that this early translation in Punjabi was concerned with preserving the originality of religious texts, not least because the ancient texts and scriptures would have been deemed to be sacred and therefore should not be changed or retold with inaccuracies, but also because the intention here was to preserve the scriptures in their original forms. However, this is only early translation and as the practice developed so did the processes. As textual circulation became more common, the oral translation used to preserve religious and ancient texts developed into written and/or printed translation. This produced written translations of ancient texts from what was considered classical language into written Punjabi, which was perceived as simpler and easier to understand because it was commonly used by people.[26] These written texts were seen as a kind of transfer of knowledge and Ravinder Singh refers to the forms of '*bhashya, tika, anvaya* and *vartika*' as examples where the transferring of religious ideas was more important than literal translating.[27] For example, there is a '*tika*' or translation of ideas of the *Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, the Sikh holy scriptures.[28] This is not necessarily an ancient text but

[25] Ibid, p. 2.

[26] Ibid, p. 12.

[27] Ibid, p. 2-3.

[28] The *Guru Granth Sahib Ji* is the holy scriptures of the Sikh religion. The fact that there is a '*tika*' available for these scriptures shows how Punjabi translation developed from the idea of being about

it includes some older writings, it was written and recorded over time as the Sikh Gurus collected and collated different writings, with the final version handwritten in 1704. Ravinder Singh argues that this is where translation becomes complex because translating the core ideas of religious texts requires not only an in-depth knowledge of the source language and target language, but also of the religious philosophy in question.

The complexities associated with translating religious texts are exacerbated when translating into a language variety that is very different to the source language. As a case study, Ravinder Singh analyses and finds some dissimilarities in five English translations of the first hymn in the *Guru Granth Sahib Ji*. For example, in translating '*Ek Onkar'*, which is the first word in the *Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, the translations vary, they are:

> ''1. By the Grace of the One Supreme Being',
>
> '2. There is but one God',
>
> '3. He is the Sole Supreme Being',
>
> '4. The Creator of all is One, the only One',

language transfer to being about the transfer of ideas. Information available online: Guru Granth Sahib - SikhiWiki, free Sikh encyclopedia. Date accessed: 26/06/22, 17:33.

‘5. One Universal Creator God’’[29]

Ravinder Singh notes the difference in the translations and argues that the translations developed from being about the transfer of language to being about the transfer of ideas. However, he does not take into account other factors, such as the background of the translator. In my view, this demonstrates that Ravinder Singh’s early conceptualisation of the process of translation being about the transfer of ideas from one language to another is somewhat limited because as previously mentioned, the historical and political, as well as ideological and cultural perspectives shape the translations. Thus, in my view, the fact that several writers from the same community can recreate different versions of the same text in the process of transferring it from one language to another demonstrates that the writers’ ideological standpoints, as well as historical, political and cultural background come into play when they translate texts. So that the choices that they make during the process of translation are entirely governed by the writer’s state of being, what they are and who they are, as well as what they know about translation and do not know, all matter in the process of translation.

Ravinder Singh usefully recognises that there is not enough commentary and criticism available on the process and theory of Punjabi translation and so, he argues, that

[29] Ravinder Singh, ‘Historiography of Translation in Punjabi’ (2021). Available online: (PDF) Historiography of Translation in Punjabi (researchgate.net). Date accessed: 23/06/22, 10:20, p. 10 – 11.

Punjabi translators themselves have tried to develop some theoretical approaches. He states:

> 'During the course of time Punjabi translators have tried to evolve and conceptualise some theoretical approach for standardising this practice. Some Punjabi translators have tried to formulate and explain their own experience of translation … (*for example*) prefaces, author's notes etc to ascertain how and what they think about translation and their own translation practice.'[30]

Ravinder Singh's argument in relation to the dearth of criticism is valuable for this dissertation because in the absence of theory, the Punjabi writers' own assessments of their processes and experiences of translation are key in understanding and defining the translations because they provide an insight into the decisions and choices that transpire in their translations. Both Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh have, as Ravinder Singh states, 'tried to formulate and explain their own experience of translation' in the introductions to their translations. The introductions that they provide include the challenges they faced and the intentions of the writers. The challenges and intentions elaborate on their practice and help to critically understand the translations. Some of the challenges arise when there are certain words that cannot be translated, because they refuse to cross linguistic borders when writers cannot find any word in the target language that they feel may suitably represent the word. It is at these

[30] Ibid, p. 13.

intersections where the choices that the writers make help to understand the complexities of language and the nuances that are contained in language, such as the communication of things that are not always tangible, like culture, philosophy, and ideology. For example, in Ravinder Singh's article, there are some words, such as '*mantra'*, which he feels that he must transliterate and use in its original form because to translate that into English would cause it to lose its meaning beyond recognition. It is at these points in the process of translation, where the writers are unable to translate, so, they sometimes transliterate. This is discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis, when Hans' use of transliteration has an impact on the overall reading of the translation because it is at the conjuncture of transliteration where writers must think about how they will make transliterated words appropriate and meaningful for the Punjabi readers.

Ravinder Singh states that Punjabi translators have tried to theorise approaches to standardise the practice of translation. However, in my view, whilst it is possible to theorise the approaches to translation, it is not possible to standardise the practice. The practice is far too wide-ranging and sporadic, in terms of its production and content, for standardisation to occur. Theorising the approaches to translation do, however, provide a critical framework within which the translations can be analysed and some categorisations through which they can be viewed. The aim of this dissertation is to construct a critical framework which can be used to read the translations.

In his discussion of what he terms 'trans-creations,'[31] Ravinder Singh provides the example of the *Dasam Granth*[32], compiled by Bhai Mani Singh Ji in 1708, they are a compilation of writings by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru. *The Dasam Granth* uses ancient Hindu mythology, not to endorse it but to use the myths as examples to illustrate particular philosophical points. Ravinder Singh states:

> 'As a matter of fact, these (*Dasam Granth*) compositions are instances of re-rendering or reworking of the primary texts. These compositions largely follow the original narrative structure of the source texts and preserve their overall thematic concerns. But at certain places they also attempt renewed interpretations of the narrative of events and situations in the light of contemporary concerns. In our view these compositions are instances of a pioneering activity in translation. In the proper sense of the term, they are reworkings or trans-creations of the earlier texts.'[33]

Ravinder Singh's discussion about 'trans-creation' deconstructs some of the hierarchical relationship that is often seen between the original work and the translation, as discussed by Bassnett and Trivedi. This is because Ravinder Singh

[31] Ibid, p. 8.

[32] Available online: Dasam Granth - SikhiWiki, free Sikh encyclopedia. Date accessed 26/06/22, 20:14.

[33] Ravinder Singh, p. 8.

argues that something is also being created in addition to the original, and not merely transferred in the process of translation. This is similar to Salman Rushdie's argument about translation being a process where something is gained. Rushdie argues that:

> 'The word 'translation' comes, etymologically, from the Latin for 'bearing across'. Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately to the notion that something can also be gained.'[34]

Rushdie's argument adds to Ravinder Singh's point about gaining something through the process of translation. In Chapter 4, I have analysed Achhru Singh's collection of Shakespearean translations, which reflect Ravinder Singh's and Rushdie's thoughts because while they retain the narrative and thematic concerns of the original plays, they bring new perspectives to original plays and can be considered as new work in their own right. There are points in the plays where Achhru Singh attempts renewed interpretations of Shakespeare's work. For example, the themes of migration and exile that are presented by Shakespeare in *The Tempest* are translated by Achhru Singh through the lens of the Punjabi partition and India's consequent independence.

Thus, I have considered how Punjabi translation might be approached and what this means for the translations of Shakespearean plays examined in the thesis. I also use

[34] Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London: Penguin, 1992).

what the translators say themselves to discuss the process of translation. Also, it is clear that these translations are not the mere transfer of language, and yet they are more than the transfer of ideas for they also involve political, cultural, historical and ideological perspectives that are partially driven by the translators but are also bound by the contexts in which they are produced. They are closest to Ravinder Singh's coinage of 'trans-creation' because they use their source text but simultaneously create something new. The fact that these texts have a source text is one way to critically assess them, but they are also situated in other contexts which make a difference to how they can be read.

The impact of colonialism on Punjabi education and literature

The writers used for this study, Surjit Hans, Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang were all born in the Punjab and have lived there for most of their lives. Punjab, and India, were once colonised and this impacted on the education systems, as well as the production of literature that pre-existed colonisation. Thus, colonisation is a significant context which must be considered when analysing and interpreting the translations.

The interaction between India and the West began as early as 1498 when the Portuguese began to control Indian ocean routes. However, by the mid-18th century English colonialism was established over the majority of India, even though the Dutch, French and Portuguese had all tried up to this point to colonise some parts of India.[35]

[35] Mohinder Pal Kohli, '*The Influence of the West on Punjabi Literature*' p. 7, (1969). Available online: ..:: Panjab Digital Library ::.. (panjabdigilib.org). Date accessed: 13/04/22, 21:13.

The Punjab came under complete civil and political control in 1849 when the Sikh forces were defeated by the British. This was when the English systems, amongst which were postal, rail and education, began to be introduced and eventually become embedded in the Punjab. Thus, the English language as an exchange and economic tool became important. The education and administrative systems that were laid by the British in the Punjab did not deploy Punjabi language; furthermore, these systems were steeped in western consciousness, as opposed to Punjabi consciousness. Despite this major movement in language and thought on the infrastructure of Punjabi life, there were some advocates who championed indigenous education and literary traditions. Amongst them were Warren Hastings, Lord Cornwallis and Johnathan Duncan who opened a Sanskrit college in 1792. Thus, two opposing schools in India, 'orientalist' and 'western' ensued, and eventually under the influence of the East India company, English education was included in the India act of 1813.[36]

Colonialism, especially its impact on education in India and the Punjab, has affected the way in which pre-colonial literary traditions have continued to develop and appear in contemporary Punjabi writing. For example, the intrusion of English in the literary space, has meant that some writers have resisted this and rather than allowing pre-existing indigenous literary traditions to continue to naturally develop as all traditions do, they have, as part of the process of resistance, preserved and retained the Punjabi traditions as they were prior to the colonial encounter. On the other hand, some writers have blended Punjabi literary traditions and writing with the English language and English literary traditions as a new development in Punjabi writing. Three main

[36] Ibid, p. 7-8.

branches of literature were present in the Punjab before the colonial encounter: Sufi Punjabi poetry which was developed with the writings of Faridudin Ganji-Shakar, Sikh religious poetry which was initiated by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, and folk tales or legends which were originally an oral literature but later recorded. Whilst these are distinct branches of literature, they overlapped and influenced each other. For example, a sub-genre of Sufi literature that was developed later and has become a genre in its own right, was that of the *Qissa* narrative; it is a combination of folk legends with Sufi symbolism, as well as imagery.[37]

In the initial stages of colonisation, the English language was used as a vehicle of education for mostly secular training for administration purposes or as part of the Christian missionary operation for religious teaching. As the latter gained momentum, the India Act of 1833 gave missionaries free reign to establish educational institutions, churches and hubs for their activities, this included teaching religion alongside secular subjects. This was not acceptable to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who at the time was the Maharaja of Punjab, and there was pushback from him. Nonetheless, just as Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign was coming to an end in 1849 due to his ill health, the first government school was opened in the Punjab in 1848 in the northern city of Simla in which English was the main subject. Furthermore, two main colleges, Mahendra college in Patiala and the Government College in Lahore prepared students for an anglicised university education at Calcutta University. As a reaction to this and the Christian missionaries, the Punjab University was established with a view to impart knowledge through the medium of indigenous languages. In 1870, another university

[37]Ibid, p. 1-3.

was established, Punjab University College (PUC) which recognised both English and Punjabi as mediums for teaching. Eventually PUC adopted the English as the medium of instruction. PUC became a literary hub where contemporary writers instigated and developed literary movements and thought. However, Professor Gurmukh Singh was an advocate for Punjabi and in 1877 he started Punjabi classes at the Oriental College in Lahore, furthermore, it was under his influence that the Khalsa College in Amritsar was established where the aim was to 'study modern knowledge through the medium of Punjabi'.[38]

All of this activity in India and the Punjab had an impact on the literary output in the Punjab because people were receptive to English education, especially western science, which signified modernity and a rejection of ancient traditions. Despite this, there was always a drive to maintain Punjabi, especially when the missionaries used English as a vehicle for religious conversion, the aggressiveness with which they worked caused contempt for them and consequently, the English language. However, western education was so influential that Punjabi literature could not remain as it had been before the colonial encounter. This new atmosphere created a fusion in literary development where new thinking merged with old traditions. Towards the start of the 20th century, there was significant activity in literary circles, there was at least 30 registered literary societies during 1888-1889. Poems by Wordsworth and Byron were read, alongside the works of Thomas More and George Eliot. The oldest society was *Anjuman-i-Punjab* which was initiated in 1865. It was a collaboration between Dr Leitner and Mohammad Hussain Azad. The societies had a clear purpose; 'the

[38]Ibid, p. 15.

diffusion of western learning and the improvement of the vernaculars.'[39] Thus, the majority of Punjabi writers never abandoned pre-colonial traditions in favour of western literary practices. Instead, they absorbed Western literature, and when this impacted their literary practice, it was most visible in their own indigenous languages. For example, Madhusudan Dutta used the techniques of Homer, Dante and Milton to create his epic *Meghnad Badh Kavya* (1861)[40] in Bengali. Thus, the Indian writers used techniques and methods that were introduced to them from the West but for their own designs and purposes.

In Chapter 3 of this study, I analyse how Surjit Hans similarly incorporates pre-colonial traditions into his work and in Chapter 4, Achhru Singh uses Western literary forms. This continues the work of their predecessors by merging 'western thinking' with Punjabi writing and blending English with Punjabi literary forms. The colonial legacy of education and language is far too significant for it not to impact on the way in which post-colonial writers write but using pre-colonial traditions underscores the pride and drive that the writers have had since the colonial encounter in keeping their literary heritage alive, notwithstanding that they have been receptive to western practices too.

Post-colonial theory

A post-colonial theoretical framework is another critical perspective that I have used in the analysis of the textual and filmic translations since the state of Punjab, and more

[39] Ibid, p. 19.

[40] Madhusan Dutta, *Meghnad Badh Kavya* (1861) (Unpublished).

widely India, were once colonised places. In the context of this study, the post-colonial period refers to the period after the process of English colonisation started in India (and the Punjab) during the mid-18th century. So, in the discussion of post-colonial studies and post-colonial writing, including drama, fiction and literary criticism, one of the aims is to recognise that pre-colonisation the colonised people have a history and complex culture. For example, writers like Chinua Achebe, in his book *Things Fall Apart*, and Salman Rushdie in the novel *Midnight's Children,* describe pre-colonial cultural practices and customs in detail, weaving them into their narratives without the need to justify their inclusion.[41] Post-colonial writing is also concerned with the strategies of resistance to Eurocentric philosophies and impositions.

To apply a post-colonial theoretical framework in the analysis of the translations, I have used the work of Edward Said and Homi Bhabha, as well as others such as Gayatri Spivak whose work I discuss later in this chapter. I have drawn upon theoretical concepts, such as mimicry, subversion, hybridity and othering to discuss the works selected for this study through a post-colonial lens. I began the analysis of the Punjabi translations with the assumption that post-colonial literature, including post-colonial translation, must *do* something, for example, Bill Ashcroft states that all post-colonial literatures have one predominant commonality:

[41] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (London: Penguin, 1958) and Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (London: Vintage, 2013).

> ‘That they emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power.’[42]

This means that often post-colonial writing is politically and polemically charged, and that the tension with the imperial power can be seen through writing strategies that result in resistance and subversion. This is evident in all four of the translations that I have analysed, as well as the Punjabi film adaptation.

Another critic, Helen Tiffin, has written extensively about post-colonialism. She states that the project of post-colonial writing is to:

> ‘Interrogate European discourses and discursive strategies from a privileged position within (and between) two worlds; to investigate the means by which Europe imposed and maintained its codes in the colonial domination of so much of the rest of the world.’[43]

[42] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (eds.), *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures, Second Edition* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 2.

[43] Helen Tiffin, ‘Post-colonial Literatures and Counter-discourse’, in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader, Second edition*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin (eds.) (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 99.

She further argues that the subversive is a feature of post-colonial writing and discourse.[44] She concludes that this is what makes post-colonial discourse counter-discursive. When critics challenge literary universality, this is when they engage in counter-discourse. This is especially relevant to the Punjabi translations of Shakespeare because the translations not only challenge and subvert Shakespeare's writing in the English language, but they also enable Shakespeare to be understood and consumed by a non-English audience. This interrogates Shakespeare's authority, as well as the authority of the English language as a dominant language. Tiffin goes on to describe two models for post-colonial studies, firstly a text can be post-colonial simply because of its 'material situation'[45] but it can also be post-colonial because it is counter-discursive. To further elucidate how the post-colonial text can be counter-discursive, she states:

> 'Since it is not possible to create or recreate national or regional formations independent of their historical implication in the European colonial enterprise, it has been the project of post-colonial writing to interrogate European discourses and discursive strategies from a privileged position within (and between) two worlds; to investigate the means by which Europe imposed and maintained its codes in the colonial domination of so much of the rest of the world. Thus, the rereading and rewriting of the European historical and fictional record are vital and inescapable tasks. These subversive manoeuvres, rather

[44] Ibid, p. 99.

[45] Ibid, p. 100.

> than the construction of the essentially national or regional, are what are characteristic of post-colonial texts, as the subversive is characteristic of post-colonial discourse in general. Post-colonial literatures/cultures are thus constituted in counter-discursive rather than homologous practices…'[46]

The Punjabi translations can be seen to belonging to both models since they have been produced materially in the Punjab by Punjabi writers and my analysis shows that they are counter-discursive. Whereas Tiffin appreciates that there are many sub-divisions of the field of the counter-discursive, she chooses to focus on the canonical counter-discursive. She defines canonical counter-discursive in terms of when:

> 'A post-colonial writer takes up a character, or characters, or the basic assumptions of a British canonical text and unveils those assumptions, subverting the text for post-colonial purposes.'[47]

She argues that European authors wrote texts that described the world and the colonies using their own 'cognitive codes' and then these 'greats' were imposed on the colonies as universal truths. In other words, these culturally specific imperial terms were to be accepted by colonials.[48] So, it has now understandably become the project

[46] Ibid, p. 17-18.

[47] Ibid, p. 100.

[48] Ibid, p. 101.

of post-colonial writing to interrogate these 'greats' and 'universal truths.'[49] Tiffin's argument about post-colonial writing as a form of interrogation is important because it augments the purpose of post-colonial literature as a form of writing back, thus the post-colonial writers use their texts as a way to write back by interrogating what has been laid down as a universal truth about them. This is relevant to this study because I have investigated the strategies used by the Punjabi writers in translating Shakespeare; my study shows that the post-colonial writers do indeed subvert the 'greatest writer of all time' as imposed by colonialism.

Edward Said argues that imperialism should be considered an 'epistemological mutation,'[50] to the extent that in the same way that the Holocaust has changed the way in which we think, similarly the effects of imperialism should change our understanding of the world. My analysis of the Punjabi translations demonstrates that imperialism continues to pervade writing, and writers use several strategies to resist the impositions of imperialism. Furthermore, Said argues that society at large is influenced and shaped by texts, hence the imperial conquest was justified by British society using the body of Orientalist writing that concluded that imperialism was necessary as a civilising mission. Colonial fiction writers such as Kipling and Flaubert confirmed the orientalist views in their 'highly regarded' narratives. In response to this body of writing, which created massive generalisations and stereotypes about the 'subjects' of colonised countries, there was the emergence of post-colonial writing which sought to eradicate misconception, challenge colonialist ideology and assert the

[49] Ibid, p. 101.

[50] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. xvi.

colonised as human beings, not subjects. In this way, this study contributes to the understanding of how post-colonial translations are counter-discursive.

Homi Bhabha's theorisations about the third space, hybridity and mimicry are also important for this study. He states:

> 'The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which itself cannot 'in itself' be conscious.'[51]

Bhabha's theorisation of the third space enables the view that the translations can be seen as new work, or more significantly that they become an original because the Punjabi reader may not know or be aware of the original Shakespearean play. For the Punjabi reader, who has no prior knowledge of the original, does not refer to the source text because it does not exist and therefore the translation is appreciated as an original Punjabi text.[52] Whilst, the translations can be read as new work, they are also hybrid,

[51] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Oxon: Routledge, 1994), p.161.

[52] My own position is different to the Punjabi reader who may not have prior knowledge of the original Shakespearean play, but because I am aware and have knowledge of the original plays, I will sub-consciously and consciously refer to the originals, for example, I have done this when conducting the

in that the Punjabi writers combine pre-colonial literary and oral traditions, and own language to rewrite Shakespeare.

Bhabha's work also shows how mimicry can be a form of subversion, for example, in Surjit Hans' translations the adapted pronunciations of the characters' names mean that the characters now 'belong' to Punjab which indigenises the characters and decentres the English language. In this case, Hans' use of names subverts the English text. Thus, post-colonial theories are a useful critical framework in analysing the Punjabi translations through a socio-historical context. Throughout this study, I have used the work of post-colonial theorists to elucidate why the Punjabi writers use specific strategies in their translation of Shakespeare. This enables me to draw conclusions on the impact of colonialism on Punjabi writing and analyse the subsequent strategies used by writers to resist colonial impositions.

Punjab's engagement with Shakespeare

Shakespeare is a colonial and western import for the Punjab. How and why Shakespeare was introduced to the Punjab is important for understanding the translations selected for this study because it provides a contextual background to how the Punjab has engaged with Shakespeare as a playwright. Shakespearean translations in Punjabi can broadly be divided into three periods: Punjabi translated plays of Shakespeare during the colonial era, Punjabi translated plays of Shakespeare

comparison between the originals and the translations. So, for me to read the translations as new work requires more of a conscious effort.

in the post-independence era, and Punjabi translated plays of Shakespeare in the 21st century. The final period is the focus of this dissertation. The translations produced in the colonial era include *Sevak*[53] written by Jivan Singh in 1911 which was a translation of *Othello*, another translation of *Othello* reworked by Narain Singh was *Lal Badshah,*[54] which was performed in 1931. Later, there was Nihal Singh's rendition of *Jion Bhave*[55] in 1945 which is a translation of *As You Like It*.

Then after India gained independence in 1947, it was as if Punjabi writers could enjoy newfound freedoms with Shakespeare because there was an abundance of writers producing translations and adaptations, both performed and published. *Shamu shah*[56], a translation of *The Merchant of Venice* was written by I. C. Nanda in 1949. In 1951, Mohinder Pal Kohli translated *Othello* as *Nirdosh Doshi*[57]. Succha Singh followed in the steps of Kohli and reworked *Othello* in 1954 with the same title as Kohli's *Nirdosh Doshi*.[58] *Much Ado About Nothing* was translated as *Vadu Vipata*[59] in 1958 by Kartar Singh Sapda. *Macbeth* was translated with the same title as the original in 1958 by Sant Singh Sekhon.[60]

[53] Jivan Singh, *Sevak* (Amritsar: Khalsa Sewak Press, 1951).

[54] Narain Singh, *Lal Badhshah* (1931) (Unpublished).

[55] Nihal Singh, *Jion Bhave* (Lahore: Punjabi Publications, 1945).

[56] I. C. Nanda, *Shamu Shah* (Jullundur: Oriental Book Depot, 1949).

[57] Mohinder Pal Kohli, *Nirdosh Doshi* (Ludhiana: Jaswant Rai Khular, 1951).

[58] Succa Singh, *Nirdosh Doshi* (Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop, 1954).

[59] Kartar Singh Sapda, *Vadu Vipata* (Ambala Cantt: Indian Publications, 1958).

[60] Sant Singh Sekhon, *Macbeth* (Delhi: Navayug Publishers, 1958).

There are also records of some performances, but the dates and publication details are unknown, however, they were performed/published around the 1940-60s because they are mentioned in Kartar Singh Duggal's article 'Shakespeare in Punjabi' which was published in 1964.[61] Following these translations there was a quiet period of approximately thirty years when there is no record of any publications or performances, until the 1990s when Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh began publishing their respective collections of Shakespearean translations. During the period between 1960 to 1990, there was a significant amount of political activity related to the Punjab, for example Indira Gandhi, the prime minister at the time, declared a state emergency which caused major upheaval and rioting. This period of unrest in the Punjab, which also impacted Punjabi people living in parts of India who had migrated from the Punjab due to the partition in 1947, could potentially be a reason for the quieter period of literary activity in the Punjab and includes the lack of translation of Shakespearean plays into the Punjabi language. As the upheaval settled in the Punjab from 1990, there was again a renewed interest and investment in Shakespearean translation as evidenced by the Punjabi Shakespearean collections selected for this study that were published from 1999. These recent collections are the subject of Chapters 3 and 4 of this study. The most recent reworking of Shakespeare into Punjabi is *Double Di Trouble*, a film written and directed by Smeep Kang in 2014, based on *The Comedy of Errors.* This is the subject of Chapter 5 of this study. The writers used for this study

[61] These are *Bhul Bhulaiyan*, which is a translation of *As You Like it* by Mohan Singh, S S Amole adapted *Julius Caesar* to retell the story of a Sikh general, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia for the stage, Balwant Singh translated *King Lear* with the title *Dukhi Raja* and Amar Singh translated *Othello* as *Desdemona te Othello*.

build upon the work of the translations published until 1958, especially Surjit Hans who, like the writers before him, maintains the Shakespearean form of the original plays and uses recharacterisation to develop an affinity to the Punjabi context in which the play becomes relocated.

These performances and translations that were produced up to 1958 are yet to receive any critical attention, excepting for Kartar Singh Duggal's article outlining the early development of Shakespearean plays translated and performed in the Punjabi language. According to Duggal, Punjabi literature has been influenced by Western literature more than literary traditions in Indian languages, and he argues that Punjabi drama has been influenced more by Shakespeare rather than Sanskrit or Indian folk traditions of drama.[62] So, when studying the translations selected for this study, it is important to keep in mind that Punjabi literature and drama has been impacted and influenced by Western literature. As discussed previously in this chapter, the encounter with Western literature has led to two main outcomes; Punjabi literature blends western forms with Punjabi writing but also resists the imposition of Western forms by repurposing them so that they become relevant to a Punjabi context. This is also demonstrated in the translations selected for this study.

Duggal writes that the advent of modern Punjabi theatre, or rather theatre that emulated the western perception of theatre, is largely credited to Norah Richards who in 1914 staged and directed the first modern play in Punjabi. She was the wife of

[62] Kartar Singh Duggal, 'Shakespeare in Punjabi', *Indian Literature 2:1* (1964), pp. 104-107.

Professor I. Richards who taught at Dyal Singh College, Lahore. Alongside Punjabi plays, she helped to stage Shakespearean dramas and Irish plays. There are not very many sources to consult about the start of Punjabi theatre but the sources that are available agree with this account of the development of Punjabi theatre.[63] This means that modern Punjabi theatre was developed through the lens of western consciousness, since Richards embedded the practice of Punjabi theatre with Shakespearean drama and Irish plays. This also leads me to conclude that Shakespeare has been an integral part of modern Punjabi drama right from its conception, which explains why there were several Shakespearean reworkings from 1911 to 1958, because this period coincided with the early development and establishment of modern Punjabi drama.

Partition

The partition of India took place in 1947 and was part of the plan for India to gain its dependence from British colonial rule. It was a territorial and political division which resulted in the creation of Pakistan. The partition of India disproportionately impacted Punjabi people because the new border between India and Pakistan cut straight through the province of Punjab, thus dividing the region in half. I argue that my analysis demonstrates that Achhru Singh's translations and Smeep Kang's film contribute to the subsequent literature that has been produced as a way of documenting the impact of the partition on the people of Punjab. So, in this section, I will provide some historical context of the colonisation of India and Punjab, and how partition became a part of the

[63] 'The Great Grandmother of Punjabi Theatre' (2020). Available online: Norah Richards - The great grandmother of Punjab theatre (hpgeneralstudies.com). Date accessed: 21/05/22, 07:24.

plan for independence. However, it is not possible in this thesis to provide a full account of the partition, and it is important to acknowledge that there are different versions of how India gained independence, therefore, here, I have aimed to provide a general overview. Prior to colonisation by the British empire, India was a country that was governed in small independent states and localities by various religious and royal dynasties, as well as the Moghul rulers. As a result, borders, religions and languages were all fluid entities. Thus, India, was and still is today, an immensely diverse region of the world. Babar was the first Moghul emperor in India when he defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526.[64] The majority of the northern region of India thus fell under Moghul rule until Maharaja Ranjit Singh acquired Lahore in 1799 who then began the task of building a Sikh kingdom.[65] When the British wanted to colonise this area of India too, the Anglo-Sikh wars ensued and the imperial regime eventually attained the Punjab, thus conquering a main part of India. Hence, by 1858 British parliament had, once the East India Company was dissolved, assumed direct control of the majority of India.[66] In 1947, the time came for India's independence, but this was not without its complications. One such complication was the territorial division of the Punjab which resulted in two separate countries, India and Pakistan. This is known as the partition of the Punjab. The partition has been described as 'probably the most cataclysmic event in the history of the twentieth-century of India;'[67] furthermore, Mushirul Hasan states that 'Today, the people and governments of India and Pakistan, tormented by

[64] Burton Stein, *A History of India* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 106.

[65] Douglas M. Peers, *India Under Colonial Rule 1700-1885* (Harlow: Pearson, 2006).

[66] Burton Stein, *A History of India* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 106.

[67] Mushirul Hasan, *India's Partition; Process, Strategy and Mobilisation* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), Introduction on cover.

the legacy of partition, are confronted with the daunting challenge of neutralizing the effects of that division.'[68] The process of partition meant that there was a turbulent period in which the Punjab and surrounding areas were embroiled in much violence and upheaval for a number of years. However, 40 years later, when scholars begun to evaluate the partition from different dimensions, such as economic and political, a wealth of material was published to offer various interpretations of how and why the partition took place. For example, Anita Inder Singh's book, published in 1987, *The Origins of the Partition of India (1936 – 1947)*[69] focusses on the strategic and political interplay between the British, Indian National Congress party and All India Muslim League. Anita Singh approaches the partition as a build-up of events rather than one defining moment in the history of India. She addresses ubiquitous questions concerning partition, such as 'how religious feeling came to be 'politicized' to the point where partition became inevitable'[70] whilst also critically evaluating the 'two-nation' theory which can be described as the religious majority and minority paradigms related to the division of India as a Hindu nation and the creation of Pakistan as an Islamic nation state. Other scholars have, rather than evaluate, uncovered and published important documents or writings that open up similar issues.

Before the British left India, a conference was held with the political party leaders of the time; Jawaharlal Nehru of the Indian National Congress party, Muhammad Ali Jinnah of the All India Muslim League and the Viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten

[68] Ibid, p. 43.

[69] Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[70] Ibid, p. 236.

to discuss Britain's exit plan. The British concluded that Nehru and Jinnah were unable to amicably agree on a central government power presiding from Delhi as the capital of India, and therefore the demand for Pakistan by Jinnah became a reality. As the imperial power, Britain announced the partition of northern colonial India to create Pakistan and independent India. Whilst Nehru had agreed with a central power, Jinnah did not and thus it was deemed that two different countries should be created based on the two-nation theory. Thus, India was divided on religious grounds because it was felt that the larger majority Hindu nation of India would not be able to accommodate the interests of the minority Muslims. However, Nehru strongly disagreed with the creation of a new nation based on religion, for example, he stated 'It is difficult to understand how any reasonable person can advance these propositions [partition] or expect them to be agreed to… many Moslem organisations are opposed to it. Every non-*Moslem*, whether he is a Hindu or Sikh or Christian or Parsi, is opposed to it. His [Jinnah] identifies a nation with religion. That is not the usual approach today.'[71]

Once the idea of two separate countries was decided upon, the next step was to create the divide line that would mark Pakistan as a separate country from India. This task was assigned to Cyril Radcliffe, a barrister from England who became known as the man 'who drew the partition line'. The border line itself became known as the 'Radcliffe line'. He had only 5 weeks to divide the Panjab in order to create Pakistan, and he was relying on unreliable consensus information and outdated maps. Once the information

[71] Mushirul Hasan, *India's Partition; Process, Strategy and Mobilisation* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 75-76.

of exactly where the line ran became public, he burned all his notes and left India never to return, as he was aware of the sentiments of the Punjabi, Indian and Pakistani people towards him. In a letter to his son, he wrote that 'I don't want the 400 million people of India to find me'.[72] This partition line, which divided the Punjab, and created Pakistan, led to one of the biggest mass migrations of all time. The actual movement of individuals and families from India to Pakistan and Pakistan to India has not been officially documented, at least until they arrived in refugee camps; however, the UNHCR (United Nations Refugee Agency), reports that at least 14 million people migrated. The Museum of Partition, an organisation set up to archive and preserve artefacts and stories related to the partition, states that it was probably nearer to 20 million.[73] However, without any actual or accurate documentation, it would be impossible to know exactly the number of people that had to leave their homes. Although, there is a lack of documentation regarding the onset of the migration, there are several photographic images taken by the photographer Margaret Bourke-White which captured the sheer brutality of the migration during partition. It has been estimated that at least 1 million lives were lost in this displacement and upheaval. The actual number of lives lost in the partition of the Panjab province, to this day, remains unknown. Thus, the independence of India and the partition are marred by loss and tragedy, rather than celebration. These events are still impacting the people of India and Punjab to this day, and the impact of the partition is a genre of writing that has become an important part of several literary cannons.

[72] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-asia-40788079/cyril-radcliffe-the-man-who-drew-the-partition-line Date accessed 13/04/2022, 14:12.

[73] Partition of India - 1947 Partition, History - India Partition 1947 (partitionmuseum.org) Date accessed 12/05/2022, 13:14.

In Chapters 4 and 5 of this study, I argue that Achhru Singh's translations and Smeep Kang's film can be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare because they incorporate the writing and characterisation strategies that are also evident in other partition literature, such as Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*[74] and Sadat Hasan Manto's *Khol Do*[75]. However, they cannot be attributed to the genre of partition narratives or partition literature alone because the translated works also deploy the techniques of opacity that are inherent in Shakespeare's work to open the discussion about concerns that are relevant to the partition. Hence, I have developed the phrase post-partition Shakespeare to describe the writers' use of Shakespeare's writing strategies alongside the writing strategies in partition literature to make their writing relevant to the Punjabi audiences whose every day realities are lived out under the historical context of the partition. To understand how Kang and Achhru Singh have used these strategies, it is important to understand how the consequences of partition have inspired film and literature which is why the next section of this chapter aims to discuss the significance of partition narratives in relation to Punjabi literature,

[74] Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan* (India: Chatto and Windus, 1956).

[75] Sadat Hasan Manto, *Khol Do* (1948). Available online: Khol Do (rekhta.org). Date accessed 14/04/2019, 13:19.

Partition literature and narratives

The initial exploration of the partition by scholars to better understand its political, economic and historical dimensions meant that initially, the evaluation of the human and social cost of partition was largely neglected. However, since 2000, this aspect has begun to be explored by academics. For example, Urvashi Butalia has collected and narrativised oral stories of partition from India by the people that experienced the partition first-hand. Drawing on her research, she suggests that there may exist a gendered telling of partition. She argues that whilst the 'generality of partition'[76] was available, such as the political, economic and national dimensions, the 'human dimension'[77] which were the private 'stories told and retold in many households in India and Pakistan'[78] were not so well-known. Butalia argues that that whilst oral history has its limitations, it is nonetheless another perspective and thus, rather than distort historical facts and statistics, it enriches them. She also reminds us that the limitations or problematization of oral history should alert us to the wider limitations of factual history in general, since this can also be subject to interpretations. For example, Hayden White, in his book *Metahistory*[79] asserts that history is a narrative, and its presentation is dependent on the particular kind of narrative the author wishes to portray, he states:

[76] Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 10.

[77] Ibid, p. 10.

[78] Ibid, p. 10.

[79] Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 1973).

> ‘If, in the course of narrating his story, the historian provides it with the plot structure of a Tragedy, he has ‘’explained’’ it in one way; if he has structured it as a Comedy, he has ‘’explained’’ it in another way.’[80]

Thus, White’s statement supports the argument that history can be subject to interpretation in the same way as literature, and Butalia’s argument, conversely supports the notion that literature or stories of partition can be viewed as an interpretation of history.[81] For Butalia, a way of addressing this lack of the ‘human dimension’ of partition has been to capture and explore partition narratives through literature and film. This endeavour has earned itself an important and unique place in literary and filmic institutions. Iconic examples are Amrita Pritam’s *Pinjar*[82] (often translated as *Cage* but sometimes translated as *Skeleton*) and Sadat Hasan Manto’s *Thanda Gosht*[83] (trans. *Cold Meat*) which were both published in 1950. Works which represent and reflect the concerns of the Punjabi partition have many metonyms, some of which are partition literature, post-partition literature, partition narratives, oral partition narratives, migrant stories, separation stories, partition novels, partition poetry and so forth; despite these different names, it is clear that these works have

[80] Ibid, p. 7.

[81] Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 10.

[82] Amrita Pritam, *Pinjar*, trans. Khushwant Singh (New Delhi: Tara, 2009).

[83] Sadat Hasan Manto, ‘*Thanda Gosht*’ (1950). Available online: Thanda Gosht (rekhta.org). Date accessed, 17/04/2019, 10:44.

become a significantly large and iconic part of Punjabi literature. For example, Khushwant Singh's famous novel published in 1956, *Train to Pakistan,* explores the consequences of partition and is considered a modern classic. In 2006, on the fiftieth anniversary of the novel's publication, Roli Books (New Delhi) released an edition of the novel which was illustrated with photographs of the partition taken by Margaret Bourke-White. She was a photographer for the picture magazine, *Life*, which was launched in 1936. *Life* sent Bourke-White to the Punjab to capture the partition in pictures in 1947 and the edition with the photos has been highly commended.[84] The photos by Bourke-White have been hailed as the most extensive documentary of the world's biggest mass migration which captured the event as it happened. The use of mixed media as a medium for exploring partition is becoming increasingly popular, as well as writers using multiple outlets to tell their partition stories. For example, the novel, *Train to Pakistan*, has been translated into many European and Indian languages, adapted for the stage[85] and produced as a Punjabi language film, which was directed by Pamela Rooks and released in 1999.[86]

Partition literature is highly politicised, and this relates to the themes and characterisation present in some of the translations used for this study. Concepts such as freedom and belonging, and nationalism, or what defines home and nations are

[84] Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*: *with Photographs by Margaret Bourke-White* (New Delhi: Roli, 2006).

[85] Available online: http://digital.lamakaan.com/index.php/whats-lamakaan-about/. Date accessed 30/04/2019, 14:02.

[86] Pamela Rooks (dir.), *The Train to Pakistan* (1999). Available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8i9odsdL0M. Date accessed: 27/04/2019, 11:05.

consequential debates that have become emphatically associated with the partition and migration. This is because the partition was a political process which promised freedom and was assumed that would be successful because citizens would feel as though they belonged to the 'right place' or nation, in effect, India or Pakistan. These notions are often discussed and challenged in partition literature, and, in Chapter 4 of this study, I have analysed how Achhru Singh uses these tropes to create dialogism in his translations. Khushwant Singh's novel, *The Train to Pakistan*, presents these tropes in ways which challenge assumptions about the partition and migration. Thus, the complexity of freedom is represented in the novel. These complexities are unpicked in Achhru Singh's translations through the emphasis that he places on the relationships between the characters and the bonds that the characters have to different places. I argue that post-partition Shakespeare explores what 'belonging' entails and creates a dialogism to reflect that these notions are complex and not rigidly dichotomous.

A writer who has written extensively using the theme of partition in his work is Sadat Hasan Manto, he regards the partition as a contentious subject and presents sensitive and controversial themes in his work. Manto moved to Pakistan after the partition and several of his works, including essays, are set during the time of partition. Manto's work presents and explores the darker side of partition, such as murder and rape. For example, Manto's novella, *Thanda Gosht,* which came under trial for obscenity, blurs the boundaries between the roles that people played in the partition, as they were victims of crimes that happened during the upheaval of partition, but during the same time they were also complicit in carrying out crimes on other people. Achhru Singh

develops the discussion on the victim/perpetrator roles in his translation of *The Tempest,* which I discuss in Chapter 4.

Manto also focuses on women's' experiences when writing about partition. In Chapter 5 of this study, I have analysed how Smeep Kang has used the opacity inherent in Shakespeare's work to explore contentious issues for women and how he presents topics that are considered taboo under the veneer of comedy in his adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors*. These issues are also explored in Manto's work, for example, in a short story, entitled *Khol Dho*, where Manto writes about a young woman who is ironically raped by the refugee camp workers who promised her father that they would save her from mobs during the partition riots.

Another writer who focussed on the experiences of women during partition was Amrita Pritam. Some of her works have been adapted for film, including one of her most famous novels which is based on partition, titled *Pinjar (Cage)*. She joined the 'Progressive Writers' Movement' to inspire people through her literary works. The movement was started in pre-partition British India and the members were mostly left-oriented and anti-imperialistic. Subsequently, she came up with a collection of works entitled *Lok Peed* (trans. *People's Anguish*) in 1944, which criticized the British Raj for the Bengal famine (1943) and the then war-torn economy of the country. After the partition of British India in 1947, Pritam migrated from Lahore to New Delhi. The partition inspired one of her most famous poems titled 'Ajj akhaan Waris Shah nu' (trans. 'Today, I say to Waris Shah'), which is included in the introduction of Khushwant

Singh's novel *Train to Pakistan* and forms part of the background song of the film too.[87] Pritam evokes the themes and characters of the original *Qissa* narrative written by Waris Shah, for example, a reference is made to Heer's villainous uncle, Kedu, 'Each man now turned Kedu (34).'[88] In this poem, Pritam uses a pre-partition form, that of the Punjabi *Qissa*, to accentuate the woman's plight. In the same way, Smeep Kang and Achhru Singh evoke the techniques used in the form of *Qissa* narratives in their reworkings of Shakespeare. Kang contributes to the debate initiated by Pritam regarding the non-existence of women's stories and recording of experiences of partition by including a partition story narrated by a woman. However, I will evaluate how this is limited and problematic in Chapter 5 of this study. Achhru Singh's use of the *Qissa* form evokes the oral story-telling form in his collection of translations and this impacts how the translations can be read.

Partition Literary Theory

Partition writers addressed similar themes, whilst also repeating cultural and linguistic codes, and thus they contributed to forming the partition literary tradition. They drew on each other's work and incorporated it into their own; for example, the writer Gulzar produced a poem called *Toba Tek Singh*[89] which was inspired by Manto's short story of the same name and in a similar way, Khushwant Singh uses Amrita Pritam's *Ode*

[87] This webpage includes biographical information about Amrita Pritam. Available online: https://learn.culturalindia.net/amrita-pritam.html. Date accessed: 01/05/19, 20:04.

[88] P. Machwe (ed.), *Voice of the Punjab: A collection of English renderings of the Punjabi poems of Amrita Pritam* (New Delhi: Raj Prakashan, 1957), p.25.

[89] Ravikant and Tarun K. Saint (eds.), *Translating Partition* (New Delhi: Katha, 2001), Introduction.

to Waris Shah in his introduction to *Train to Pakistan.* Immediately after the partition, and for some years beyond 1947, there was an extensive amount of partition literary and film works produced; however, this has undergone considerable development and writing which considers the partition in new and different ways are now being published. For example, Aanchal Malhotra's *Remnants of Partition,*[90] published in 2017, is a collection of stories in which survivors of partition reflect on how material possessions have become ways of remembering partition and pre-partition times.

Therefore, works related to partition in the Punjab are abundant and have been continually produced since 1947; however, they have not yet been critically examined compared to partition literatures from other areas of the world. For example, Joe Cleary's book, *Literature, Partition and the Nation State*[91]*,* is an extensive critical analysis of partition literature but it excludes the Punjabi partition, instead, its focus is literature that has been produced in relation to the partitions of Ireland, Israel and Palestine. Cleary justifies excluding the Punjab because he states that the similarities between the Middle East and Ireland, namely the 'peace process' developments in these areas, allow for a better comparative study between those two areas rather than with the Punjab. However, Cleary acknowledges that all partition arising from colonisation, and subsequently their literatures will undoubtedly have some similarities, such as, 'the nature of the colonial and postcolonial state.'[92] Thus,

[90] Aanchal Malhotra, *Remnants of Partition*: *21 Objects from a Continent Divided* (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2017).

[91]Joe Cleary*, Literature, Partition and the Nation State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[92] Ibid, p. 4.

Cleary's work is a reminder that whilst partition literatures can be compared to an extent, the Punjab partition has its own unique historical and contemporary paradigms, which is reflected in its literature, and thus requires its own scholarly enquiry that appreciates this inimitable situation.

Cleary recognises that analysing partition, from any area of the world, will always be 'controversial' since 'The scholarship on it [*partition*] is sometimes intensely polemic and always connected to some extent to wider political struggles within the societies in question.'[93] Cleary's work is divided into two parts, the first part is relevant to the Punjabi partition literature because it considers the violence of partition.'[94] The violence of partition in a Punjabi context has been written about extensively, especially to understand violence in partition as a gendered experience. For example, Kavita Daiya's book, *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender and National Culture in Postcolonial India*[95], examines 'South Asian ethnic violence and related mass migration in and after 1947.'[96] Daiya charts the way in which diasporic literature from the UK and US, by writers such as Bapsi Sidhwa and Salman Rushdie, connects with the partition since they 'raise in the public sphere questions about ethnicity, citizenship, and gendered belonging that South Asian nationalist histories cannot answer.'[97]

[93] Ibid, p. 9.

[94] Ibid, p. 11.

[95] Kavita Daiya, *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender, and National Culture in Postcolonial India* (Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 2008).

[96] Ibid, p. 5.

[97] Ibid, p. 76.

Similar to Joe Cleary, Rituparna Roy's *South Asian Partition Fiction in English: From Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh* (2010) is based on literary works arising from the partition of India.[98] The book is not centred on Punjabi partition literature but includes some useful arguments. Roy describes three main thrusts in South Asian partition fiction; these are: the concept of the nation which explores notions of nationalism and patriarchy; the representations and perspectives of women, as well as their predicaments during the partition, and imagined communities in which 'belonging', and the idea of 'home' is explored. Cleary's and Roy's work are both valuable in providing a high-level framework for Achhru Singh's reimagination through the lens of partition, but they must be applied with care because they do not engage specifically with the Punjabi context.

So, whilst some critical material is available on partition literature, it is not specific to the context of Punjabi partition literature, therefore, it is limited in its scope and breadth. This study, however, considers the Shakespearean translations and adaptations, written by Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang, as a part of partition literature and critically evaluates these. I have considered these as post-partition Shakespeare because they include the themes and techniques of partition literature, and not simply because they have been produced since the onset of partition.

[98] Rituparna Roy, *South Asian Partition Fiction in English: From Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010). Available online: 350729.pdf (oapen.org). Date accessed: 20/01/22, 17:21.

Partition literature has also been translated extensively, for example, Ravikant and Tarun. K. Saint have edited a volume of partition literature called *Translating Partition*,[99] which includes the translated stories of Attia Hosain, Bhisham Sahni, Joginder Paul, Kamleshwar, Sadat Hasan Manto and Surendra Prakash. There are a few critical commentaries on the translated stories, however, they do not focus on Punjabi literature. Thus, to address the gap in scholarship for Punjabi partition literature, I have used partition literature itself to help analyse and evaluate the translations, as well as criticism that is available on partition writing in a South Asian context that can be applied carefully to Punjabi partition writing.

Pre-colonial traditions

As I discussed earlier, the colonial impact on Punjabi literature has been fundamental in making writers want to keep pre-colonial traditions alive in their writing. Therefore, the writers examined for the purposes of this thesis are following their predecessors because they too use pre-colonial traditions in their writing as a way of resisting western and colonial impositions. The two main genres of pre-colonial writing that is used by the writers examined in this study are Sufi literature, specifically Sufi poetry and the *Qissa* narratives, which also includes the oral story-telling tradition. The aim of this section is to provide an overview of these genres so that they can be understood and appreciated when they are discussed in relation to the translations.

[99] Ravikant and Tarun. K. Saint (eds.), *Translating Partition* (New Delhi: Katha, 2001).

Sufi literature

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to give a full and proper overview of Sufi literature, but it is important to understand the development of Sufi writing in the Punjabi language. Whilst Sufi literature exists in various languages, there is a strong tradition of Sufi literature in the Punjabi language.

L. R. Krishna writing about the Punjabi Sufi poets argues that Sufism was developed in new ways when it came into contact with the Punjab. She states that these developments can be divided into three schools of Punjabi Sufism:

> '1. The Orthodox School - The Sufis of this school believed in conversion from one religion to another…though they tolerated different religions, they believed Islam was the only true creed.
>
> 2. Time Philosophic School - The Sufis of this school were speculators and thinkers. They had absorbed the essence of the *Vedanta*[100] so well that to them difference of religion, country and sect were immaterial. They displayed best the essence of pantheistic Sufism. They ignored conversion and were chiefly responsible for establishing unity between the faithful of various religions.

[100] This is a reference to the teachings of Hindu scriptures.

3. The Popular School – The adherents of this school were men of little or no education. These people collected the beliefs… of various creeds, and preached and practiced them.'[101]

Despite Krishna's classification, there were some common features inherent in all the Punjabi Sufi poets, for example, their writing reflected the connection between the human soul and the divine, and that each human soul is longing to end the separation from the divine. Like all Sufi poets, the Punjabi Sufi poets initially wrote in Persian, and later they adopted Urdu. However, Krishna discusses the inadequacy of both of these languages for the Punjabi poets, stating that:

> 'But this Urdu looked for guidance to Persia and was so much overlaid by the Persian vocabulary, phraseology, and jeux de mots, that it was really Persian diluted by an Indian language.'[102]

Thus, both Persian and Urdu did not provide the Punjabi poets with the *Punjabiat* with which they were looking to write with. Because *Punjabiat* is a particular world view that privileges the Punjabi way of life and culture, in the 15th century, the poets soon adopted the use of the Punjabi language in their writing to represent their national sentiments and culture. An aspect of Sufi *Punjabiat* can be seen when Punjabi Sufi

[101] L. R. Krishna, *Punjabi Sufi Poets: AD1460-1900* (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 12-13.

[102] Ibid, p. 13.

poets use the rurality of Punjab to find God in all his creation and attain union with him. Thus, in Punjabi Sufi poetry, God is the beloved and the human soul, as a lover, is separated from God. Krishna describes Punjabi Sufi poetry in relation to this:

> 'The Sufi poetry is consequently full of poems, songs and hymns praising the Beloved, describing the pain and sorrow inflicted by separation, and ultimately the joy, peace and knowledge attained in the union.'[103]

Krishna's description confirms the significance of God for the poets. For the Punjabi Sufi poets, their poetry is a direct communication with God, and they often address themselves in their poetry as a way of identifying the human soul as God's creation. Mohan Singh, a poet, and an academic, has written about the most significant themes that are repeated in Sufi literature. He argues that one of the most prevalent themes is the identification of the human soul as God and using the soul as a means of direct communication with God.[104] This is an important feature of Surjit Hans' translations, which I will analyse in Chapter 3 of this study. Hans recharacterises the character of Prospero from *The Tempest* so that he aligns with this Sufi ideal.

[103] Ibid, p. 13.

[104] Mohan Singh, *A History of Punjabi Literature (1100 – 1932)* (Amritsar: Khalsa College, 1956), p. 10.

Qissa **narratives and the tradition of oral story-telling**

Qissa narratives, which are part of the Sufi tradition of poetry, are usually based on legends and folklore that were passed through generations orally. The *Qissa* genre can be categorised as an oral literature since these were not recorded initially. However, writers introduced the tradition of recording these legends, but did so by deploying oral story-telling techniques in their writing.

The oral literature of the Punjab is wide-ranging and not only reflects the society that it represents but it has also been shaped by the historical and societal contexts of the time. I. Serebryakov has written an outline of Punjabi literature, he argues that Punjabi literature is rooted in oral literature because it was developed from oral literature. He describes the development of folklore from spoken to written word, he states:

> Folklore that has not only kept alive plots and images from the ancient past, but that also reflects the people's attitude to historical events and personalities… Among the oldest documents of Punjabi folklore are the legends about Rajah Rasalu. Legends, tales, stories, songs and ballads are linked with this name. Plots centred around him occur in every genre of Punjabi folklore… with the lapse of centuries different traits accreted to this image reflecting various epochs, their capacity

> for absorbing new traits born out of new times, accounts for the great vitality of legends.[105]

Serebryakov demonstrates that not only did folklore become a written genre from an oral genre, but the legends also changed and developed to reflect new times. So, this means that oral literature and the *Qissa* narratives connect and relate to the Punjabi people in ways that other literatures do not and thus they have a particular relevance to them. Therefore, it is used when writers need to create a dialogue with their audiences because it speaks of their concerns to them.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I discuss how Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang have blended aspects of oral literature and *Qissa* narrative techniques with the Shakespearean narratives. This enables their translations to be more relevant to the Punjabi audiences and is a way of connecting with them through a familiar technique. This writing strategy is also a way for the writers to master Shakespeare for their own purposes, because whilst they use the Shakespearean text, it is only to remodel and rework it so that they can domesticate it. The way in which the writers selected for this study use the *Qissa* narrative techniques with Shakespeare also shows the way that previous writers who, after the colonial encounter, resisted a complete conversion to English literary techniques, instead choosing to blend English and Punjabi forms or writing strategies to create narratives that engaged with indigenous readers in familiar ways. This shows

[105] I Serebryakov, *Punjabi Literature: A Brief Outline* (Moscow: Nauka, 1968), p.11.

that Kang and Achhru Singh are continuing the resistance that the earlier writers staged in their work.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the critical perspectives that have informed my analysis of the Punjabi Shakespearean translations and film adaptation. The critical perspectives draw upon historical, political, cultural and political contexts to ensure that the reading and interpretation of Punjabi Shakespeare is not singular. In interpreting the translations through these perspectives, I have applied a post-colonial theoretical framework. I use the work of Homi Bhabha to discuss the hybridity and cultural translation that takes place in the translations. Through Edward Said's work, I can demonstrate how the writers resist western and colonial impositions by being careful not to Other their characters or places. Furthermore, Salman Rushdie's discussions inform the way that I evaluate the new readings and interpretations that are gained from Punjabi Shakespeare. As well as these well-known post-colonial theorists and writers, I have drawn upon the work of academics who specifically write in a Punjabi context. In the next chapter, Chapter 3, I will examine Surjit Hans' Punjabi translations, *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit*, which will enable me to develop thinking about different approaches to translation.

Chapter 3

Merging Shakespearean form and aspects of Sufi literature in Surjit Hans' collection of Shakespearean translations.

Introduction

One of the main concerns of this thesis is to consider the different critical perspectives through which the Punjabi translations of Shakespeare can be studied to understand the writers' different techniques and writing strategies. Writers of early Punjabi Shakespeare translated the plays for theatre because Shakespeare was introduced to the Punjab as a dramatist through college courses and university programmes. However, Kartar Singh Duggal argues that Shakespeare's presence as a dramatist in Punjabi theatre has diminished with time. He states this is due to a lack of professional theatre in the Punjab, which has meant that, over time, Shakespeare, when translated into Punjabi, is seen more as a literary dramatist, rather than a dramatist alone.[106] This impacts how Shakespeare is viewed by the writers and the way in which I can analyse the translations for this study. Surjit Hans has written the translations without stage or performance directions and Achhru Singh has narrativised the plays so that they read as short stories. Furthermore, the fact that there is only one Punjabi Shakespearean film available is evidence that Shakespeare's is not viewed as a dramatist but rather a literary dramatist, so the translations are to read rather than performed. This means that in my analysis of the translations I have studied them through the lens of literature and not performance.

[106] Kartar Singh Duggal, 'Shakespeare in Punjabi', *Indian Literature 2:1* (1964), pp. 104-107, p. 107.

Punjabi theatre was influenced and shaped by early theatre practitioners, such as Norah Richards, who was born in Ireland but moved to India with her husband. She is renowned for directing the first modern Punjabi play in an indoor theatre at Dyal Singh College, Lahore[107], in 1914.[108] Her students were writers like Ishwar Chander Nanda, who went on to translate *The Merchant of Venice* into *Shamu Shah*. The writer and critic Kartar Singh Duggal suggests that a close and faithful translation, one without drastic changes, was the usual translatory practice for Shakespearean plays in the early 1900s in Punjab.[109] Duggal argues that Shakespeare was introduced to the Punjab as an educational tool, as a model for 'training' theatre students and for the early part of the 20th century, he was the only playwright prescribed for teaching in educational institutions.[110] The aim of early Punjabi translations was to emulate the English version of Shakespeare. Duggal's discussion suggests that 'more faithful, more direct and more legitimate' translations were favoured, and they were usually written by 'university professors', much like Surjit Hans himself (whose translations will be the focus of this chapter), who would have an expert understanding of English literature and theatre or drama.[111] For example, Patras Bhokari who studied English at Cambridge University reproduced *Hamlet* in 1934. Another example is Sant Singh Sekhon, who was a professor of English literature for three decades and translated *Macbeth* in 1958. Both of these early reproductions, according to Duggal, were

[107] At the time, 1914, this would have been in Punjab, India, but it is now in Pakistan, West Punjab.

[108] Kartar Singh Duggal, 'Shakespeare in Punjabi', *Indian Literature 2:1* (1964), pp. 104-107, p. 105.

[109] Ibid, p. 106.

[110] Ibid, p. 104.

[111] Ibid, p. 105.

'cherished' and 'unforgettable' pieces of work.'[112] In his discussion, Duggal also cites examples that were 'more a narrative than a play' where the stories, for example, the various Punjabi renditions of *Othello* from 1911, have been adapted for the Punjabi audiences and the focus drawn to certain aspects of some characters that are relevant to a Punjabi context.[113] However, Duggal is not impressed by these narrative translations and states that they 'failed to portray the darkly-lit grimness of the original'.[114] Duggal notes how Dhani Ram Chatrik's translation of *Othello* in Punjabi verse with a 'grip over metre and form'[115] failed to impress his contemporaries because they were 'obsessed with the realistic tradition of the 19th century'. For Duggal, however, Chatrik was 'brilliantly qualified to tackle the play… and he brought out the ruggedness and stark realism of the characters.'[116] Duggal's discussion of the early translations is reflective of the nascent Punjabi translatory practice of Shakespeare during and after he was introduced to the Punjab, positing that translation was an opportunity for writers to recraft Shakespeare as faithfully as possible in the Punjabi language to introduce Shakespeare to them authentically.

This chapter concentrates on Surjit Hans' *Jhakhkhar* (1999) and *Romio te Julit* (2005) to explore how these translations can be defined and read. In resonance with the performances and translations of Shakespearean plays produced in Punjabi theatre

[112] Ibid, p. 105-106

[113] Ibid, p. 105. Duggal refers to Jivan Singh's translation *Sevak*, Amar Singh's *Desdemona te Othello* and Mohinder Pal Kohli and Suchcha Singh's Zakkhmi's *Nirdosh Doshi.*

[114] Ibid, p. 105.

[115] Ibid, p. 106.

[116] Ibid, p. 106.

and literary arenas in the 1900s, *Jhakhkhar* aligns with the original in terms of form and narrative. In *Romio te Julit* where there is a close fidelity to the original, Hans has been incredibly scrupulous in attention to detail to the point of including footnotes which describe textual differences between the two versions in *Quarto 1* and *Quarto 2*.[117] Therefore, Hans' translations build upon the early Punjabi Shakespearean translations that aim to introduce Shakespeare as authentically as possible to the Punjabi audiences. However, a close analysis of the Hans' collection shows that he makes some adaptations in his work which also render his translations significantly different to the original Shakespearean plays.

So, my study shows that Hans' work can be viewed as the early 20th century 'straight' translations that Duggal discusses, however, Hans' process of translation includes adaptations which recontextualise the plays and recharacterize the characters, thus they advance beyond the aims of the early translations. Hans' strategy of maintaining the form and narrative as close as possible to the original has meant that at times his translations heavily rely on transliteration; this forces Hans to explain and expand on his transliterations which he does using cultural appropriation. The use of transliteration and appropriation prompts Hans to switch between two languages, English and Punjabi.

The nuanced writing strategies deployed by Hans, such as the recharacterization of key characters so that they contain elements of Sufi writing, contribute towards developing and applying critical perspectives through which Hans' translations can be

[117] For example, Hans adds a footnote which explains that he has used *Quarto* 1 and the word in question translates as 'honour' but in *Quarto* 2, it is 'hour'.

subjected to literary criticism. In *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit*, Hans renames his characters so that when spoken aloud, their names 'sound' Punjabi. For example, the new names which Hans bestows on his characters are created using established Punjabi lexicon when Prospero becomes Pros-peer and Miranda becomes Meer-nadhi. In an explanatory section in his foreword entitled 'About Translation' Hans explains why and how he adapts the names of the main characters in the play.[118] Hans states '*pehli aukar navan dhi hain* (trans) The first challenge of translation is in translating names.'[119] Hans argues that Shakespeare and other writers/historians changed and adapted names when they used various texts as sources for their work, for example, he states:

> '*saxo ne denmark da itihas latini vich 12-vi sadhi vich likhia jithe hamlet amleth hain. San 1570 vich franseesi anuvadh vich eh hamblet hain*,[120]
>
> [trans. Saxo wrote Denmark's history in Latin in the 12th century where Hamlet was Amleth. In 1570 Francisi translated this as Hamblet.]

Hans suggests that Punjabi writers are not so adaptive and that they tend to continue to use the English spellings and pronunciations for names when articulating them in their work. However, he suggests that Punjabi writers should, like the writers mentioned, articulate names in ways that enable them 'become' Punjabi. He states:

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[118] *Jhakhkhar*, p. ix.

[119] *Ibid*, p. ix.

[120] *Ibid*, p.ix.

> ‘*doosriya bhashavan vangu patra dha nava dha punjabikaran zaroori hain*’[121]
>
> [trans. It is necessary to make the names of the characters become Punjabi just as (translators of other) languages do this.]

Hans asserts that this is a necessary part of the translation process, arguing that, after all, changing names into Punjabi, will make it easier for readers to articulate and verbalise. Hans’ renaming is significant because it makes the characters amenable to be relocated in a Punjabi context. Hans’ discussion presents the challenges of translating names, especially in relation to the impact that the colonial encounter has had on indigenous languages such as Punjabi, but he also recognises that to be able to articulate his characters as Punjabi he has to change them, despite his affinity to the earlier Punjabi Shakespearean translations that advocated for minimum change.

As well as renaming, Hans has recharacterized the dramatis personae in his translations by drawing upon aspects of Sufi literary styles and techniques. The work of critics, Kartar Singh Duggal, Sant Sekhon, Mohan Singh and Siddiq Kalim demonstrates how Sufi literature, as a pre-colonial tradition, continues to pervade post-colonial literature and contains archetypes that reassert familiarity and patterns of Punjabi literariness. The discussion in Chapter 2 explains how Punjabi writers during the colonial era insisted on continuing to use pre-colonial literary traditions,

[121] Ibid, p.ix.

which has meant that pre-colonial traditions have become firmly embedded in contemporary literature.

Surjit Hans' collection of Shakespearean translations

Surjit Hans has translated the entire collection of Shakespeare's plays into Punjabi. The Patiala based Punjabi University, which strives to 'further the cause of the Punjabi language', commissioned Hans to undertake the translations in 1993.[122] The project was conceived in the early 1990s when Joginder Singh Pawar was vice-chancellor of the university. Pawar states:

> 'We always felt a large chunk of our population didn't know English. So, the idea behind offering fellowship to Hans was to popularise Shakespeare. The university's publication bureau has done its job; now it should be introduced in the curriculum. In fact, this should have been done long ago.'[123]

Pawar's intentions show that the university's concern is primarily to introduce Shakespeare to Punjabi speaking audiences, but he also envisages that the translations be subject to wider literary study and analysis through their inclusion in Punjabi literature curriculums.

[122] Available online: Punjabi University, Patiala | Higher Education Institute | NAAC "A" Grade | Punjab. Date accessed 05/03/22, 16:45.

[123] Available online: Prof Surjit Hans, who translated all of Shakespeare to Punjabi, dies at 89 : The Tribune India. Date accessed 05/03/22, 18:02.

Hans took approximately six months to complete each translation, completing the collection in 2013. The publication of Han's collection attracted much attention from numerous media outlets, including newspapers, magazines, television, radio and internet, in the Punjab, parts of India, Canada and the UK.

Translations selected for this chapter

Two translations have been selected from Hans' collection for this chapter, they are *Jhakhkhar* (1999) which is a translation of *The Tempest* and *Romio te Julit* (2005), which is a translation of *Romeo and Juliet.* For the purposes of this study, I have written the synopsis in English, but to do this I have translated the Punjabi translations into English. I have summarised the main parts of the translations for the synopsis.

Jhakhkhar (trans. Storm)

Hans has based his translation on an *Arden* edition of *The Tempest*, edited by Frank Kermode and based on Shakespeare's *First Folio* (1623). *Jhakhkhar* is translated so that it adheres to the form and narrative of the original Shakespearean play. Hans outlines the challenges of translating from a 16th century text, especially when it incorporates poetic forms and language. He also argues that a layer of complexity is added to the translation, because words and phrases from a 16th century text can be problematic when in a modern context the words can carry different meanings. He also notes that it was challenging to interpret and translate the conventions of the time, as well as language that was specific to seamanship, in scenes where the shipwreck and mariners are featured. Ironically, Hans acknowledges the non-authenticity of

Shakespeare's work because his plays were compiled after his death, however, Hans' attempts to translate with a high degree of fidelity to the original.[124]

Romio te Julit

As with *Jhakhkhar*, Hans has endeavoured to translate as faithfully as possible to the original play. In *Romio te Julit*, Hans includes footnotes which describe textual differences between the two versions in *Quarto 1* and *Quarto 2*. So Hans, also provides a meta-context for his readers when he alerts them to the different versions of the Shakespearean plays and presents them with the information that the plays were compiled after his death.[125] For example, Hans explains that he has used *Quarto* 1 for his translation and to maintain fidelity to that particular version, he has translated the word in question as 'honour' but he is also aware that in *Quarto* 2, the word is recorded as 'hour'. Here, Hans is not simply translating the text, but he is also enriching the experience for new readers by giving them an insight into the debates and issues surrounding the text. So, for Hans, his version of the play is translated not only by considering the text itself, but also the context and meta-text. *Romeo and Juliet* is renowned for its poetic quality and Hans has also strived to maintain the poetic aspect of the play, by using the same poetic forms as Shakespeare, such as the sonnet form, and by deploying poetic language. This has enabled the Punjabi readers to access and experience the poetry of Shakespeare in their own indigenous language.

[124] *Jhakhkhar,* p. ix-xii.
[125] *Jhakhkhar,* p. ix.

Surjit Hans biography (1930-2020)

Hans was born in the Doaba area of Punjab; he briefly moved to the UK, Southall, but returned to Amritsar, where he taught at Guru Nanak Dev University. Hans has authored over sixty books in Punjabi and is renowned for focusing on those subjects and topics which have been historically neglected by scholars. For example, his research on analysing the paintings included in the *Janam Sakhi* (biography) of Guru Nanak Dev Ji in relation to the narratives in the biography is original and unique.[126] Hans was also a historian, he taught history and this aspect of his career is evident in the work he has produced and research he has undertaken. His book, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature*[127]*,* and his doctoral thesis, *Historical analysis of Sikh Literature*[128]*,* both interrogate literature as a vehicle of historical narratives, one which Hans argues is much negated in the construction of history. Hans has contributed massively to the field of Punjabi literary studies and has pioneered many literary ventures, as well as engaging in the debates in the field. He was editor of *Lakeer,* a Punjabi academic journal and published criticism on several Punjabi literary traditions, including the Sufi tradition, which is discussed in relation to his adaptations in this study.[129]

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[126] Surjit Hans, *B-40 Janamsakhi Guru Baba Nanak Paintings* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1987).

[127] Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandhar: ABS Publishers, 1988).

[128] Surjit Hans*, Historical Analysis of Sikh Literature (1500-1850 AD)* (Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980, Unpublished PhD dissertation).

[129] Surjit Hans, 'Why the World of Waris Collapsed' *Journal of Regional History IV (1983)*, pp.7-19. This discusses the Sufi writer Waris Shah and thus, demonstrates Hans' engagement with Sufi literature.

Maintaining Shakespearean form and narrative

Hans' collection of Punjabi translations, which include everything Shakespeare has written except the sonnets, closely follow the form and narrative of the original plays and poetry. However, Hans makes some significant adaptations and appropriations which render his work simultaneously different to the originals. The high level of fidelity to the original work makes these changes even more stark and pronounced. For example, in both translations, *Jhakhkhar and Romio te Julit*, Hans has maintained the number of words and lines as the original Shakespearean plays, adhering, with immense accuracy to Shakespeare's original plays in terms of form and structure. In *Romio te Julit*, the lengthy exchange between Romeo and Benvolio is written over three pages, and this is the same as the original play.[130] Maintaining the form of the play is clearly of importance to Hans because he prioritises using the same linguistic structures as Shakespeare, even mimicking the poetic structures found in the original play *Romeo and Juliet* by deploying a combination of prose and verse in *Romio te Julit*. For instance, when Romio and Julit's first encounter takes the form of a Punjabi-language sonnet Hans reminds his readers of this in a footnote, he states '*ethe sonnet shuru hunda hain* [trans. the sonnet starts here].'[131] Similarly, readers are reminded of this change in form in the *Norton* edition of the original play. Hans also maintains the poetic structure of the opening sonnet performed by the chorus in the original play, as well as the lengthy exchange which takes place between Friar Laurence and Romio.

[130] This is when Benvolio probes Romeo to find out the reason for his sadness, Hans has recorded the exchange on p. 7/8/9 of his new version, and this is the exact same number of pages used in the original play in the *Norton* edition (p. 971/972/973).

[131] *Romio te Julit, p. 23.*

The imprint of the original form of Shakespeare's play comes through candidly when the rhythm of Hans' translation retains the iambic pentameter and maintains the same act and scene numbers as the original. In *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit*, the narrative and plot remain largely unchanged, however, Hans' recharacterisation, as discussed later, disturbs the narrative thread and traditional readings of *The Tempest.* However, amongst this imitation of Shakespearean structure, Hans domesticates the Shakespearean characters so that they 'become' Punjabi, in the case of Prospero, he is adapted and moulded to fit the iconic character of a Punjabi 'peer'. This domestication makes the characters seem familiar and less alien to Punjabi audiences and readers, since Pros-peer becomes a character that is recognisable from Punjabi literature.

According to Hans, he regularly consulted Atthar Singh's *English-Punjabi Dictionary*, which many scholars argue is the 'first-ever complete, comprehensive and consolidated English-Punjabi dictionary'[132] to aid him in translating *The Tempest* from the English language to the Punjabi language.[133] So, whilst Hans assures his readers that he has endeavoured to maintain fidelity to the original play through the careful selection of language from resources that are recognised as credible and comprehensive, he also admits that translation of any kind is subject to some creative license and interpretation. When Hans states, '(E)ither I could find the necessary words in this dictionary otherwise I would know that I have to arrange something

[132] Amaresh Datta (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Indian Literature: Volume 2*: *Devraj to Jyoti* (New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi, 2005), p.1032.

[133] *Jhakhkhar*, p. x.

else,'[134] he is referring to the translators' use of creativity where there can be challenges in the process of translation. It is the arrangement of 'something else' which force Hans' translations to deploy adaptations and appropriations that speak of the engagement of Shakespeare with the Punjabi language, all whilst Hans strives to retain a high level of fidelity to the originals.

Hans argues that his main purpose was to introduce Shakespeare to a Punjabi readership and to enable them to access and appreciate Shakespeare's work in their own indigenous language. He states:

> 'Undoubtedly, Shakespeare is the greatest writer who ever walked this earth. I started translating him with the idea that it would help Punjabi readers.'[135]

As clear as Hans' purpose may seem, it is inevitable that introducing Shakespeare to Punjabi readers entails more than presenting the Shakespearean form and narratives in the Punjabi language to them; it also means unravelling a whole different world view that is intrinsically bound by time and space in the plays. In his process of translation, Hans negotiates an important balance between Shakespeare and Punjabi in which Shakespeare should not be lost in the Punjabi language and at the same time the Punjabi language should not become foreign to itself. He states:

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[134]Ibid, p. x.

[135] Vishav Bharti, 'Prof Surjit Hans, who translated all of Shakespeare to Punjabi, dies at 89' (2020). Available online: Prof Surjit Hans, who translated all of Shakespeare to Punjabi, dies at 89 : The Tribune India. Date accessed 01/06/22, 22:23.

'*angrezi samaj sada jeha nahi*'[136]

[trans. English world/society is not like ours].

Hans' statement acknowledges that his aim to introduce Shakespeare as authentically as possible is flawed because, according to Hans himself, the English world to which Shakespeare belongs, and the Punjabi world are two different entities that cannot be fully reconciled. His statement reiterates the difference between the languages, societies, and world views. To bridge the gap and attempt a reconciliation between these two worlds, in effect between the two languages, Hans employs various writing strategies that incorporate both English and Punjabi, for example, he makes use of transliteration in his Shakespearean translations. When, for instance, Hans transliterates 'Bermuda'[137] in *Jhakhkhar* he also adds a footnote to explain this to his Punjabi audience. Hans demonstrates that he is aware of what his Punjabi readers might find unfamiliar, and therefore what might be unknown to them. Hans attempts to tame the unknown by giving his readers some context and background knowledge in the footnotes which accompany his transliterations.

Thus, Hans' attempt to introduce translations to a Punjabi readership that strive to be as close as possible to the original Shakespearean plays has meant that his Punjabi Shakespearean translations are heavily transliterated with English words. To preserve some essence of Shakespeare in his translations, especially the themes and motifs which signify socio-cultural ideas, Hans has retained a significant amount of the

[136] *Jhakhkhar,* p. ix.

[137] *Jhakhkhar,* p. 16 and *Norton*, p. 3223.

original Shakespearean language too. For example, in the original play *Romeo and Juliet,* Juliet's father, Capulet, refers to 'Pentecost' at the end of Act I. The original *Norton* edition describes this in a footnote as:

> 'The seventh Sunday after Easter, a standard reference point in the medieval and Renaissance calendar.'[138]

When translating in the main text of the play, Hans transliterates 'Pentecost' in the Punjabi language so that the spelling, and pronunciation align with the English language, it is written as 'ਪੰਤੇਕੋਸਟ'[139]. Hans does this so that his reader can read the Shakespearean word in the Punjabi language. It gives his readers an original part of the Shakespearean play but in the Punjabi language, and this is indicative of Hans' original aim which was to keep his Punjabi translations emblematic of Shakespeare but this forces him to deploy transliteration in this example, however, this presents a challenge for Hans, because he is acutely aware that his readers are not fluent English readers/speakers and so are unlikely to be familiar with his transliterated reference. Thus, Hans recognises that it is not enough to simply transliterate the English socio-cultural references and that they would seem out of place embedded in the Punjabi language without any contextual or textual cues as to how they should be read and interpreted. To address this challenge, Hans translates the footnote as quoted above from the *Norton* edition, which explains the term 'Pentecost', however he also uses cultural appropriation in his Punjabi footnote explaining the meaning of the term. In

[138] *Norton*, footnote 3. p. 982.
[139] This was typed using Google translate and is similar to *Romio te Julit*, p. 21.

this way, 'Pentecost' is compared to '*puranmaashi*';[140] which is a Punjabi calendar reference linguistically derived from Sanskrit, used to denote the specific date in each calendar month when there is a full moon. Hans translates the footnote as below:

> '*eesta magro satve aitvaar de din. eesta hazrat eesa de surjeet hon da din hain. 23 march magro puranmaashi baadh pehla aitvaar*.'[141]
>
> [trans. this is the seventh Sunday after easter. Easter is the day when the prince of Christianity was reborn. It is the first Sunday after *Puranmaashi* on March 23rd].

At first glance, Hans' use of transliteration in the main text of the play is logical enough because it would be challenging to find a Punjabi equivalent, or something near enough that could be used as an alternative, that may capture that it is the seventh day after Easter and is specific to the medieval and renaissance calendar. Using a Punjabi word to capture this information would enable Hans to maintain a sense of Shakespearean authenticity in his translation which he aims to do but to leave it at that would be a form of mimicry, albeit this would be in isolation, since it is only specific words that Hans transliterates in Punjabi, not the whole play. During this process of transliteration, Hans also must contend with the risk of alienating his audience, therefore, he culturally appropriates the explanation of the term in his footnotes, and this ends up recontextualising and domesticating the play for his Punjabi readers. This is because the appropriation of '*puranmaashi*' as an alternative for 'Pentecost'

[140] *Romio te Julit,* footnote 3, p. 21.

[141] *Romio te Julit,* footnote 3, p. 21.

provides a reference point for Punjabi readers in the Punjabi calendar that is recognised and accepted. This adds a layer of Punjabi context to the play which enables Punjabi readers to read some transliterated Shakespearean language but also understand the meaning of the play in culturally appropriate ways. In this way, there is significant amount of dialogue between the main translated play and the footnotes which enables the Punjabi readers to view the play through a Punjabi lens.

This can be seen as a strategy by which Hans relocates and recontextualises the play for his new Punjabi audience, thus Hans' work goes beyond his original aim of presenting an authentic English Shakespearean play in Punjabi. Recontextualising the play and relocating it for a Punjabi audience, creates a hybridised version of the play which goes beyond mimicking the play and presenting a Punjabi version of an English Shakespearean play. Whilst there are elements of the original Shakespearean play within the Hans Punjabi version, Hans' techniques of recontextualisation and relocation create a new Shakespeare, one which speaks to the Punjabi readers directly in their language and, more pertinently, in their context. Where, for example, Romeo, in the original play uses metaphorical language in referring to the moon as 'cynthia', Hans culturally appropriates this in a footnote, he writes:

> '*chandramaa dhi devi (jiven sada agni devta*)'[142]
>
> [trans. the goddess of the moon (like a god of fire for us)]

Hans' footnote signifies the differences between the cultural context of the original play that was written by Shakespeare and Hans' own translated version, when he

[142] *Romio te Julit*, footnote 1, p. 67.

elucidates what the reference means in 'for us', in effect he directly uproots the play from its original meaning to relocate what it means for a Punjabi reader, demonstrating that he is writing from a particular position, that of a Punjabi writer writing for a Punjabi audience.

In both *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit*, Hans demonstrates that whilst his intention is to introduce Shakespeare to the Punjabi readers, he must also grapple with those parts of the text which do not translate from one culture to another with ease and translating them may mean that he reuses Shakespeare in a way that is more appropriate and valid for a Punjabi readership. However, Hans' appropriations of Shakespeare's plays do not only materialise when it is hard to find equivalents, or alternatives, of English reference in the Punjabi language, they go beyond this initial aim and it can be seen from his work that he also wants to relocate his characters not only geographically in the Punjab, but so that they can be identified as Punjabi culturally. For example, Hans appropriates essential familial relationships so that they are situated in a Punjabi context when, in *Romio te Julit,* he describes the character of Tybalt in relation to Julit as '*Chacha dha putt*.' In his introduction, he writes:

> '*angreza da desh vich baap dhi pehn tah hundi hain par othe kisa dhi bhua nahi hundi jis karan ehdhe layi koi shabad nahi'*[143]
> [trans. in the country where English people live there is a father's sister, but they have no *bhua* so for that reason they have no words for these relationships].

[143] *Jhakhkhar*, p. ix.

In the Punjabi to English dictionary, 'ਭੂਆ' (*bhua*)' is translated as 'father's sister, aunt'.[144] Hans highlights the differences in, or rather lack of, names for family relationships in the English language compared to the Punjabi language. In the original Shakespearean play, *Romeo and Juliet*, the familial relationship between Tybalt and Juliet remains unnamed because Hans rightly suggests, the English language does not have the words to describe these relationships but in *Romio te Julit*, Hans relocates the Shakespearean characters in a Punjabi familial context by describing Tybalt as '*chacha dha putt*.' There is no adequate translation in English for '*chacha*', as Hans has argued in his introduction, but it can be interpreted as 'father's younger brother', demonstrating that in the Punjabi culture and language, each familial relationship has its own specific name rather than generic names like 'uncle' or 'aunt'. Hans' use of '*chacha*' in this context, appropriates the characters of Tybalt and Juliet, as well as her parents, because referring to Tybalt as '*chacha dha putt'* names the relationships with the specificity that makes them functional in the context of Punjab, as opposed to remaining in a western or Eurocentric context.[145] Thus, in his translation, Hans chooses not to emulate the western context in which the relationships remain unnamed.

[144] Krishan Kumar Goswami, *Punjabi-English Dictionary* (New Delhi: UBSPD, 2014), p. 266.

[145] In Western culture, when referring to a parent's brother or sister, the blanket terms of 'aunt/aunty' and 'uncle' are used. However, in Punjabi culture each relation is given its own name, for example, a father's elder brother is called '*taya*' and younger brother is called '*chacha'*.

As well as the appropriation of familial relationships to recraft the identities of his characters as Punjabi, Hans also uses examples of linguistic phenomenon that are unique to Punjabi speakers which localises the identity of the characters and roots them in the Punjabi language. This means that the characters do not speak Punjabi as an adopted language but as if it is their own language. For example, in Shakespeare's original play, *Romeo and Juliet*, Capulet states 'thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds'[146], Hans reworks this in his Punjabi translation as '*shukar shukoori, fakhr fakhoori*'.[147] He draws on the techniques of Punjabi spoken language in this example, which is the phenomenon of repeating words but changing the ending of the repeated words so that they become nonsense words. This is a colloquial technique specific to spoken language, often associated with the bucolic quality of the Punjabi language. Hans' inclusion of Punjabi patterns of spoken language act as a form of validation, reiterating that Punjabi is a language that can be used for something as 'prestigious' as Shakespeare.

Hans has stated that his main purpose was to introduce Shakespeare, without alteration or adaptation, in the Punjabi language to Punjabi readers. However, he has accepted that at some points in his translations, he had to arrange for 'something else'[148] which went beyond his aims of translating faithfully and steps into the realm of appropriation. He states:

[146] *Norton*, p. 1015, III. V. 152.

[147] *Romio te Julit*, p. 72.

[148] *Jhakhkhar*, p. x.

> ‘maslan badal angrezia layi maare par sada layi changa’[149]
> [trans. changing instances/items is bad for the English but it is good for us]

Han’s statement recognises that appropriating words into the Punjabi culture from the English language means that those appropriations will no longer be recognisable for the English speakers, but he argues it will be ‘good’ for his Punjabi readers because it will give them a better understanding and affinity with the text. Thus, the act of appropriating and using language that is unique to Punjabi speakers in Hans’ translations initiates a process of relocation and recontextualization for the plays. And Hans realises that his intention of introducing Shakespeare to the Punjabi readers can only be realised if he makes the plays relevant to the Punjabi readers too. So, he clearly wants to introduce Shakespeare to the Punjabi readers but not at the expense of the Punjabi language and heritage because for Hans and his readers, the use of Punjabi in telling Shakespearean stories is just as important as the stories themselves.

Renaming Shakespearean Characters

At the beginning of this chapter, I noted that the overall effect of appropriation and cultural re-significance in Hans’ translations contributes to the resistance to western cultural impositions. In *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit,* this resistance is extended through the practice of renaming the main characters since Hans does not retain the anglicised pronunciations of the names. Instead, he changes the spellings of the names so that when they are pronounced, they sound more Punjabi. For example,

[149] *Jhakhkhar*, p. ix.

‘Juliet’ is renamed ‘Julit’ and ‘Romeo’ as ‘Romio’. The new spellings dictate how the new names are pronounced in Punjabi.[150] This mispronunciation and misspelling of the original Shakespearean names so that they do not sound ‘strange’ or ‘foreign’ in the Punjabi language, can be seen as a form of resistance against the colonial legacy of the English language dominating over the Punjabi language. So, whilst Hans, largely adheres to the form and narrative of the original plays, *The Tempest* and *Romeo and Juliet*, he resists perpetuating western cultural impositions in his translations, as well as resisting the domination of the English language over Punjabi by deliberately adapting the names of the characters so that they sound Punjabi.

Similar to Hans, who in his translation, changes the spelling, and thus pronunciation of ‘Montague’ to ‘Monteg’, Achhru Singh in his translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, which will be analysed in Chapter 4 of this study, the name is also changed so, ‘Montague’ becomes ‘Monteg’. When ‘Monteg’ is verbalised, it sounds like Punjabi rather than ‘Montague’ which sounds foreign in the Punjabi language. It can be seen here that both translators are adapting the plays in a similar way, and this demonstrates that whilst Hans and Achhru Singh have rewritten *Romeo and Juliet* in different ways, thus producing two very different versions of the same play in the Punjabi language, they nonetheless have some common cultural and political concerns which come through in their writing. Both writers, Hans and Achhru Singh, use renaming as a way to resist Western cultural impositions and challenge the anglicisation of the characters in their translations. Renaming the characters with Punjabi names relocates the characters in the Punjab which contributes to the recontextualization of the Shakespearean narrative as Punjabi. As mentioned previously, Hans states that the first challenge of

[150] *Romio te Julit*, inside cover page.

reworking Shakespeare from English into the Punjabi language manifested itself in the translation of the names of the characters in the play. Hans observes that it is not only in Punjabi or other Indian languages where this can be a challenging part of the translation process. He argues that there is a tension between maintaining the Shakespearean characters' names and appropriating their names so that they are not alienated and distanced from the indigenous languages. In his introduction, Hans cites an example of a post-colonial Zulu reworking of *Macbeth* where the names of the characters are changed for the same reason, he states:

> '(in) the Zulu play, *uMabatha, Macbeth becomes Mabatha'.*[151]

Hans' reference to *Mabatha,* demonstrates that he draws on the practice of other post-colonial translators to inform his own practice. [152] Hans discusses a phenomenon regarding the pronunciation of names of renowned international writers by Punjabi speakers when he states that they pronounce 'Tolstoy' the same way as an English speaker would, whereas in fact in Russian it is pronounced 'Thhalstoy'.[153] As well as arguing that this is considerably easier to verbalise in Punjabi and closer to Punjabi

[151] Available online: https://www.google.co.uk/search?ei=ahdgW_juEoeYgAat9rDIAQ&q=umabatha+zulu+macbeth&oq=zulu+umabatha&gs_l=psy-ab.1.0.0i22i30k1.12402.20784.0.23037.9.9.0.0.0.0.179.1186.0j9.9.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.9.1185...0j0i67k1j0i10k1j0i22i10i30k1j0i13k1j0i8i13i30k1.0.nn2C5kWT9zc. Date accessed: 01/06/19, 19:24.

[152] *Jhakhkhar* p. ix.

[153] *Jhakhkhar* p. ix.

speech sounds, Hans concludes that 'we (*Punjabi*) follow English blindly.'[154] According to Hans, Punjabi writers should think more carefully about how names sound in Punjabi rather than accepting and leaving anglicised pronunciations unchallenged. In this context, he notes that while he wants to introduce his Punjabi readers to Shakespeare, he does not want to re-affirm the imposed cultural prestige of English in Punjabi culture and risk alienating his Punjabi readers. Hans' discussion and argument challenges the way in which the English language has influenced and dominated the indigenous languages which were subject to colonial rule. Hans demonstrates that a hierarchical relationship exists between the English language and pre-colonial indigenous languages, such as Punjabi, using his translations as a space to resist the dominance of the foreign language.

According to Shivakumar Jolad and Isha Doshi, the dominance of English is the colonial legacy of language hegemony that emerged with the introduction of Western education to India. This compulsory medium of instruction in English in educational institutions disenfranchised and marginalised the regional languages of India. This dominating legacy of English continues to this day in India and the Punjab. As Jolad and Doshi argue:

> '(English) is used widely in higher education institutions and government documents and has attained the de facto status as lingua franca in all commerce and industry in India… (and thus) … The demand for English education continues to dominate, in

[154] *Jhakhkhar* p. ix. Hans states: '*asi angrezi de piche lag ke*' which translates as 'we blindly follow the English.'

> spite of various attempts such as the Three Language Formula (TLF) to promote and incorporate vernacular languages in Indian education.'[155]

To Jolad and Doshi, children have been negatively impacted in school when they are subject to a medium of instruction which is not their mother tongue. In fact, in their view, many children are still subject to a medium of instruction in English despite policies[156] to include regional and local languages in their medium of instruction. So, the tangible implications for minority speakers who are forced to 'renounce their mother tongues for their children to be able to receive standard education through the medium of a dominant language' are severe.[157] Jolad and Doshi's views can be seen as related to Hans' act of resistance, especially when he illustrates the implications of the colonial legacy of English dominance over the Punjabi language. As a writer, he directly counteracts this colonial legacy of education in his translations, for example, in *Jhakhkhar*, he uses the twenty-first letter of the Punjabi alphabet to provide an aspirated /t/ to spell 'Anthonio' rather than 'Antonio'. This sounds closer to Punjabi and coincidentally, this also sounds closer to the softer Italian pronunciation rather than the harder English pronunciation of the letter /t/ used in English when /t/ is alone in the consonant position at the beginning of a syllable. When Hans' does this in his

[155] Shivakumar Jolad and Ishi Doshi, 'Colonial Legacy of Language Politics and Medium of Instruction Policy in India' (2021). Available online: Joald_Doshi_Colonial Legacy of Language Hegemony and Language Policy in Education in India_June_SocArxiv (1).pdf. Date accessed: 20/07/22, 23:13.

[156] National Education policy of India, (2020). Available online: National Education Policy 2020 (ruralindiaonline.org). Date accessed 20/07/22, 23:27.

[157] Shivakumar and Doshi, p. 2.

translations, this repeated act of resistance becomes a stage for protest. Using his translations as space to realise his post-colonial concerns, Hans is able to defy the hierarchical relationship that exists between English and Punjabi, by changing the English names into Punjabi. This is also related to Pawar's comment about curriculum mentioned earlier in this chapter; after Hans' collection of Punjabi translations was published, Pawar argued that Hans' Punjabi Shakespeare should be included in the curriculum for teaching rather than English Shakespeare. Thus, it can be seen that academics, such as Pawar, and writers, such as Hans, are working collectively to undo the language hegemony of English that Jolad and Doshi discuss in their work.

In the act of renaming, resistance and protest, Hans also indigenises the characters as Punjabi when he changes the names in a way that they take on aspects of Punjabi culture. For example, 'Miranda' in its original form sounds unfamiliar and foreign in Punjabi. Hans changes 'Miranda' to 'Meer-nadhi' so that it not only sounds more Punjabi when verbalised, but it also takes on a Punjabi aspect because to create an adaptation of Miranda, Hans adjoins two Punjabi words, 'Meer', a name that has been used across various Indian languages, including Punjabi, for example, Sa*meer* or Shafiq *Meer*[158] and '*nadhi*' which means 'river'.[159] Changing the names by using established Punjabi names and words, as opposed to simply adapting the English names for ease of verbalisation, means that characters can be identified as Punjabi. Hans' nuanced approach transforms his characters from Shakespearean to Punjabi

[158] ਮੀਰ - Meaning in English (shabdkosh.com)

[159] Krishan Kumar Goswami, *Punjabi-English Dictionary* (New Delhi: UBSPD, 2014), p. 202.

Shakespearean characters because they can identify as Punjabi but are contained in the Shakespearean form of a play which Hans emulates faithfully.

The concept of taking on culture, or the process of acculturation, has been discussed by Ishwar Chander Nanda, who translated the Shakespearean play, *The Merchant of Venice,* in 1949. Nanda, who discusses Shakespearean names and characters in the same way that Hans does in his introduction, critiques the way that Punjabi writers fail to recreate Shakespearean characters when they translate them. To Nanda, this means that they can 'become lost' in the Punjabi language, and he states that this makes them seem 'mundane'. Nanda's argument is that if the Punjabi writers treat their Shakespearean characters as if they are English, rather than take into account the new Punjabi context to which they have been introduced to, the characters will seem out of place and foreign. So, for Nanda, whilst the Shakespearean characters may speak Punjabi due to the target language of the translation, without being recreated as Punjabi through a cultural lens, they would not be convincing enough as Punjabi characters. This means that for Nanda, to change the language is not enough on its own to recreate a Punjabi translation, the characters of the play must also be recreated. Critically, Nanda states that it is imperative, when translating Shakespeare, that the characters 'take on a colour that is representative of '*Punjabiat*''.[160] Nanda states:

> '*shakespeare dhi asal kahani vich jo vart vartara hain oh sadi punjabi zindagi toh bilkul vakhra hain te jo os nu punjabi boli*

[160] IC Nanda 'Shamu Shah' (1928), Available online: ..:: Panjab Digital Library ::.. (panjabdigilib.org). Date accessed: 20/07/22, 23:26.

raanh biyaan kita jae te vich sanu swaad nahi aa sakde ten aa hee staje utte koi rang baj skahde hain.'[161]

[trans. the way in which Shakespeare's original story is written is completely different from our Punjabi life and to realise that story in the Punjabi language would make it tasteless to read and colourless on the stage.]

The act of '*Punjabiat'*, for Nanda, is that which encompasses Punjabi life and language to produce a Punjabi world view. Indeed, not only are Nanda's characters renamed with Punjabi names, but they are also subsumed by Punjabi culture, so that they 'become' Punjabi. Nanda's adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice* is retitled *Shamu Shah,* which is also the name of one of the main characters, Shylock. Nanda's renaming of Shylock as Shamu Shah is significant for the Shakespearean narrative because '*Shah*' carries a specific meaning in the Punjabi language; it denotes a title usually bestowed on wealthy men who are typically money lenders. Thus, in Nanda's play, the Punjabi audience immediately recognises the position of Shamu Shah as a landowner and money lender, which is the essence of the character in the original Shakespearean play. Using a name that carries meaning which is relevant to the play creates a familiarity for the Punjabi audience and indigenises the character of Shylock.

Nanda's and Hans' renaming of the Shakespearean characters, as well as the discussion about losing the characters in the Punjabi language and taking on culture reflects Salman Rushdie's claim about translation. He states:

[161] Ibid, p. 2-3.

> ‘The word 'translation' comes, etymologically, from the Latin for 'bearing across'. Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately to the notion that something can also be gained.’[162]

As well as arguing that translators and readers typically assume that something of the original texts is usually lost in translation, Rushdie asserts that new meanings and contexts are also gained in the process of translation. Rushdie’s concept of loss and gain in translation echoes Hans’ and Nanda’s act of renaming. Hans argues that when they rename the characters, they lose the aspect of the name which is anglicised, whilst Nanda asserts that they take on ‘*Punjabiat*’ because their names not only sound Punjabi, but they also carry specific meanings which are unique to the Punjabi language. Rushdie’s discussion echoes Nanda’s concerns that the Shakespearean characters are lost in the Punjabi language, but Rushdie reminds us not to be remorseful about this, because this loss will be compensated for through the gain of ‘*Punjabiat*’. However, the lengthy timespan in which these writers were writing; Nanda had written in 1949, and Hans and Rushdie about 50 years later, shows that the concerns about loss and gain in translation have been relevant to writers for a considerable period of time. This shows the underlying hierarchical relationships between culture and languages, especially colonial and indigenous languages, has

[162] Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London: Penguin, 1992).

continued long after independence. However, Hans, Nanda and Rushdie continue to resist this hierarchy by renaming the characters and engaging with the debate.

Whereas the renaming of characters illustrates the difference in the languages of the source text and the target language, it also highlights the hybridity of the translations. In his analysis of post-colonial novels, Lesar Ahmed argues that code-mixing, or the 'changing back and forth between two language varieties,'[163] that can often be seen in post-colonial writing alerts the readers to the difference and hybridity inherent in the post-colonial psyche. He argues that this also indicates a resistance to Westernisation because the writers do not accept 'western stereotypical canonical norms.'[164] To demonstrate how code-mixing in post-colonial literature acts as a counter-discursive strategy, he uses Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, *Ice-candy-man,* as an example. He states:

> 'Linguistic and literary practices installed in the novel are also representative, and reliable to inscribe difference, hybridity, mixed identity and resistance in the context of the prevailing forces of neo-colonialism, neoliberalism, massive migration, acculturation and globalization rather than unconsciously accepting and experiencing the world only through the lens of the western stereotypical canonical norms.'[165]

[163] Lesar Ahmed, 'Code switching or code mixing as the postcolonial counter discourse strategy in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel Ice-Candy-Man (Cracking India)', *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 7:5 (2019), pp. 1-12.

[164] Ibid, p. 1.

[165] Ibid, p. 10.

So, according to Ahmed, code-mixing works to deconstruct canonical norms and signifies hybridity, amongst other things. To Hans, translation does not pertain to one language, for even though it is written in Punjabi, it uses both language varieties for its own purposes. For example, in *Romio te Julit*, Hans translates and adapts 'Dian's wit'[166], which is a mythological reference that Shakespeare deployed in the original Romeo and Juliet, as 'Dian *budh* (trans. Dian's intelligence).'[167] Hans' writing here does not operate under Punjabi grammatical rules for nouns because to write about Dian's intelligence in Punjabi, he would need to use '*dhi*' in between 'Dian' and *'Budh'* to signify the possession of 'intelligence'. At the same time, Hans' transliteration here does not wholly follow English grammatical rules either. Nonetheless, the code-mixing in the translation alerts the reader to the duality of the text because it can be seen that the translation makes use of both languages in one utterance. This demonstrates that when English and Punjabi are seen side by side, in 'Dian *budh*', the difference between the two languages can be seen, conversely, Hans' use of both languages at once conveys the hybridity with which he writes. The code-mixing which Hans uses as a strategy to resist western impositions, goes beyond this initial aim and is a reminder of the hybrid nature of Hans' translations, rather than a combination of English Shakespeare and Punjabi language, the translations are a reimagination which are novel in their own right, as Punjabi Shakespeare. This is a new literary and linguistic space, which is different to Shakespeare and Punjabi because both are used in new ways. Code-mixing in this way, as Ahmed argues, also conveys a resistance to accepting the world through a western and neo-colonial lens because Hans

[166] *Norton,* p. 973, l. l. 204.

[167] *Romio te Julit*, p. 9.

transliterates to maintain the mythical reference for his readers, but he does not present the reference through the Western lens, instead he adapts it so that it can be viewed and understood through a Punjabi lens. This can also be seen as counter-discursive as it repurposes the original references, deviating away from their original meanings and imposition. Furthermore, Tejaswini Niranjana, as mentioned in Chapter 2, argues that translation is a 'significant technology of colonial domination.'[168] The Punjabi writers, therefore, use the space and form of translation to resist colonial domination and are thus counter-discursive in their approach.

Reverting to pre-colonial traditions – Sufism

As I have discussed previously, Hans has followed very closely the form, structure and narrative of the original Shakespearean plays when translating his collection of Punjabi translations. The fidelity to the original plays can even be seen in the poetic structures and tropes which Hans translates, however, there are some significant adaptations that Hans makes which demonstrate that his work is different to the original. One of these adaptations is the way in which Hans reverts to using the pre-colonial tradition of Sufi writing in his translations. Hans' use of tropes and techniques that are from Sufi writing end up in recharacterising the Shakespearean characters and creating new ways of rendering Shakespeare. 'Recharacterising,' as discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, takes place when Hans changes some aspects of the characters so that they can be recognised as their original selves but also take on novel characteristics. Hans' characters become recharacterised through using archetypes and words which are recognisably from the Sufi writing tradition.

[168] Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), p. 21.

In her writing about the place of Punjabi Sufi poetry in Punjabi literature, L. R. Krishna has argued that it is desirable to use certain Sufi words and concepts in their original form no matter what language the discussion is held in. To Krishna, Sufism is so rich in its signification that the words associated with Sufism have meanings that are too specific and precise to interpret or change. While it could be argued that this is the case with translation in general, in Chapter 2 of this study, I contend that there are some words that refuse to cross linguistic borders because they have specific ideas, meanings, associations and feelings attached to them that would be simply lost in translation, this is due to their affinity to the traditions and heritage of the culture to which they belong. One such word is '*peer*', which in English can be interpreted to mean teacher or preceptor,[169] but according to Krishna, to fully engage in a discussion about Sufi poetry, the speaker or writer ought to specifically use the term '*peer*' instead of employing any synonyms or translations. [170] She argues that to translate or attempt an interpretation of some Sufi words would result in making meanings that are no longer Sufi-specific. The only way to capture the Sufi associations then would be to add the prefix of 'Sufi', for example, Sufi teacher or Sufi guide, otherwise the translations themselves fail to relate back to Sufism and signify the Sufistic meanings of the Sufi tradition. Kartar Singh Duggal and Sant Singh Sekhon also argue that the word '*peer*' is so closely associated with Sufi literature, since its writers addressed themselves or other Sufi saints by the name '*peer*', that it is synonymous with Sufism and has even evolved so that it carries more meaning through the lens of Sufism rather

[169] Kartar Singh Duggal and Sant Singh Sekhon, *A History of Punjabi Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1992), p. 64.

[170] L. R. Krishna, *Punjabi Sufi Poets, AD 1460-1900* (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 20.

than that of its original meaning which pre-dates Sufism.[171] So, for critics and writers of Sufi literature, to translate the word would mean it loses its powerful association with all that it stands for.

In *Jhakhkhar,* Prospero's character becomes recharacterised as a Sufi *peer* when he is renamed as 'Pros-peer'. That Hans uses the established literary trope of a Sufi *peer* in his reimagination makes Pros-peer a character that is recognisable and familiar to the Punjabi audience, shows how, as a writer, he has mobilised Shakespearean characters to become Punjabi. Hans knows that renaming Prospero will have implications for the way in which the audience will view and engage with the character of Pros-peer. They will view him through a Sufi lens, and the words and actions which he performs will be viewed through a Sufi prism. For example, any part of Pros-peer's character that displays humility will be seen by the audience as akin to the acceptance and humility that is displayed by *peers* when they submit to God's will.

According to Duggal and Sekhon, the most prominent feature of Sufism, which manifests itself in Sufi literature, is the submission to God's will. Since Sufi narratives embody a sense of humility and acceptance that submits itself to a higher power through the language that is deployed, these narratives directly incorporate the idea of submitting to God's will either using it to change or drive the plot forward, or, in the spiritualistic addresses.[172] In *Jhakhkhar*, by attributing the Sufi submissive element to Shakespeare's Prospero, Hans renames him and presents him as Pros-peer. Re-characterising Pros-peer demonstrates how 'submission' as seen in Sufi literature can

[171] Duggal and Sekhon, p. 64.

[172] Ibid, p. 65-66.

also be seen in the character of Pros-peer. The submission to God's will can be seen when, following the ship wreck, Pros-peer explains to Meer-nadhi that 'It was all God's will.'[173] She is influenced by him and remarks, 'what has God done.'[174] Thus, Pros-peer, views events from a Sufi perspective and accepts that the events leading up to and beyond their arrival on the island have been part of God's will.

In the original play, in the same scene, Prospero narrates how Antonio, with the help of the King of Naples, overtook the 'crown.'[175] He lays the blame on Antonio and asks Miranda:

> 'Mark his condition and th' event; then tell me/ If this might be a brother' and 'I pray thee mark me, that a brother should be / Be so perfidious'[176]

He feels that Antonio's behaviour raises the question if he is his real brother as Antonio's actions are not brotherly in the least. Prospero firmly holds his brother responsible for his actions as he comments on his greed, he states 'So dry (thirsty) he was for sway (power).'[177] Furthermore, in the original, Prospero assures Miranda that no one will be hurt in the shipwreck as he has complete control over it, and it has been conjured with his 'art'. Prospero shares with Miranda his realisation that Antonio had

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[173] *Jhakhkhar*, p. 13.

[174] *Jhakhkhar*, p. 11.

[175] *Norton*, p. 3220.

[176] *Norton*, p. 3220 and p. 3219.

[177] *Norton*, p. 3320.

the opportunity to act as such because Prospero himself was 'neglecting worldly ends.'[178] Thus, in Shakespeare's play, this dialogue between Miranda and Prospero, clearly shows that the human characters in the play have the power to produce and influence the action. In a sense, the original play enables them to be super-human by being all controlling and all knowing. This places the human, rather than God, at the centre of the universe. There are several humanist readings of *The Tempest* which capture and explore the humanist elements in the play. Such readings are cognisant of the nascent debates of the time of Shakespeare's writing.[179]

In contrast to Shakespeare's humanist elements of the play, Hans' adaptation replaces the focus on individual action with an emphasis on God's will and power. This change in the narrative of the play that Hans makes in his Punjabi translation aligns with the theme of humility that pervades Sufi literature. Other Punjabi translations of *The Tempest*, for example, Acchru Singh's *Toofan* (2012), have adopted similar interpretations. As discussed in the next chapter, Achhru Singh's translation denies Prospero as a magician, who is responsible for creating the storm, and instead asserts

[178] *Norton*, p. 3219.

[179] For example, Goran Stanivukovic's reading of the original play discusses this same disclosure scene in relation to the art of rhetoric. Stanivukovic argues that Prospero's speech in this scene is a 'product of humanist culture' in which a part of being a human of the world is to learn how to effectively read and speak. He concludes that Prospero is like a 'humanist trained in the art of rhetoric.' Stanivukovic's reading of the play highlights how Shakespeare's Prospero, through the art of rhetoric, convinces Miranda of her uncle's deceitful character. He also argues that *The Tempest* reveals a darker side of humanism too, in which individualism can have detrimental consequences. Goran Stanivukovic, 'The Tempest and the Discontents of Humanism', *Philological Quarterly* 85/1-2, 2006, pp. 91-119.

that it is '*paratma*' (trans. God) who creates the storm as a punishment. Achhru Singh's translation deviates from established humanist interpretations of *The Tempest*. In this way, both Hans and Achhru Singh do not place the human at the centre of the universe, instead it is God's will and power that drives forward the action and events of their reimaginations. This is a significant contrast, not only to humanist readings by critics but also to the humanist elements which are inherent in the play.[180] This shift in the translations is significant because when Hans' and Achhru Singh reimagine the character attributes, they create a literary pattern that signifies their writing strategy. For Hans and Singh, a humanist reading, or viewpoint, is not valid since western humanism is not relevant to a contemporary Punjabi context. So, for Hans, Pros-peer as a character with Sufi elements is more relevant than a character who embodies western humanism, as Prospero does.

Azra Waqr has written about archetypes of Sufi literature and how these can become a way that writers relate to their audiences. When, the archetype character of a Sufi 'peer' can be educed through Pros-peer he becomes more recognisable and less alien to the Punjabi audience. *The Tempest*, as a play and narrative does not seem so strange or foreign when it incorporates character archetypes, such as the Sufi *peer*, that the Punjabi audience recognises. Waqr writes:

> 'Through them *(narratives)* we can live on several levels of consciousness simultaneously. These narratives save and enrich a language and define a culture. We live with the

[180] *Norton*, p. 3249.

> narratives, the characters and places and they become real to us. Poetry based on these love legends is the link with our past…[181]

Here, Waqar uses the famous *Qissa* narrative of *Heer Ranjha* to emphasise the importance of archetypes in the Punjabi language.[182] Hans recreates Sufi archetypes through the language he uses. Pros-peer is addressed as '*Sahib*'[183] and this is the same way that Baba Farid Ji, one of the earlier '*peers*' of the Sufi tradition and Sufi literature,[184] uses the *Salok* form[185] to address God through his own soul. In one of his most well-known *Saloks,* he deploys '*Sahib*'[186] when he addresses himself in an attempt to reach God through his own soul. So, when Ariel refers to Pros-peer as '*Sahib*', it evokes the same language that is used in Sufi writing.

Historically, a strong oral tradition has created opportunities and space for mental images of archetypes to become ingrained in the Punjabi psyche. When these characters are repeated in different forms they become so well known to the

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[181] Azra Waqr, 'The 'lover' Archetype in Punjabi Classical Poetry', *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol.30:1, (2009), p. 158.

[182] Ibid, p. 158.

[183] *Jhakhkhar* p. 18-19.

[184] Siddiq Kalim, *Songs of A People* (Lahore: Lehran, 2000). p. 26.

[185] This is a poetic form often found in Sufi literature, it consists of one to twenty-six couplets. Available online: https://app.gurugranthsahib.io/tggsp/english/SignificantTermsDetail/Salok. Date accessed 21/06/22, 20:29.

[186] Baba Farid Ji, 'Kalam Baba Farid Ji' (unknown date. Available online: https://apnaorg.com/poetry/faridg/. Date accessed 21/05/22, 17:02.

consumers and producers of the narratives that they become 'real' to them and act as a reference point to 'real life'. The archetypes are so well embedded in the culture and language that even when people may not be familiar with the narratives themselves, they still recognise the archetype and what it emblematises. Waqr uses the character of 'Ranjha' to exemplify how an archetype operates in literature and how this crosses over into 'real life'. When Hans uses the archetype of a Sufi *peer*, the character and narrative becomes instantly recognisable for the readers. Waqr discusses this further:

> 'The archetype of a lover (Ranjha) has been discussed, who is also inspired by a mystic path, or Sufi way of life, searching God (beauty). The lover archetype is giving, caring, intimate. He is the primal energy, passion and appetite for all human hungers, such as food, wellbeing, reproduction, creativity and meaning. He is the symbol of man's connectedness to all other people. The lover Ranjha is a traveller in Punjabi poetry, whose goal is to move into another life, or go into the other dimension of life, that is less alien and more 'us'.'[187]

When Hans deploys language and tropes that are typical in Sufi literature, his reimagination incorporates pre-colonial traditions of writing since Sufism is thought to have begun developing as early as the ninth century.[188] So, even though *Jhakhkhar*,

[187] Waqar, p. 154.

[188] Duggal argues that Sufism begun to develop in the ninth century in Arabia contrary to popular belief that it began much later in India. Kartar Singh Duggal, 'Introduction to Bulleh Shah's Poetry'

by its material position, is a post-colonial text, it includes instances of pre-colonial literary traditions.

Incorporating a pre-colonial tradition of writing in the reimagination enables the audience to see a Shakespearean play that is rooted in Punjabi literature, and from a new Sufi perspective. This enables the Punjabi audience to see that which has been imposed on them as 'great literature' entwined with that which they are familiar with as part of the literary tradition.[189] Enmeshing these together means that Hans disturbs and interrogates the hierarchy that exists between Shakespeare's canonical works and literature from other parts of the world, and indeed between English and Punjabi.

Hans' use of a Punjabi archetype helps the audience to feel comfortable about seeing, consuming, and using the Punjabi language and culture. Raja Rao, the Indian writer and critic, discusses what it means to write like an Indian writer. In the foreword to his novel *Kanthapura* (1938), Rao states that an Indian writer when writing in English,

> '…has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought-movement that looks maltreated in an alien language.'

(1995). Available online: https://apnaorg.com/prose-content/english-articles/page-2/article-1/index.html. Date accessed: 19/05/22, 21:54.

[189] Helen Tiffin argues that 'great literature' was imposed on the colonised and held up as that which dealt with universal truths. Helen Tiffin, 'Post-Colonial Literatures and Counter-Discourse' (1987). Available online: https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol9/iss3/4 . Date accessed: 15/04/22, 22:16.

Rao's arguments allude to the strangeness of working with a language that is very different to the writer's language. His arguments highlight how some things that can sound completely normal in one language can be alien and abnormal in another. To avoid this strangeness, Rao deduces that:

> 'We cannot write like the English. We should not. We can write only as Indians.'[190]

Rao's arguments build a strong narrative around using indigenous languages and using English in a subversive way, in effect, using it for your own purposes. In this way, it can be seen how Hans has used an English text but adapted it for his own purposes. Thus, Hans' translation can be seen to be counter-discursive because it decentres the 'accepted' Eurocentric interpretations of Shakespeare that are privileged. By enabling a Sufi perspective, Hans talks back to the centre and enables a new centre in his translation and writing. As stated previously, Tejaswini Niranjana discusses how translation became a part of colonial discourse and she argues that translation was used as a technology to achieve colonial domination.[191] Hans uses the form and space of translation to decentre the colonial discourse and enable, as well as assert, a Punjabi centred perspective of Punjabi Sufism. This means that translation is used, by Hans, to change the rhetoric of the narrative, and not simply to transfer text and narrative from one language to another. Gayatri Spivak argues that translation requires careful consideration when translators are considering the rhetoric of the language in translation. She states:

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[190] Raja Rao, *Kanthapura,* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), Foreword.

[191] Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), p. 21.

> ‘The act of translating into the third world language is often a political exercise of a different sort.’[192]

By this, Spivak means that not only does the translator, as in Hans’ case, transfer the language and ideas of English Shakespeare but he also changes the unspoken or unwritten colonial discourse that is inherent in the original play, that of humanism, to a discourse and philosophy that speaks to a Punjabi reader, that of Punjabi Sufism.

Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I discussed the critical perspectives that I would utilise in examining the Punjabi translations. By applying these and examining Hans’ presentation of Punjabi Shakespeare, I have found that there are some commonalities in Hans’ collection of translations which aim to deliver the Shakespearean narratives of the plays as legitimately as possible. Thus, his translations firmly build upon the early 20th century translations that were fixated in introducing Shakespeare in its original form to Punjabi audiences. In this way, Hans’ *Jhkar* and *Romio te Julit* can be seen as mimicking the original plays *The Tempest* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Choosing to use the same form and structure, as well as narratives and themes as the original plays means that it seems Hans ends up recreating an imitation. However, this mimicry is mimicry in the post-colonial sense that rather than only imitate, it serves to remind

[192] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), p. 213. Date accessed April 30, 2023.

us that it is different to the original and questions the authority of the original. For example, Hans' use of pre-colonial Sufi traditions in his translation of *The Tempest* decentres the original interpretation of the narrative. Frantz Fanon states that mimicry is 'nauseating'[193] because it takes inspiration from Europe. Fanon's thinking provides a framework to question the imitative style which Hans has chosen for *Jhkar.* This makes Hans' reimagination seem redundant because mimicry is reproduction which only serves as the colonial master's mouthpiece from Fanon's perspective. When considering Fanon's arguments, Hans' approach in translating *The Tempest* is simplistic and his reimagination can be seen as absurd in the foreign language of Punjabi, especially because the structure of the Shakespearean play is far removed from the typical Punjabi literary forms. This then makes the play seem alien and strange in the Punjabi language. In relation to Fanon's arguments about mimicry being 'nauseating', it can be argued that Hans' translations do clearly imitate the original plays, but my analysis shows that they go beyond this to create a new space between the two languages and cultures. This is where Fanon's arguments about mimicry are limited because Homi Bhabha's work on the third space shows how mimicry can also be a form of subversion. Bhabha states 'The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space…'[194] This enables Hans, as a writer to possess and control the characters and thus the text, reimagining them in a new space and context.

[193] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Penguin: London, 1961), p. 251.

[194] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Oxon: Routledge, 1994), p.161.

Thus, Hans is challenged to recreate Shakespeare authentically but at the same time needs to be considerate of the lack of familiarity that his readership will have with Shakespeare, and this means he uses various writing strategies to enable his readers to access Shakespeare through a Punjabi lens. Furthermore, Hans reverts to the use of pre-colonial traditions, and renames and recharacterises his characters in his translation to resist anglicisation and western cultural impositions, which decentres western interpretations of Shakespeare that do not resonate authentically with Punjabi audiences. When Hans incorporates pre-colonial traditions, his Punjabi Shakespearean translations become Sufi-inspired. This approach, by Hans, creates a hybrid Shakespeare, in which the original can be traced but is no longer the centre of that space. This means that whilst Hans has used Shakespeare and maintains some elements of the original play, he has also reworked the plays so that the Punjabi elements become the most prominent aspects of the plays. In the next chapter, I will examine two translations from Achhru Singh's collection of translations

Chapter 4

Post-Partition Shakespeare in Achhru Singh's Collection of Punjabi Shakespearean Translations

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that Surjit Hans' collection of translations that could be read through different critical perspectives inform my development of the notion of different approaches to Punjabi Shakespearean translation. This chapter expands the discussion to include Achhru Singh's collection of Punjabi Shakespearean plays that use a different approach in translating Shakespeare into Punjabi, as well as some writing strategies that are similar to the way in which Surjit Hans has translated Shakespeare. Achhru Singh has translated twenty-two Shakespearean plays in total, and this chapter will discuss two translations.

Since a large Indian province known as the Punjab was the focus of partition, Punjabi partition literature concentrates on the experiences of the Punjabi community at the time of the partition and the consequences they faced after the partition. In my discussion of the features of partition literature in Chapter 2, I suggest that literary works centred around partition follow and develop with Partition sensibilities, literary patterns, themes, and codes, which have created a new genre of writing. Achhru Singh's translations incorporate the features of writing that are found in Punjabi partition literature, which is Punjabi writers' literary response to the partition of British colonial India in 1947. His translations can be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare because they use Shakespeare as a source, as well as presenting the themes found in partition literature. This is different to Surjit Hans because Hans produces a Sufi-

inspired Shakespeare which incorporates pre-colonial traditions in contrast to Achhru Singh's practice, for although Achhru Singh includes some features of pre-colonial writing, he draws on the post-independence condition of partition to recreate his translations.

According to Chaman Lal, the partition has had such a profound impact on the state of Punjab, and consequently Punjabi literature, that there have been over five hundred fictional texts written on the subject, which according to critics like Lal, are yet to be significantly critically examined. Lal's argument about the lack of critical examination echoes Khushwant Singh's concerns discussed in Chapter 1, in which Khushwant Singh describes the field of Punjabi literary criticism as appreciation rather than critically driven. So, my contribution of Achhru Singh's translations as post-partition Shakespeare is new, especially how I demonstrate that the translations engage in a dialogue with colonial and post-colonial concerns because his recrafting of Shakespearean texts, which can be seen as representative of colonialism, challenge the colonial text's superiority through the concerns of the Punjabi partition. As I discuss later in this chapter, Achhru Singh's narrator describes how Prospero arrives on the island and begins the process of resettlement:

> *'sau os ne sab toh pehla as tapu nu buddhi jadoogarni de burre prabhav toh mukth karan dha yatan keeta atte oh apne yatan vich safal hoya... tapu te ponchan de uprant dooja kam jo os duara keeta geya si ariel atte os vargeeyan hor naek rooha,*

jinnha nu ariel vaang kedh keeta hoya si, nu ohna dhi kedh vicho mukth karvauna'[195]

[trans. So, first of all he endeavoured to free the island from the bad effects of the old magical lady, and he was successful in his attempt. As soon as he arrived on the island, the second job he did was to free Ariel, and the other spirits that were also imprisoned like Ariel]

Here, Achhru Singh's emphasis on Prospero's resettlement process shifts the focus of the play to issues that are relevant to the indigenous Punjabi community. Rather than recreate a broad post-colonial re-reading of Shakespeare, Achhru Singh has reinterpreted the characters of Prospero and Ariel through a specific Punjab-oriented lens of post-partition and post-independence because this was a significant period for the people of Punjabi. For example, in the Punjab, independence alone from colonial rule was not enough for people to feel that they were free citizens because despite independence, institutions such as the Indian civil service and English education would still be operating in India. So, the partition of the Punjab offered people hope for the freedom which they yearned because it would mean a break away from the institutions that had been set up in India as part of colonial rule; however, people later learnt that this was a false hope because the promises of freedom through partition were not realised. In Achhru Singh's reworking of *The Tempest*, Prospero's resettlement, which is a trope associated with the mass migration that took place during the partition, is enacted through the act of freeing the island of its magical possession and releasing

[195] *Toofan*, p. 177.

Ariel, as well as the other spirits. Achhru Singh chooses to focus on this resettlement and freedom whilst completely disregarding other post-colonial interpretations, which shows that his writing is centred around the Punjabi context. In chapter 2, I discussed how Joe Cleary justified his choice to exclude the Punjab from his critical analysis of partitioned states and the subsequent literature that was produced following partitions around the world.[196] This is because Cleary acknowledges that all partition arising from colonisation has similarities such as 'the nature of the colonial and postcolonial state.'[197] His exclusion of the Punjab is important because it serves as a reminder that colonial encounters had different contexts and specificities which writers can choose to present, as is the case with Achhru Singh who shifts the focus of the play so that it aligns with the specific historical contexts associated with the Punjabi partition.

In writing post-partition Shakespeare, Achhru Singh's strategy is to draw upon techniques from pre-colonial traditions of Punjabi literature and storytelling that are from the *Qissa* and oral storytelling tradition, in order to express his sense of *Punjabiat*. Incorporating Punjabi literary traditions that draw the audience to Punjabi ideology, which embeds traditions which have been deeply rooted in Punjabi culture expands the genre. That he draws on these pre-colonial features, functions to reinforce Achhru Singh's position as writing from a Punjabi ideological vantage point. Farina Mir's book, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab*[198]*,*

[196] Joe Cleary*, Literature, Partition and the Nation State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[197] Ibid, p. 4.

[198] Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab* (California: University of California Press, 2010).

shows that using pre-colonial traditions in Punjabi writing is typical for Punjabi writers. Despite a lack of state patronage for the Punjabi language during the colonial period, Punjabi pre-colonial indigenous traditions of storytelling and writing flourished because Punjabi writers at the time advocated the use of Punjabi as a form of resistance to the imposition of the English language on Punjabi life. Thus, the efforts to marginalise the Punjabi language during the colonial era were not successful and pre-colonial traditions of writing are still influential in Punjabi contemporary writing. However, this becomes even more interesting when writers rewrite colonial texts, such as Shakespeare, using techniques from pre-colonial writing. In this context, the Punjabi language and literary traditions have the same authority and significance as the Shakespearean text, and so, when writers like Acchru Singh rework the content using these techniques, they strategically assert authority to disturb the hierarchy between the colonial text and indigenous languages.

My argument is that Achhru Singh decentres Eurocentric interpretations of the plays through the development of new interpretations in his translations. Whereas the Eurocentric interpretations are not privileged by Achhru Singh, he reinterprets Shakespeare from a Punjabi post-partition point of view, reworking the characters and action of his translations so that they become more relevant to a Punjabi context.

Achhru Singh's collection of translations

Achhru Singh has translated twenty-two Shakespearean plays which he has divided in to two volumes.[199] He published his collection in 2012 and stated:

> 'These books have brought Shakespeare within the reach of even those readers who are not conversant with English.' [200]

This shows that Achhru Singh's primary aim was to introduce Shakespeare to Punjabi readers who did not have access to Shakespeare in English. Not only does Achhru Singh translate Shakespearean plays into Punjabi, but he also provides his readers with an extensive biography about Shakespeare in both of his volumes.[201] Achhru Singh states he took inspiration from Charles and Mary Anne Lamb's *Tales from*

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[199] Achhru Singh, *Shakespeare dian kahaniya: Part I* (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2012). In Volume I, the translated plays are as follows: *The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, All's Well That Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Taming of the Shrew, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Comedy of Errors, Winter's Tale, Cymbeline, The Two Gentleman of Verona and The Tempest.*
Achhru Singh, *Shakespeare's dian kahaniya: Part II* (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2012). In Volume II, the translated plays are as follows: *King Lear, Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet, Timon of Athens, Richard II, Coriolanus, Anthony and Cleopatra*.

[200]Gurpreet Singh Mehak, Fatehgarh Sahib, 'Translating English Classics into Punjabi is his Passion**',** *Hindustan Times*. Available online: Translating English classics into Punjabi is his passion - Hindustan Times**.** Date accessed 15/01/22, 23:21.

[201] Achhru Singh's *Shakespeare dian kahaniya*: Part I and Part II have introductions that include sections written in Punjabi about Shakespeare's birth and childhood, marriage and children, his life in London, his work, the themes of his plays, limits of the plays and Shakespeare's final days and death, p7-12.

Shakespeare.[202] Lambs' tales have been transformed from plays into short stories, which is also the form Achhru Singh chooses for his translations. Lamb's preface reads:

> 'The following tales are meant to be submitted to the young reader as an introduction to the study of Shakespeare.'[203]

Lambs' intended readership is younger readers but whilst Achhru Singh's translations have been simplified into short stories from plays so would be more suitable for younger readers, his readership is wider and includes all Punjabi speakers who may not be able to access Shakespeare in the English language. As much as Achhru Singh took Lambs' tales as a starting point, he maintains that he:

> 'Tried to retell the whole play, made connections, emphasised sub plots, reduced irrelevant material, and teased out the complexities'[204]

[202] *Shakespeare dian kahaniya: Part II*, p14.

[203] Charles and Mary Lamb, *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807). Available online: The Project Gutenberg eBook of Tales from Shakespeare, by Charles and Mary Lamb. Date accessed 18/12/2021, 19:44.

[204] *Shakespeare dian kahaniya, Part II*, p. 14.

For Achhru Singh the problem is not about persuading young readers to appreciate Eurocentric stories such as Lambs' tales but their inability to read them in English; hence, he created a collection of translations.[205] According to Achhru Singh:

> 'Great literature written in any language and by a writer of any country retains its freshness, charm and appeal. Thus, it can be enjoyed and should be enjoyed by people all over the world irrespective of the time and place they belong to. No writer is alien and no writing is out of bounds for a person dedicated to reading and desirous of widening his mental horizon.'[206]

Achhru Singh alludes to the universality of literature and how literature can become relevant to different audiences. In his Punjabi translations of Shakespearean plays, he has reworked characteristic representations and developed themes that are relevant to the Punjabi audiences. He argues that Shakespeare's universality which is a result of the exploration of human emotion, particularly when he unpicks love, anger, jealousy, hate, joy, sadness, sacrifice and greed, which are relevant to every human.[207] Furthermore, Achhru Singh states:

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[205] Ibid, p. 14.

[206] Gurpreet Singh Mehak, Fatehgarh Sahib, 'Translating English Classics into Punjabi is his Passion', Hindustan Times. Available online: Translating English classics into Punjabi is his passion - Hindustan Times Date accessed 15/01/22, 23:21.

[207] *Shakespeare dian kahaniya*: Part II, p. 11.

> ‘Shakespeare undoubtedly enjoys a high stature in English Literature, but his appeal is universal, surpassing boundaries of race, cultures and ideologies. Literature sharpens our aesthetics and plays a major role in guiding our lives towards the right direction.’[208]

Whilst Achhru Singh alludes to the universality of literature here again, he also highlights the moralistic purpose literature can serve. It is the allusion to the universality of literature combined with his sense of the moralistic purpose literature can serve which makes his work and discourse on ‘other’ literatures distinctive. This resonates with the early genres of religious writing and poetry that emerged in Punjabi literature. This is manifested in Achhru Singh’s translations, through the inclusion of elements of the oral storytelling and *Qissa* tradition which both serve as moral tales in Punjabi literature.[209]

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[208] Parvesh Kumar Sharma, ‘Shakespeare's books translated in Punjabi’, *Times of India.* Available online: https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/shakespeares-books-translated-in-punjabi/articleshow/14529416.cms Date accessed: 16/11/2021, 20:54.

[209] Limited copies of the translations were published but they have been popular according to Achhru Singh. He confirmed, in an interview conducted for this study, that both parts of his translations had sold out fairly quickly and he was contacted by some readers to congratulate him on his work. (Unpublished interview between Kiran Singh and Professor Achhru Singh, 28 March 2022).

Translations selected for this chapter

The two translations selected from Achhru Singh's collection for this study are *Toofan* (2012), which is a translation of *The Tempest* and *Romeo atte Juliet* (2012); a translation of *Romeo and Juliet.* The title of Surjit Hans' version of the same play, *Romio te Julit,* is slightly different. I have selected the same two translations that I chose when studying Surjit Hans' translations in Chapter 3 to allow for some comparisons to be made between the writers and plays. For the purposes of this study, I have written the synopsis in English, but to do this I have translated the Punjabi translations into English. Below I have summarised the main parts of the translations for the synopsis.

Toofan **synopsis**

Achhru Singh has drastically changed the form of the play by reworking it into a short story of thirteen pages. In Achhru Singh's version, an omniscient narrator guides the reader through the story which opens with a brief introduction, in which the reader is introduced to the characters. The introduction explains that the ending of the story shows that in the end, good wins over evil.[210] The story opens with an omniscient narrator explaining that an old man and his beautiful daughter live on a secluded Island in the sea. This island was previously under the spell of an old witch, Sycorax, but Prospero freed the Island upon his arrival. The son of the old witch, Caliban, also resides on the island, he is described as 'half human and half animal.'[211] The narrator

[210] *Toofan*, p. 176.

[211] *Toofan*, p. 176.

describes Ariel's condition as being trapped in a tree, under a spell, however, Prospero also releases Ariel through magic since he has an extensive amount of knowledge in the magic arts. Prospero then finds a cave which he tries to make into a home for himself and his daughter by dividing the caves into rooms, one of which he keeps a study to house his books. He then further releases more spirits who have been trapped on the Island, and these spirits then always remain in his service.

Twelve years pass and Miranda transforms from a child into a beautiful young woman. Despite the fact, that Prospero does not experience any problems on the island, he is not completely happy here and longs to go back to his homeland. He feels that the island is not his 'real' home. The longing for his homeland leaves him constantly restless.[212] At this point in the story, a storm is seen by Prospero and Miranda forming over the sea which has a ship in its midst. Miranda is distressed at the thought of the ship sinking and feels sympathy for the people on the ship. She pleads with her father to do something to save the people on the ship. Prospero assures Miranda that no harm will come to them. Miranda is shocked to learn that her father knows of the people on the ship. Here, Prospero explains to Miranda how they arrived on the island twelve years ago, he explains how his brother usurped his kingdom.

Ariel informs Prospero of the developments of the storm and then brings Ferdinand to Prospero by enchanting him with a song. As Miranda has seen no other human beings previously, except her father, she is mesmerised by Ferdinand. She asks her father if he is an angel. The narrator also informs the reader that Ferdinand is equally

[212] *Toofan*, p. 178.

mesmerised by Miranda's beauty. Prospero realises that they have fallen in love and starts to question Ferdinand. Prospero sets Ferdinand laborious tasks, Miranda tries to help Ferdinand, but he refuses in case her father finds out. At this point, Prospero is invisible and is watching Ferdinand. Ferdinand takes a break to speak to Miranda, they speak about love and marriage. Prospero, still invisible, is won over by seeing them both engage in conversation. He reappears and asks for forgiveness from Ferdinand.

The other survivors of the ship, including Antonio and the King of Naples, are still wandering about the island in search of shelter, they suddenly hear a voice which recalls their bad deeds, and prompts them to remember Prospero and Miranda. Antonio regrets his behaviour towards his brother and niece. Ariel informs Prospero that Antonio, his enemy, is now a changed man. Ariel leads them to Prospero, by enchanting them with a song but they are unable to recognise Prospero and Miranda. Prospero thanks his old friend, Gonzalo and this enables the others to recognise Prospero. Antonio asks for forgiveness from his brother. Prospero forgives his brother, as well as Miranda and Ferdinand. The King of Naples asks who Miranda is and Ferdinand informs him. The King states that Prospero has gained a son whilst he has gained a daughter. Achhru Singh ends the story with a short speech from Prospero in which he states that 'the bad times are now behind us, and days of happiness have now started.'[213] They all board the ship and arrive in Milan safely.

[213] *Toofan,* p. 188.

***Romeo atte Juliet* synopsis**

As with his other translations, Achhru Singh transforms Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet,* into a short story of seventeen pages. Achhru Singh begins his translation with an introduction, this contains a commentary which categorises the play as a tragic romance and describes how the play is about two feuding families. Rosaline is introduced, with an explanation about Romeo's one-sided love for her and that Rosaline despises Romeo. The reader is then informed about the Capulet party, to which everyone is invited except the Montague family.

Achhru Singh's translation closely follows the themes of the original Shakespearean drama, especially when Romeo and Juliet meet for the first time in the play. Romeo describes Juliet in terms of her beauty and purity. Achhru Singh highlights Romeo and Juliet's disappointment and dismay when they realise, through learning each other's surnames, that they belong to opposing families. Achhru Singh's translation also includes a summarised version of Shakespeare's infamous balcony scene. Juliet asks Romeo to inform her of marriage arrangements in the morning. As per the original play, the friar agrees to marry them.

That same afternoon, Benvolio, Romeo and Mercutio exchange harsh words with Tybalt, and a brawl breaks out between them in which Mercutio is killed. Achhru Singh states that Romeo was in no position to fight Tybalt because he was now related to him through marriage and that Romeo had tried to stay away from family fights as he was generally of a quiet nature. Achhru Singh further narrates that Tybalt took Romeo's good nature and timid disposition as cowardice and continued to provoke

him to such a degree that Romeo was unable to control himself and felt compelled to fight with him. The fight ends with Romeo murdering Tybalt. As this happened in broad daylight, news of the fight quickly spreads.

The prince arrives at the scene and Benvolio relays the incident as truthfully as he can but is mindful that Romeo should not be held as responsible. Romeo is given the punishment of exile from the city of Verona. The friar advises Romeo to bid Juliet goodbye and directly go to Mantua where he should wait until the friar can disclose their marriage to everybody. The friar states that this is the only way that he could unite the two families and make the prince remove his punishment.

It has only been a few days since Romeo left Verona that Juliet's father Capulet brings a proposal to her of marriage. Juliet feels panic on hearing her father's proposal to marry Paris and makes many excuses to avoid this marriage. Her father does not listen to her pleas and decides that she will be married on the coming Thursday to Paris. Friar Laurence advises Juliet to accept the marriage to Paris happily. The night before the marriage she should drink the medicine that he was about to give her, and this would put her in a deep sleep for forty-two hours.

When Paris arrived to marry Juliet, the Capulet family was grieving, and nobody could understand what had happened. Achhru Singh comments that bad news travels faster than good news and the death of Juliet's news got to Romeo before Friar Laurence's letter explaining that Juliet death was only an act and Romeo should come and take her away from Verona. On hearing this news Romeo set off for Verona. On his way,

he purchased some poison. When Romeo arrived in Verona it was the middle of the night, and he went straight to the Capulet's mausoleum, where he finds Paris. Romeo kisses Juliet and then drinks the poison, immediately he falls to the ground and dies. Juliet's medicine begins to wear off and she begins to wake.

Friar Lawrence is shocked to see Romeo and Paris's bodies covered in blood. Juliet awakes fully and sees Romeo dead. She kisses Romeo and kills herself with a dagger. Achhru Singh writes that Romeo and Juliet lay side by side, they could not be together but were now together in death. The Capulets and Montagues also arrive at the scene. The two families are shamed for their enmity. They both agree to end their hatred. Montague promises to erect a golden statue of his daughter-in-law Juliet. Capulet states he will do the same for Romeo. Achhru Singh narrates that by the time the families had realised how to behave with each other they had lost their most priceless treasures. Romeo and Juliet sacrifices finished the hate, ego, and enmity between the two families and started them on a new path.[214]

Achhru Singh Biography (1948-)

Achhru Singh was born in Mansa, a city in Punjab and he still lives in the Punjab, in Fatehgarh Sahib. He completed an MA in English and Punjabi and has an academic career that spans more than 43 years and includes lecturing in different colleges and universities. Throughout his career, he has published sixty-eight books in total, forty-two of which are translations. He states his mission is to translate at least 50 classics

[214] Achhru Singh, *Shakespeare dian kahaniya: Part II, Romeo atte Juliet* (Unistar: Chandigarh, 2012).

of the world into Punjabi so that Punjabi readers can read and enjoy global literature.[215] As well as introducing the English classics to Punjabi readers, Achhru Singh has also introduced Punjabi readers to the English language more generally by publishing *Universal English Grammar and Vocabulary Study.*[216] Achhru Singh has been the recipient of sixteen local and national awards of honour for his contribution to Punjabi literature.

Appropriating Shakespeare and displacing proverbs

Achhru Singh's translations include most of the major themes of the original plays, and like Surjit Hans, he explicitly foregrounds Shakespeare's biography and overviews of his writing in both of his volumes. However, Achhru Singh uses cultural appropriation by using Punjabi phrases and words for the religious words in English, this means that the religious register of the play is maintained; thus, he uses cultural appropriation as a way to maintain the registers of the plays. For example, in *Romeo atte Juliet*, he writes as part of a larger section in the story:

[215] Gurpreet Singh Mehak, Fatehgarh Sahib, 'Translating English Classics into Punjabi is his Passion', *Hindustan Times*. Available online: Translating English classics into Punjabi is his passion - Hindustan Times Date accessed 15/01/22, 23:21.

[216] Gurpreet Singh Mehak, Fatehgarh Sahib, 'Translating English Classics into Punjabi is his Passion', *Hindustan Times*. Available online: Translating English classics into Punjabi is his passion - Hindustan Times Date accessed 15/01/22, 23:21.

> ‘*Os de pavitar atte devi hath nu apne hath vich lehn dhi agya chandha hain atte jaikar as tarah karan naal os dha hath apavitar hunda hove tah oh as nu chumm ke ek sachain shardaalu vaang pashchaataap kar lavage.’*
>
> [trans. He wanted permission to take her pure and goddess like hand in her hand but if in doing that her hand was to become impure he would kiss it like a true worshipper to repent his sin][217]

Achhru Singh’s deployment of the religious register of the play, even when he changes the dramatic form into a short story is evidence that Shakespeare pervades Achhru Singh’s reimagined story. In the original play, Shakespeare used religious discourse such as ‘saint’, ‘shrine’, ‘pilgrim’, ‘sin’ and ‘devotion’, among others, which Achhru Singh carries through into the translation. However, Achhru Singh culturally appropriates the religious references, and which he translates without the Christianisation found in the original play, therefore, enabling his readers to gain a sense of familiarity with the Shakespearean stories and engage with them through a Punjabi perspective.

In addition, he uses colloquial language to develop an affinity with his readership who are unlikely to have encountered Shakespeare. According to Achhru Singh, he found it challenging to translate the narratives when he could not hear the voice of common

[217] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 99.

people in Shakespeare's stories; he argues that Shakespeare's plays, 'are all about kings and queens, noble men and princesses, rulers and lords.'[218] Achhru Singh discusses the value of the common man in Shakespeare's work, concluding that the plays present characters with power and control; this generates the meaning that the common man has little or no value in Shakespearean drama. He recognises that this can have a distancing effect for readers when they are unable to relate to characters and the narratives of the translations but to mitigate this risk. Therefore, he deploys colloquial language which capitalises upon the idiosyncrasies of the Punjabi language to create an affinity with the 'common man'. Achhru Singh uses the colloquial phrase,

> *'os de sirr te bhoot savaar si*'
>
> [trans. he has a ghost wrapped around his head]. [219]

This Punjabi phrase denotes Tybalt's anger and infers that the character is unable to think rationally. Crucially, Achhru Singh knows that his application of colloquial phraseology allows him to culturally appropriate the Shakespearean drama so that it can relate directly and vitally with the intended Punjabi readership.

Retelling the narrative of the plays without losing the registers of the play, which develop the themes in Achhru Singh's stories, is important to his practice and it

[218] *Shakespeare dian kahaniya*, Part II, p. 12.

[219] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 104.

underscores the characteristics of his approach to translation. In the scene in *Romeo atte Juliet* when Romeo encounters Juliet for the first time, Achhru Singh writes:

> '*ki devi-devtian atte ohna de shardaaluan de bhul nahi hunde*.'
> [trans. Do Goddesses-Gods and their worshippers not have lips?][220]

As the quotation above shows, Achhru Singh's use of '*devi-devtian*' appropriates the Christianised religious references in the original play so that they resemble a religious philosophy that would be recognisable for a Punjabi readership. In this context, to refer to Juliet, Achhru Singh writes:

> '*as doraan Romio nu ik aheji sundar aurat dikhai diti jis nu rabb ne vehle beh ke gharea jaap dha si'*
> [trans. At this moment Romio saw a woman whom it looked like God had taken his time to make her][221]

This is a typical Punjabi phrase which intersects feminine beauty and religious ideology. By recrafting Shakespeare's language to include colloquial phraseology he ensures that for the Punjabi readers, such an encounter of phrases, and two cultures,

[220] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 99.

[221] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 98.

reproduces a Punjabi context. The repeated reference to Juliet as '*devi,*'[222] which means 'goddess' that recharacterises her and enables the development of a sense of a religious encounter, and it also echoes the presentation of the character in the original play. The *Norton* edition of the original play includes a commentary which notes that the first meeting between Romeo and Juliet is akin to a religious experience because of the use of tropes that are related to religion and faith.[223] In this way, while there are drastic changes to the original Shakespearean form, the emphasis is on the parts of the play which Achhru Singh feels are essential to the core of the story and the tone of the play in the Punjabi *Romeo Atte Juliet*. Whereas keeping these elements of the play allows the reader and spectator to recognise the play as Shakespearean and gives it a strong and evident connection to the original, appropriating selected elements also makes the play more familiar to the younger Punjabi readers.

The way in which Achhru Singh appropriates register and uses Punjabi colloquial phrases, the readers relate to the new translations through a Punjabi lens. This tends to give the unknown narratives a degree of familiarity, which persuades the readers to see the Shakespearean text as an indigenous text. To achieve this affect, Singh capitalises on opportunities where there are significant moments of emotion or drama in the play to present these in ways which are familiar to the Punjabi readers. Thus, describing Juliet's character and the love that Romeo has for her, Achhru Singh uses colloquial phraseology such as:

[222] Krishan Kumar Goswami, *Punjabi-English and English-Punjabi Dictionary*, (New Delhi: India, 2014). p.193. Translation of 'devi' is 'goddess and pious lady'.

[223] *Norton*, p.959.

'rabb ne vehle beh ke gharea jaap dha si'[224]

[trans. It looks like God took time to create her]

'*Par pyar tah pyar hunde hain'*[225]

[trans. Love is love ultimately]

'*ik duje de hoge'*[226]

[trans. they belonged to each other]

'*saah vich saah lehnde si'*[227]

[trans. in each breath they took they thought of each other]

All of these phrases are common Punjabi phrases, and using idiosyncratic language relocates the play in the Punjab, creating a sense of immediacy, as opposed to distance, for the readers which means that they can engage with the emphatic moments of the translations on a deeper level. The love between Romeo and Juliet, as depicted by Achhru Singh, is emphasised, and presented through language that resonates with the 'common man', which is one of Achhru Singh's aims. According to him, this contrasts with the original play because it presents characters and language that are unique to people with power. Achhru Singh's blending of cultural

[224] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 98.

[225] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 100.

[226] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 102.

[227] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 102.

appropriation, as well as merging of colloquial language with Shakespearean narrative challenges and interrogates the original play's singular view of presenting the main characters that have power and control, as opposed to using the language of 'common people' for them that Achhru Singh harnesses in his translations.

Initially, Achhru Singh uses Punjabi colloquialisms to present Romeo and Juliet's love through a Punjabi lens, but when he needs to emphasise the tragic elements of the play; he enables his readers to view also the opposing themes in the narrative through their own cultural lens. For example, when Mercutio is infuriated by Tybalt, Achhru Singh uses the following colloquial phrase to emphasise Mercutio's rage precisely before he is murdered by Tybalt:

> '*Mercutio de ragha vich jawani dha garam khoon daur reha si*'[228]
>
> [trans. There was the hot blood of youth running through Mercutio's veins]

Again, when Romeo hears of Juliet's untimely death, Achhru Singh writes:

> '*buri khbar hamesha hee changi khbar nalo tez chaldi hain*'[229]

[228] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 102.
[229] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 108.

[trans. bad news always travels faster than good news]

and

'*aasa mitti vich mil geya*'[230]

[trans. their hopes had been quashed in the soil/ground]

The colloquial expressions used culturally during times of distress to restate the tragic elements of the play, are crucial in reiterating the indigenous or traditional elements of tragedy and creating an immediacy with his readers who will not only instantly recognise, through the idiosyncratic language used, but also the magnitude of the tragedy for Romeo and Juliet.

Moreover, there are particular aspects of the plays, in particular the English proverbs invoked in the original plays, that are displaced using Punjabi colloquial language, rather than applying Punjabi proverbs.[231] Critically, Achhru Singh's choice to use Punjabi colloquial language over Punjabi proverbial expression contributes to debates about gender since gender critics argue that language is a vehicle to affirm male dominance over women. For instance, Iram Sagheer and Shirin Zubair argue:

[230] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 108.

[231] *Norton*, allusions and references to proverbs, p. 972 (footnote 1), p. 971 (footnote 8), p. 979 (footnote 9, 1, 2 and 3).

Direct use of proverb, p. 1009, 'death's the end of all' III. III. 93 and footnote 4. For example, Nurse uses proverbs to console Romeo to make him see that his situation is not as doomed as he believes.

> ‘Sexism in Punjab proverbs shows the exploitation and manipulation of females by males. This results in extreme form of differential gender roles for men and women as well as gendered division of labour which is promoted and reinforced through such ‘words if wisdom’ as proverbs are usually deemed in lay culture… discrimination and bias against women through language proverbs have(*ing*) far reaching socio-cultural implications…’[232]

Achhru Singh’s practice invokes the debate about language and male dominance because, as Sagheer and Zubair have written, the language of Punjabi proverbs has socio-cultural implications.[233] Their arguments demonstrate that Punjabi proverbs in everyday speech and written texts enforce gender bias, constructing ideological realities.[234] They suggest that this issue needs to be addressed in the following ways:

> ‘Attention and activism is required to address issues in order to eradicate such biased and misogynist gendered representations in Punjabi language… A language reform movement is recommended in contemporary Punjabi language

[232] Iram Sagheer and Shirin and Zubair, ‘Women in Punjabi Proverbs: Cultural Models, Gender Ideologies and Stereotyping’, *Journal of Gender and Social Issues*, 19.1, 2020, p. 1.

[233]Ibid, p. 1.

[234]Ibid, p. 1.

and culture to change such dated representations of women in Punjabi proverbs.'[235]

According to Sagheer and Zubair, language needs to be carefully manipulated to address and change problematic gender issues which are perpetuated through the use of gender-biased Punjabi proverbs. So, when Achhru Singh chooses not to use Punjabi proverbs as alternatives for English proverbs, he contributes to the reform that Sagheer and Zubair recommend. Whereas in the original Shakespearean play, proverbs are used to develop characters, in Achhru Singh reimagined text he develops the character of Juliet through colloquial expressions that describe her:

'*sundartha dhi saakshaat murat*'[236]

[trans. she was a figure of utmost beauty]

Achhru Singh's authorial choice to exclude Punjabi proverbs in his writing, by not substituting the English Proverbs with Punjabi proverbs, reflects a wider literary movement in Punjabi literature, in which writers endeavour to represent women in fiction through language which does not reaffirm gender bias. Parvinder Dhariwal examines three influential male writers in Punjabi literature, Bhai Vir Singh, Gurpreet Singh Lari and Shiv Kumar Batalvi who use their literary outputs to address gender

[235] Sagheer and Zubair, p. 9.

[236] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 98.

bias in Punjabi writing and language.[237] Her criticism of the male writers' chauvinistic outlook focuses on their representation of the central characters in their work, who are women, through a male-voiced language. Dhariwal analyses Sundri; the protagonist in Bhai Vir Singh's novel, *Sundri,*[238] who, although initially depicted as brave and courageous like her male counterparts, is developed through religious discourse and proverbial language into the role of a goddess, so, that she becomes a representation of the impossible or unattainable underscores the view that Sundri is realised through a male viewpoint. For example, she is described in Bhai Vir Singh's novel in the following way:

> 'You are not an ordinary woman; you are a goddess. Blessed be your birth that you are full of love for religion, O respected sister! May God fulfil your wishes… You make your life useful to others. But you must always have the courage of a man to face this kind of hard life.[239]

[237] Parvinder Dhariwal, (2013). *The heroine in modern Punjabi literature and the politics of desire*. Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) 2008+. University of British Columbia. Retrieved 27/07/22, from https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0073494 . Dhariwal analyses the character of Sundri in Bhai Vir Singh's novella *Sundri (1898)*, Prabha in Gurpreet Singh Preetlari's novel *Unmarried mother (1942)* and Loona in Shiv Kumar Batalvi's poetic verses of the same name, *Loona (1965)*.

[238] Bhai Vir Singh, *Sundri* (Delhi: Hemkunt Press, 1983).

[239] *Sundri*, p. 24-25.

Whilst Achhru Singh avoids proverbial expressions, the colloquial language that he uses, for example, '*Sundarta dhi saakshaat murat [*trans. she was a figure of utmost beauty]' evokes religious imagery. So, for Achhru Singh there is a fine balance between foregrounding Shakespeare by maintaining a religious register through cultural appropriation, but also contributing as a writer to contemporary debates about gender representation and bias by avoiding proverbial expressions and deploying colloquial language. Thus, this shows how Achhru Singh, through his writing strategies, is challenged to manage his competing aims during the process of translation.

Merging pre-colonial traditions and colonial forms

In Chapter 2, I discussed how colonialism's influence on Punjabi literature has in a way enabled a collaboration of literary styles, in which Punjabi writers merge pre-colonial traditions of Punjabi writing with western forms which have been introduced during the colonial period. The imposition of English language and literature led Punjabi writers to staunchly advocate for their own indigenous pre-colonial literary styles; however, as English and Punjabi literature merged, writers eventually began fusing the two styles of literature in a collaborative way. This blending of writing styles and forms evident in Achhru Singh's translations where he deploys elements of the *Qissa* genre in the form of a short story, continually enables the creation of Punjabi Shakespearean texts.

Achhru Singh has transformed the dramatic form of the Shakespearean plays into short story forms with third person narration. This is true for all twenty-two of Achhru

Singh's Shakespearean translations, in which he aims to present the narratives of the plays as short stories, similar to Charles and Mary-Anne Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*, from which Achhru Singh took inspiration. However, Achhru Singh's format differs from Lambs' since he additionally includes an introduction to each of his translations. The short story form can be seen as a colonial import since it was introduced to Punjabi literature during the colonial period. As Kartar Singh Duggal argues, the short story has remained a popular choice of narrative form for writers because of its ability to engage readers who find it faster to read.[240] Achhru Singh's use of Punjabi idioms and the short story form, which is seen as a colonial import and was initially seen as foreign to Punjabi literary culture, is reflective of the way in which writers blended the Punjabi and English literary techniques together.

As well as using a Western import in the form of a short story, albeit adapted with an introduction, Achhru Singh has also imbued his translation with elements of the *Qissa* tradition, which as discussed in Chapter 2, is seen as a development of the oral story telling tradition of Punjabi literature. In *Toofan*, for instance, Singh's translation begins with an omniscient narrator stating:

> '*Bahaut samme pehla samundar dhi godh vich banne ik adbhut taapu upar keval dho viyakti – prospero naami ik buddha atte os dhi khoobsurat larki miranda – reh reha san*'[241]

[240] Kartar Singh Duggal and Sant Singh Sekhon, *A History of Punjabi Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1992), p. 274.

[241] *Toofan*, p. 176.

> [trans. A long time ago, in the lap of the ocean, there was an island upon which two people – an old man named Prospero and his beautiful daughter Miranda – were living]

For Punjabi readers, this opening statement, which is reflective of the features in the written genre of *Qissa* literature, is suggestive of the oral story-telling tradition. For this reason, *Qissa* literature can be seen as a written form of an oral story because it includes Punjabi-specific oral story-telling devices such as situating the story as legendary. So, in merging of pre-colonial traditions of the *Qissa* narratives with colonial forms Achhru Singh's Punjabi Shakespeare collection reflects the characteristics of a canon that is underlined by the collaboration of Punjabi writing and western styles. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, the colonial encounter in the Punjab enabled the introduction of the English language and literature. However, although initially there was resistance to the use of the English language by Punjabi writers, as English became embedded into educational systems, they began to embed English literary techniques and forms into their Punjabi and as a result Punjabi writing has become imbued with western techniques.

To return to my earlier point, Achhru Singh in *Romeo atte Juliet* takes advantage of another oral storytelling device in Punjabi literature that involves the inclusion of brief introductions before starting the main story. As well as stating that *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most read and dramatised Shakespearean romantic tragedies, Achhru Singh adds authorial comments and states that as much as it is romantic because of the limitless love that the protagonists have for each other, it is also tragic due to the

enmity that their families display. In this introduction, Achhru Singh alludes to the conclusion of the play by telling the readers that the lovers die for each other, and this results in the end of the family enmity. He concludes by stating that the way in which this happens is the plot of this play.[242] Oral storytellers would often introduce stories with this compacted information because it gave listeners an idea of what was to follow, and they hoped to pique their interests. As the *Qissa* narratives are often moral tales, an introduction also served the purpose of providing the reader/audience with some guidance of what the moral tale of the story might be; for *Toofan,* translated from *The Tempest,* Achhru Singh states 'that in the end good wins over evil in this story'.[243] In the original play, no such cues are given to the audience, although the moral soon asserts itself. This shows that Achhru Singh closely follows the Punjabi narrative models which would be familiar to the Punjabi audiences. By deploying traditional oral story-telling devices in written stories Achhru Singh creates a connection to the pre-colonial tradition of oral storytelling. This makes the unfamiliar story of *The Tempest* into something which is more familiar to the new Punjabi readers, and it means that the narrative becomes recontextualised for the Punjabi readers.

As well as creating familiarity with the readers of the translations, using the Punjabi pre-colonial literary heritage asserts something about Punjabi language and writing, a rhetoric of authority that is just as convincing and important as the Shakespearean texts. This contributes to the continually disturbing sense of hierarchy between source text and target language, as well as, between the colonial text and indigenous

[242] *Romeo atte Juliet*, p. 97. Achhru Singh refers to the '*natak*' [trans. play].

[243] *Toofan*, p. 176.

languages. Contemporary Punjabi writing has been merged with western techniques, as discussed in Chapter 2, but pre-colonial traditions can be seen as pure and authentic forms of literary traditions. Even though, Achhru Singh, uses the colonial import of a short story, he only does this through showcasing his own indigenous literary heritage and building upon the work of his predecessors who advocated for Punjabi writing and literature during the colonial period.

Resettlement, belonging and freedom

I argue that *Toofan* can be seen as post-partition Shakespeare because it includes themes and motifs that are recurrent in partition literature. Achhru Singh recharacterises the characters of the original plays so that they present the themes that relate to the partition. As discussed in Chapter 2, resettlement is an important theme that is presented in partition literature that informs Achhru Singh's idea of resettlement in *Toofan* and forces him to displace other concerns of the play. As well, belonging and freedom are also concepts that reoccur in partition literature that Achhru Singh uses to construct the setting of the island in *Toofan* and the relationships between the characters to show how these notions are intertwined.

Achhru Singh has condensed the plays into short stories, but he does not in any way condense the characters; in fact, he enlarges them and emphasises some of their traits and characteristics so that they reflect the concerns of the partition specifically. In the introduction to *Toofan*, the narrator states:

> ‘*As bilkul he vakri kism de natak vich sada mel ik jaadugar, ik jinn, ik pashaach atte kuj pret-ruhan naal hunda hain jo as natak dhi kahani nu agge taurde han*’[244]
>
> [trans. In this unique play we encounter a magician, a ghost, a cannibal, some spirits and one woman who move the story of the play forward]

Singh states that the characters are the most important connection to the original play, and it is these characters who propel the story forward. Brett Gamboa argues that

> ‘very little happens in *The Tempest*, and what does happen seems entirely at the discretion of Prospero.’[245]

This lack of action in the play, Gamboa argues, gives space for directors to create conflicts between the characters based on ‘subtextual cues and political topicality.’[246] In this context, Singh’s version can be seen to take advantage of this space by reworking the characters and the themes that come out of the play. For example, in the first part of the translation, Singh focusses on Prospero and Miranda’s landing and settling on the island.[247] This is different to the original which begins with the

[244] *Toofan*, p. 176.

[245] *Norton*, p. 3214.

[246] *Norton*, p. 3214.

[247] *Toofan*, p. 176.

description of the storm, in which the characters of Alonso, Gonzalo, Sebastian, boatswain and mariners can be seen battling with the storm.[248]

In a stark contrast to the original play, where the storm is the focus at the beginning, Achhru Singh's translation deploys the narrator to use the beginning of the story to describe in detail Prospero's activities on the island following his arrival. He writes:

> *'Sau os ne sab toh pehla as tapu nu buddhi jadoogarni de burre prabhav toh mukth karan dha yatan keeta atte oh apne yatan vich safal hoya*.'[249]
>
> [trans. So, first of all he endeavoured to free the island from the bad effects of the old magical lady, and he was successful in his attempt]

'*Bahaut sammhe pehle samundar di godh wich ik adbuth tapu upar keval dho viyakti – prospero naam ik buddha ate os dhi khoobsoorat larki, miranda, reh rahe san*.'

[trans. A long time ago in the lap of the sea there was an island upon which Prospero, an old man, and his beautiful daughter, Miranda, were living].

[248] *Norton, The Tempest*, p. 3215, 3216, 3217, I. I. 1-60.

[249] *Toofan,* p.177.

In Achhru Singh's reimagination, Prospero begins by freeing the Island from under the spell of an old witch, Sycorax.[250] Then he uses his magical knowledge to release Ariel, a spirit who was already present on the island, from a tree as follows:

> '*tapu te ponchan de uprant dooja kam jo os duara keeta geya si ariel atte os vargeeyan hor naek rooha, jinnha nu ariel vaang kedh keeta hoya si, nu ohna dhi kedh vicho mukth karvauna*.'[251]
>
> [trans. As soon as he arrived on the island, the second job he did was to free Ariel, and the other spirits that were also imprisoned like Ariel.]

In this way, Achhru Singh presents a high level of detail in showing exactly how Prospero settles on the island, including how he then finds a cave, which he makes into a home for himself and his daughter. Whereas in the original play, Shakespeare used magic as a way of resolving difficult issues, and gradually the audience learns how Prospero has adapted the island to suit his needs. However, Singh, right at the beginning, goes into significant detail when Prospero uses magic to resettle on the island. When Singh decides to focus the beginning of the play on Prospero's resettlement rather than the storm, he ends up displacing the storm and shifts the focus of the play. The shipwreck and the storm in the original play occupy almost all of Act II, but in the reimagination, this section of the play is completely omitted, and instead, Prospero's resettlement on the island is given precedence. Thus, Singh has

[250] *Toofan*, p. 177.

[251] *Toofan,* p. 177.

also re-focussed the narrative of the play in his translation when he displaces the storm with Prospero's resettlement. Other sub-plots are also displaced by Singh in his translation; for example, he omits Antonio's plan to convince Sebastian of a murderous act and similarly, Caliban's plan to assist Stephano in the murder of Prospero is also omitted. Significantly, these omissions provide Singh the textual space to focus his translation on resettlement.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Partition literature often presents the anxieties and challenges associated with resettling. For example, in the iconic[252] partition novel *Train to Pakistan* (1956) by Khushwant Singh, a character called Iqbal Singh who is new to the village struggles to adjust to his new environment. Similarly, in *Toofan,* the reader is informed of how Prospero learns to adjust to his new environment by selecting a suitable cave as a dwelling and then dividing the cave into different areas, keeping one area specifically for the books that he has brought with him so that the new place becomes more 'home-like'.[253] The focus on resettlement in the translation leads to an

[252] Rituparna Roy, *South Asian Partition Fiction in English: from Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), p. 33. Rituparna Roy writes about the iconic status of *Train to Pakistan*, she argues that the novel has been bestowed this status for a number of reasons; it has gained its iconic status because it is the first English language novel to be written on the subject of partition by a Punjabi writer and because it initiated one of the most significant images of partition literature; the image of the 'loaded train' which has become synonymous with the partition. Furthermore, writers who have written partition novels, for example Salman Rushdie, have praised it highly themselves.

[253] *Toofan*, p. 177.

'*Ik gufaa vich apni rihaish kardea hoya as nu ghar vaang hee araamdyak atte sahulat barpoor banaa leya. Os ne iss nu keye hisya vich vand leya*.'

exploration of the meaning of home to different characters, especially people like Prospero and Miranda who have been uprooted from their homeland. Just as partition literature explores the concept of home, notions of freedom and belonging, which are intrinsically tied up with the concept of home, are also examined.

Achhru Singh underlines the anxieties that are associated with resettlement for the people of his country, through his reworking of the Shakespearean characters. Indeed, in presenting the dialogue between the villagers and the 'foreigner' Iqbal Singh' in *Train to Pakistan,* the author examines notion of the complexity of freedom and belonging. In the same way, Achhru Singh's narrator in *Toofan*, remarks that it has been twelve years since Prospero and Miranda have arrived on the island but despite settling well, Prospero regularly remarks that he cannot be completely happy. The reader learns that Prospero's source of unhappiness derives from feelings of not belonging and unrest from being away from home. Even though Prospero's brother usurped him as ruler of Milan, he still longs to go back to Italy, and it is challenging for him to consider the island as his 'real' home. Prospero's longing to return to Milan, his 'homeland,' becomes a constant source of anxiety for him, so much so, that the narrator states he remains in a perpetual state of restlessness.[254] For example, Achhru Singh writes:

[trans. in a cave, he made it a home by making it comfortable with facilities. He divides the cave into sections/areas].

[254] *Toofan*, p. 178.

'*ah tapu os dha asli ghar nahi si*'[255]

[trans. this island was not his real home]

'*vatan vapsi dhi taang os nu har samme bechain kardi rendi si*'[256]

[trans. thoughts of returning to his home country kept him constantly in a state of restlessness]

'*os dha asli ghar tah door Italy vich si*'[257]

[trans. his real home was far away in Italy].

In this way, Achhru Singh develops the character of Prospero so that the anxieties associated with resettlement and belonging are illustrated through him because whilst he is in control and possession of the island, he does not feel that he belongs there. On the other hand, Prospero feels that Milan is his home, and this is where he belongs, yet he no longer controls Milan, and it does not belong to him. In this context, Achhru Singh emphasises and draws out the complexity of the two meanings of 'belong', as in what it means for somewhere to belong to Prospero and for Prospero to belong to somewhere.

Significantly, in his presentation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Achhru Singh also critically examines the dilemma of the people whose view that Pakistan was created so that it could be a Muslim country and people could freely practice their religion has

[255] *Toofan*, p. 178.

[256] *Toofan*, p. 178.

[257] *Toofan*, p. 178.

been betrayed. As people migrated from one country to another, and began to resettle, they began to question if moving and resettling in another country genuinely equated to freedom. In Achhru Singh's translation, a major part of Prospero's resettlement involves freeing things, for example, he frees the island from Sycorax' magical entrapment and frees Ariel from a tree, along with other spirits. That in the original play Prospero undertakes these tasks, while in Achhru Singh's *Toofan* the action takes place much earlier in the story, underlines Achhru Singh's writing strategy of presenting significant and relevant aspects of the plot to his audiences at the beginning of the text. The way in which Achhru Singh reworks the characters' actions in the play, by making the resettlement of Prospero revolve around freedom, creates a dialogical discourse between the notions of freedom and resettlement. Thus, *Toofan*, in comparison to the original, enables new questions and debates around how these two notions are linked. The focus on Ariel's relationship with freedom, rather than Caliban's narrative is reflective of the specific colonial context of the Punjab because before the arrival of the British, India was colonised by the Mughal empire. Therefore, Ariel's double entrapment, first by Sycorax and then by Prospero is more meaningful in presenting the post-colonial context of the Punjab, which experienced colonisation first by the Moghul rulers and later by England. For example, Achhru Singh presents this complex relationship to freedom when the narrator then tells the reader that:

> '*prospero jaan dha si ke es sun saan atte door-derede tapu upar rehnde hoye os nu apne rozmarha jeevan vich ehna rooha deya sevava de har same lorr pendhi rehegi*.'[258]

[258] *Toofan*, p. 177.

[trans. Prospero knew that staying on this eerie and far away island he would be requiring the service of these spirits on a daily basis]

This aligns closely to the original *Tempest*, in which Prospero demands Ariel's service for a short period of time and it remains ambiguous if Ariel is satisfied with this arrangement, so, Prospero reminds him about his previous enslavement by Sycorax, which prompts him to ask for his freedom and Prospero agrees to free him in two days, but critically, in *Toofan,* there is no ambiguity about Ariel's acceptance of his subservience and the narrator states that Ariel becomes subservient to Prospero simply because he is grateful. The narrator states this is because Ariel prefers to be enslaved by Prospero rather than Sycorax, mainly because Prospero is kinder, but Ariel nonetheless remains enslaved. This raises questions about the interrelationship between belonging and freedom; Ariel belonged to the island before Prospero arrived but since his arrival, he belongs to Prospero and the island also belongs to Prospero; ironically, Prospero does not belong to the island. So, for Achhru Singh, the dichotomy of freedom and subservience are explored where Ariel, although freed from the tree, must remain subservient to Prospero.

This critical examination of the interrelationship between freedom and belonging, where the idea of freedom is explored in the trope of an imagined community, is evident in other English language partition fiction. Rituparna Roy, in her writing, discusses the trope of an imagined community in the texts she discusses in *The Shadow Lines* (1988) by Amitav Ghosh and *Midnight's Children* (1981) Salman

Rushdie. These novels consider the aftermath of partition and what significance notions such as, home and belonging, and freedom and independence, have on the communities that were affected by it. They explore the meanings of these notions and question how they are situated in the wider context of the nation as an imagined community. For example, in *Midnight's Children*, the children who are born when India gains its independence are all connected to each other through the idea of freedom and independence. While similar partition literature, as discussed by Roy, creates debates about significance of belonging and freedom, I would suggest that Achhru Singh probes issues, like Prospero's resettlement in his reimagination, and the implications this has for freedom and belonging. Indeed, Achhru Singh too contributes to the debates regarding the imagined community which is an important trope in partition literature.

The critic Benedict Anderson, coined the term 'imagined community' in his book *Imagined Communities* [259] as a framework to understand nationalism in relation to people. Since its publication, various post-colonial scholars like Rituparna Roy, Partha Chatterjee and CK Saraswathi have considered Anderson's ideas in a post-colonial national context. Chatterjee has argued that Anderson's imagined community is useful but limited in a once-colonised context because it fails to address a dilemma that once-colonised nations face, that they are intrinsically bound by more than one nationalism. Chatterjee names these as 'material' and 'spiritual' domains.[260] The material domain

[259] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

[260] Partha Chatterjee, *Whose imagined community?* (London: Routledge, 2008), p, 217.

is the superimposition of the imperial power on the colonial society, where the west proves its power by showing that modernity is all important, and the colonised succumb to this, and the spiritual domain are the markers of cultural identity. The anti-colonial struggle for a free nation, in effect, one that gains independence from its colonisers, means that both domains are required for the colonised society, but it is the spiritual domain that the once colonised resist changing. This is the domain that they want to protect and keep as their 'national culture.'[261] However, try as they might, it is impossible that the spiritual domain can remain unchanged and Chatterjee argues that it is here that a modern nation is fashioned, one that is different to the Western power, and he uses Bengali literature and theatre as an example. During the mid-nineteenth century, Bengali drama had two forms it could use, Shakespearean or Sanskrit forms (which had only been rejuvenated due to orientalist scholars), both were considered western forms; however, the performative practices of Bengali theatre made it impossible for these criteria to be applied to plays written for the theatre and these tensions between Bengali performative practices and western dramatic forms remain unresolved to this day. In Chatterjee's example, it can be seen that the spiritual domain resists change. Such a tension is representative of the tension that once-colonised communities face regarding the material and spiritual domains of nationalism. Thus, Chatterjee's insights highlight that nationalism has an added layer of complexity in a post-colonial context.

In *Toofan*, Achhru Singh has developed the character of Prospero, especially in relation to Ariel, to focus on resettlement and unpack the notions of belonging and

[261] Ibid, p. 217.

freedom, which are all themes that are intrinsically bound to nationalism. The fact that Achhru Singh's reimagining ties all these things together - resettlement, belonging, freedom - serves as a reminder that the forced migration of people during the partition of Punjab was part of a bigger event. Ravinder Kaur argues that there are some important signifiers, such as '1947', that signify India's independence. To Kaur, the Punjabi partition can also be seen to be part of a 'series of events that collate and condense the British departure from India, the inauguration of post-colonial Indian nation-state…'[262] and that means that these concepts are connected to each other. So, one could see Achhru Singh's reimagination as a contribution to the foregoing debates, for as Chatterjee, states the real project for the once colonised is to claim, 'our freedom of imagination'.[263]

In a way, Achhru Singh has claimed the freedom of his imagination, especially when he chooses to incorporate national markers of culture in his reimagination, for example, when he includes themes of partition literature that are specific to the Punjab. So, while Achhru Singh resists change to the spiritual domain, he also succumbs to the material domain; for example, when he changes the form of the play to a short story, rather than a traditional Punjabi literary form. According to the literary critic, Kartar Singh Duggal, the short story is akin to a colonial hangover.[264] He argues that it was a form that was introduced to the Punjab during the colonial encounter and has

[262] Ravinder Kaur, *Since 1947: Partition Narratives among Punjabi Migrants in Delhi* (New Delhi: Oxford, 2007).

[263] Chatterji, p. 224.

[264] Duggal*, A History of Punjabi Literature*, p. 274.

remained in Punjabi literature since this time. He argues that whilst the short story is a form that is not typically Punjabi, it nonetheless continues to be popular because of its inherent affinity to modernity. To readers, it represents the modernity of the west, and he argues that both the contemporary writer and reader in the Punjab have a desire to be known as modern and this explains why the short story remains popular.[265] The fact that Achhru Singh chooses to adopt the form of short story, shows that he succumbs to the material domain which according to Chatterjee signifies modernity.

Achhru Singh's simultaneous resistance and succumbing is emblematic of the relationship between people in the real world of politics. Achhru Singh chooses to portray belonging and freedom through the cultural marker of partition and pre-colonial literary devices, but he also uses the western form of a short story to do that. There is an inherent tension between the material and spiritual domain here, and this resonates with Chatterjee's argument in which post-colonials must consider a nationalism that pre-dates colonialism as well as the nationalism of colonialism. So, Achhru Singh has taken advantage of the lack of action in the play, like other writers before him and used that space to develop themes and characters that are topically relevant. It is notable though that in presenting issues of freedom and belonging, Achhru Singh does not develop the relationship between Prospero and Caliban but chooses to use Ariel instead. Using Ariel is more relevant to Achhru Singh because Ariel's relationship with freedom is closer to the concerns of partition than that of Caliban. Ariel is trapped in a tree before Prospero arrives on the island and when he is freed, it seems his

[265] Ibid, p. 274.

enslavement has ended; however, this is not the case since he remains subservient to Prospero. While this aspect of the text is the same in the original as well as Achhru Singh's reimagined text, Ariel's response to the subservience differs in the two versions. Caliban is free before Prospero arrives on the island but becomes enslaved by Prospero. Thus, Ariel's relationship to freedom is more useful for Achhru Singh because the potential freedom of Ariel closely aligns with the promises of freedom that came with partition and Ariel's situation is suited better to exploring what it means to be supposedly free.

Sadat Hasan Manto, a writer who was directly impacted by the partition, incorporates concepts and themes associated with freedom and belonging in his work. Like Achhru Singh, he explores how freedom is not a dichotomy. His satirical short story, *Toba Tek Singh* (1955), explores what happens when the Indian and Pakistani authorities decide to exchange inmates in a 'mental asylum' based on whether they should be classed as an Indian or Pakistani citizen after the partition. The ensuing comedy consists mostly of the detainees of the asylum discussing the concept of this new country that is called Pakistan. The irony of their dialogue and discussion is that despite their removal from the asylum to the new free country they will continue to be detainees and thus, for them, freedom remains unattainable. Therefore, to discuss and debate freedom becomes redundant and futile. In writing *Toba Tek Singh*, Manto asks if freedom has really been achieved by India's gaining of independence and the creation of Pakistan. Thus, Manto's story asserts that freedom has not been achieved when the detainees realise that they will not be 'free,' despite being moved to the country of their choice. Similarly, when Ariel experiences a simultaneous gain and loss of freedom, Achhru Singh evokes the representations of freedom as contradictory or

complex, and sometimes unachievable, in partition literature. The resonance with the debates about imagined communities arises because Achhru Singh provokes readers to think about what makes Ariel feel as if he belongs to Prospero, and about what makes Prospero think Ariel belongs to him or that the island belongs to him. Belonging and freedom are important concepts in partition literature, Achhru Singh develops the characters of his reimagination so that these concepts come to the fore of the story.

The victim/perpetrator relationship

Another prominent feature of partition literature is when writers develop characters in ways that blur the boundaries between victim and perpetrator. In the novellas, *Thanda Gosht* and *Khol Dho*, written by the partition writer Manto, the victims become perpetrators and perpetrators become victims of crime and violence as the stories progress. In *Thanda Gosht,* Manto's story about necrophilia, the protagonist can initially be seen as a criminal because he rapes a girl that he finds dead. However, he becomes a victim of crime himself when his lover murders him upon finding out about the rape. His lover is also a victim of his betrayal, but her act of revengeful murder makes her a perpetrator of crime too. Similarly, the workers in the refugee camp in *Khol Dho* are victims of the upheaval of migration, they have lost their land and homes, but when they rape the girl from their own community, they also become perpetrators of crime. Urvashi Butalia, in her book, *The Other Side of Silence; Voices from the Partition of India,*[266] discusses the complicity of ordinary people in the ''ugly' parts of this history.'[267] She argues that one reason why people are reluctant to talk about their

[266] Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

[267]Ibid, p. 9.

memories of partition is because there were no 'good' or 'bad' sides in the partition. She states that 'virtually every family had a history of being both victims and aggressors in violence.'[268] Achhru Singh repeats these characteristic representations in his post-partition translation and draws attention to the 'good' and 'bad' sides of his characters. He emphasises the roles, of victim and perpetrator, that the characters occupy at different points in the narrative. He does this by reminding the readers of the actions of the characters so that even when a character is presented as a perpetrator at a particular point in the narrative, the reader is immediately reminded by Achhru Singh that they have also been a victim in some way. So, in *Toofan*, when Prospero frees Ariel, only to then control his freedom, the reader is reminded that Prospero has also been a victim of his brother's scheme to usurp Prospero as the ruler of Milan. The boundary between victim and perpetrator is blurred when Achhru Singh draws attention to the fact that Prospero occupies both positions. Furthermore, Achhru Singh uses metaphorical language that illuminates the different sides of the character, which serves as a reminder of the fluidity between victim and perpetrator in contexts where migration and resettlement have taken place. Where Achhru Singh's narrator remarks that it was wise for Prospero to control Ariel, he also argues that this is only because Prospero's circumstances mean that he would not be able to otherwise manage his life on an island that is foreign and unknown to him. Achhru Singh states that Prospero's life is '*rozmara,*'[269] this means that for Prospero his life is like a death every day because he has been a victim of forced migration. Thus, Achhru Singh highlights the complexity of presenting characters that have migrated and had to resettle, much like Butalia mentions in her book, in terms of how they are victims but

[268]Ibid, p. 9.

[269] *Toofan*, p. 177.

also can be perpetrators. He includes the characteristic representations found in partition literature in his translations and this deepens further the view that his work can be read as post-partition Shakespeare.

Making the translations counter-discursive

Helen Tiffin argues that European authors wrote texts that described the world and the colonies using their own 'cognitive codes' and then these 'greats' were imposed on the colonies as universal truths. In other words, these culturally specific imperial terms were to be accepted by colonials.[270] This has led to the view that Eurocentric writing and its interpretations of literature are to be accepted as true and universal. However, in Achhru Singh's Shakespearean translations, the traditional themes that are considered significant by Eurocentric writers are not given the same prominence and instead, migration and resettlement, alongside the complexities of freedom and characteristic representations are explored in the Punjabi version. This means that Achhru Singh, as an author and translator is resisting traditional interpretations of the original play; he does not allow his work to be contained by the existing and continuing interpretations of Shakespeare's plays.

One such interpretation, which is Eurocentric, is a humanist interpretation of *The Tempest*. The human as the centre of the universe is represented by Prospero in the

[270]Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth and Tiffin, Helen (eds.), *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* Second Edition (London: Routledge, 1995), p.101.

original play; he is presented as all powerful, and it is his planning and magical talents that propel the action of the play. This Eurocentric humanism is not in line with the God-centred ideology of the Punjab, and more widely India, in which God, not the individual human, is responsible for all that happens and has overall power over every being. In line with this, in Achhru Singh's *Toofan*, the power to avenge Antonio is taken out of Prospero's hands,[271] which is a stark difference compared to the original.[272] The original Shakesperean play depicts man, in the form of Prospero, as the centre of the universe but Achhru Singh removes this human individualism and power from the play, instead Achhru Singh places God as the centre of the universe and the power to control the action becomes God-centred. In every magical act, rather than Prospero, it is '*paratma*'[273] which denotes God, that accomplishes the action in the translation.[274] So, in the original Shakespearean play, Prospero's character is developed as a magician and this gives him the power to avenge Antonio but in Achhru Singh's reimagination it is '*paratma*' who creates the storm as a punishment, not Prospero. Thus, Achhru Singh decentres the humanist interpretation of the play, when he does this, he shifts the focus from the human to the creator. This is a rewriting of Prospero's character because he shifts from being self-centred, which represents the Eurocentric humanist view, to a God-centred character which represents a non-western view.

[271] *Toofan*, p. 186.

[272] *Norton*, p, 3249.

[273] Krishan Kumar Goswami, *Punjabi-English, English-Punjabi Dictionary* (New Delhi: UBS, 2014), p. 222.

[274] *Toofan*, p. 186.

Helen Tiffin, who has written extensively about post-colonialism, states that the project of post-colonial writing is to:

> 'Interrogate European discourses and discursive strategies from a privileged position within (and between) two worlds; to investigate the means by which Europe imposed and maintained its codes in the colonial domination of so much of the rest of the world.'[275]

She concludes that this is what makes post-colonial discourse counter-discursive. During the 1960s and 1970s, decolonisation movements in Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America also challenged the original play and its existing interpretations. For example, Aimé Césaire, a black writer and activist from Martinique, re-wrote Shakespeare's play in 1969 in French. *Une Tempête,*[276] translated into English as *A Tempest* in 1985, challenges Prospero's authority on the island. Cesaire's play reminds us that the island originally belonged to Caliban and therefore Prospero's authority on the island is artificial and manipulated, much like a coloniser's authority on a colony and its colonised communities. In contrast to the original play, Cesaire's translation focusses on Caliban's language and celebrates Caliban's verbal attacks on Prospero. In this way, the interpretations and responses by post-colonial writers like Cesaire interrogate the original play and challenge the interpretations produced thus

[275]Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth and Tiffin, Helen (eds.), *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* Second Edition (London: Routledge, 1995), p.99.

[276] Aime Cesaire, *Une Tempete* (London: Oberon, 2002).

far about the play; they do this through reinterpretations that are relevant to their specific colonial contexts. In a similar way, Achhru Singh's translation is also counter-discursive because he reinterprets the play through his own post-colonial lens, for example, he decentres the humanist view of the play. This is counter-discursive because as part of colonial rule, the British tried to impose a Eurocentric humanist view on India and the Punjab, as a way of persuading the people to succumb to modernity and European progress since for Europeans, India was stuck in its ancient traditions and ways. However, Eurocentric humanism conflicted with the pre-colonial ideology of God-centredness. Achhru Singh reworks Prospero so that he can show that a God-centred view is also a valid perspective, and thus counteracts the imposition of Eurocentric ideals.

Conclusion

In Chapter 3, I examined two translations from Surjit Han's collection of Punjabi Shakespearean translations: *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit*. My discussion of these two translations, which was informed by critically analysing them, enabled me to argue that Hans' translations built upon the early translations that emerged from Punjab's interaction with Shakespeare during and after the colonial era. Han's intentions to introduce Shakespeare to his Punjabi readership as faithfully and authentically as possible compelled him to use writing techniques, for instance, transliteration, which had the effect of distancing and alienating readers. My examination of *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit*, showed that Hans balanced his intentions with the need to recontextualise Shakespearean drama and characters so that they became relevant to the Punjabi context and readership. Hans managed this through the writing

techniques that he deployed in his translations, which included using cultural appropriations for explanations of his transliterations and familial relationships. To further embed his translations in a Punjabi context and relocate his characters in the Punjab, Hans also draws upon the pre-colonial tradition of Sufi literature, through which he renames and recharacterises his characters, so they 'become' Punjabi. Thus, in the previous chapter, I argue that Hans' Punjabi Shakespearean translations are Sufi-inspired. This chapter has led me to theorise that for Achhru Singh maintaining the Shakespearean form is not important like it is to Surjit Hans. Thus, Achhru Singh's collection of translations aim to introduce the narratives of the plays more than anything else. In doing so, Achhru Singh transforms the plays into short stories and merges these with pre-colonial forms of writing which replicate the style of oral storytelling. Nonetheless, Achhru Singh is also keen to assert his work as Shakespearean and he does this by maintaining the various discourses and registers of the original plays in his translations, however, he does this by using cultural appropriations, which is similar to Hans, and uses colloquial expressions. Critically, Achhru Singh's approach to translation differs to Hans' approach because it includes features prevalent in partition narratives and therefore Achhru Singh's translations can be read as post-partition Shakespeare. Furthermore, Achhru Singh reinterprets the play through a post-colonial lens that is specific to the Punjabi context, and this means that whilst he does not decentre the original narrative in other post-colonial ways, for example, he does not recuperate the colonial subject, instead, he specifically focusses on the relationship between Ariel and Prospero because this relationship most closely represents the process of colonialism for him because the Punjab, and India, went from Mughal colonisation to British colonisation, although the Punjab experienced a brief period of independence between Mughal and British rule. He also

decentres the Eurocentric interpretations of the plays that are most pertinent to the Punjabi context, for example, he reworks the humanist readings and reasserts a God-centred view in the translation. Firmly situating the translations in a Punjabi context and interrogating traditional interpretations of the plays.

In the next chapter, Chapter 5, I will examine Smeep Kang's *Double di Trouble*, which is a Punjabi adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors* to show how, in line with Achhru Singh's approach to translation, it can be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare. However, in the next chapter, I will also demonstrate that Kang's film draws upon Hans' approach too in its foregrounding of Shakespeare.

Chapter 5

Refocussing Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* to make it relevant to Punjabi audiences in Smeep Kang's *Double di Trouble*

Introduction

So far, this study has concentrated on the textual collections of translations produced by Punjabi writers Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh, and how these can be used to develop thinking about different approaches that can be taken in the process of Punjabi Shakespearean translation. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, Hans' approach involves building upon post-colonial and post-independence Punjabi Shakespearean translations, as well as creating Sufi-inspired Shakespeare and Achhru Singh's translations can be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare. As a contrast to the analysis of textual translations, in this chapter, I discuss Smeep Kang's Punjabi film adaptation, *Double di Trouble* (2014), which is based on *The Comedy of Errors*. I will evaluate the themes and issues that Kang chooses to develop as the writer of the film but also the actors' interpretations of the script and the way they choose to portray Punjabi Shakespeare. Whilst the writer and director of the film is the same person, it is still important for me to address the difference in analysing the textual translations by Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh, and the film adaptation by Smeep Kang. To align some of the comparison I have focussed on the language used in the film rather than the performative elements, but this does mean that I am relying on the actors' interpretations of the script which means that it is possible that different actors may emphasise or reduce particular themes and issues of the script in their performance. Also, as the film has been written and directed by Smeep Kang, I have assumed that there is less chance of reinterpretation of the script since the person

writing the script is also directing the actors, therefore, there is a closer connection between the written script and the director's decisions that impact the way in which the actors' interpret the text because Kang will know what he expected from certain lines in the film script.

Punjabi cinema is distinct from other regional cinemas and India's biggest film industry, Bollywood[277], since it is divided into two branches: Punjabi language films that are produced in Western Punjab in Pakistan and films that are produced in Eastern Punjab in India. When this study talks about Punjabi cinema or films, it refers to the cinematography in Eastern Punjab in India because that is where the film discussed in this chapter, *Double di Trouble*, was produced. That Punjabi film industry, and indeed Indian society at large, has been influenced heavily by Bollywood, is apparent in the film that will be analysed in this chapter; therefore, in my analysis of *Double di Trouble*, there is some reference to a Bollywood adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors* entitled *Angoor* which was produced in 1982.[278] [279] The global reach of the Punjabi film industry means that Kang has been more successful than the Punjabi writers, Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh, whose aims and intentions are discussed in the previous chapters, in reaching a mass Punjabi speaking audience. This is partially

[277] Saurabh Samraat, 'Bollywood's Toxic Masculinity: The Problematic Portrayal of Men and Women in Popular Hindi Cinema,' *International Journal of Law Management and Humanities*, 4:1 (2021), pp. 424-431 (p. 424). Samraat discusses the scale of Bollywood, in terms of production and export of movies nationally and globally.

[278]Ibid, p. 424. Samraat discusses that Bollywood has 'gigantic sociological, psychological, and cultural effects' on its audience worldwide and influences regional cinema.

[279] Sampooran Singh Kalra (Gulzar) (dir.), *Angoor*, (1982, A. R. Movies).

because Punjabi cinema is immensely popular in India as well as in the UK and Canada where there are large communities of Punjabi people.

The first recorded performance of *The Comedy of Errors* in England was on 28 December 1594; however, scholars are divided about the play's date of composition.[280] *The Comedy of Errors* was not printed until 1623 when Shakespeare's plays were collected in the First Folio, published seven years after the dramatist's death.[281] The main source of *The Comedy of Errors* is the *Menaechmi* (200BC) of Plautus from which Shakespeare deployed the main plot of twins separated at birth; further material, including the addition of a second set of twins, comes from the same playwright's *Amphitruo*. Not only did Shakespeare use Plautus' work, but the smaller details in his play can also be seen in works from George Gascoigne's *Supposes*, John Lyly's *Mother Bombie* and John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*.[282] In a study exploring the sources for *The Comedy of Errors,* Richard Dutton has identified yet another potential source for the play; he argues that Lucian's *Calumnia non temere credendum*, "On not believing rashly [or: being too quick to put faith] in slander" is the source for the character/s of Antipholus. Dutton argues that the main, and perhaps most important, element in the process of translation for Shakespeare has been the

[280] Some argue that it was written in the very early 1590s, but others maintain that 1594 is the more likely date of composition.

[281] 'When did Shakespeare write The Comedy of Errors? And where did he get his inspiration?', Royal Shakespeare Company, Available online: https://www.rsc.org.uk/the-comedy-of-errors/dates-and-sources.Date accessed 01/03/22, 18:39.

[282] Richard Dutton, 'The *Comedy of Errors* and *The Calumny of Apelles*: An Exercise in Source Study,' *Religion and the Arts*, 7:1-2, (2003), pp. 11-30.

Christianisation of the action and characters.[283] Dutton's arguments demonstrate that Shakespeare adapted and reworked different sources to create new works. Like Shakespeare, Kang draws on different sources which he reworks and repurposes to write and direct *Double di Trouble*. Kang uses the Shakespearean narrative and, Like Achhru Singh, reworks the features of partition writing and film to include them in *Double di Trouble*. Additionally, through the narrative techniques that Kang deploys, the film resonates with the contemporary debates about the gendered retelling of partition, and this has the effect of repurposing Shakespeare to suit Kang's Punjabi audience. Most importantly, Kang's use of pre-colonial traditions and techniques contributes to a new way of viewing and interpreting Punjabi Shakespeare.

Since, as mentioned earlier, Punjabi cinema is heavily influenced by Bollywood film productions, Kang's Punjabi language film entitled *Double Di Trouble* is inspired by *Angoor*. Kang's film, like Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* and Gulzar's *Angoor,* includes two sets of twins, but instead of a son (Antipholus) and servant (Dromio) twin set, Kang includes a father and adopted son twin set in his Punjabi film. The cast of *Double Di Trouble* includes well-established Punjabi and Bollywood film actors. The opening of the film starts with a statement which reads:

> 'This film is indebted to and based on Shakespeare's play *Comedy of Errors*. It's about twins who are unaware of each other and don't have any children of their own. Blame it on Shakespeare that the ones they adopt turn out be twins too.

[283]Ibid, p. 25.

> Wish we could ask Shakespeare why it happened. Anyway, let's forget why it happened and watch what happened… Smeep Kang.'[284]

Kang translates the above statement in a Punjabi-language voiceover, and the words in English are also displayed on a plain black background before the film starts.

In Punjabi, Kang says:

> *'ah film Shakespeare de natak comedy of errors de adarat hain. ah ohna judwe viyaktia di kahani hain jo ik doosre toh anjaan ne doha de koi alaud nahi, Shakespeare dhi soch a ke doha ne jo alag alag bache godh le ohvi kudrati judwe nikle. kaash asi shakespeare nu puch sakde ke edha kyon hoya chalo kyon hoya nu bhul ke dekhde a ki hoya'*[285]

Like Surjit Hans' and Achhru Singh's textual translations, Kang's film explicitly states that Shakespeare is the source of his adaptation. However, Kang's opening statement reflects closely what happens in his filmic adaptation, *Double di Trouble*, rather than the narrative of the original play, *The Comedy of Errors*. The overt labelling of the film as Shakespearean in this opening statement, or at least signalling that Kang is adapting Shakespeare signifies how the adaptation has dual concerns - Punjabi

[284] *Double Di Trouble*, 0:00:33.

[285] *Double di Trouble*, 00:00:01 – 00:00:30.

language and Shakespeare. In this respect, the foregrounding of Shakespeare all three writers Surjit Hans, Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang contributes to the creation of Punjabi Shakespeare as the new niche genre in Punjabi literature and drama.

As I discussed in Chapter 4, Achhru Singh's *Toofan* mostly maintained the narrative of the original play but also included themes and concerns, as well as characteristic representations from Punjabi literature, especially partition literature. In a similar manner, in Kang's *Double Di Trouble* there are instances where the film displaces and adapts the themes of the play so that the focus of the film adaptation becomes the partition and its consequences. The Partition critics and writers led by scholars such as Guneeta Singh Bhalla, Aanchal Malhotra and Amrita Pritam record diverse experiences of partition which resonate with my examination of *Double Di Trouble*. To highlight his concerns about the consequences of partition, Kang, within *Double Di Trouble,* explores the partition through the lens of women's experiences too. Consequently, the themes and/or action in the original play have been replaced with those that resonate with the partition. The work of Kirsten Knopf, which engages with the decolonisation of cinema in ways that might be useful in our understanding of how Kang breaks down assumptions and delineates major themes from the original play to assert his indigenous voice in the play and self-represent the Punjabi characters. Also, 'faction' is a term that might be useful in understanding the film adaptation, especially when Kang references and represents the partition in the film narrative. Christian

Krampe[286] and Ritu Menon[287] use the term 'faction' to define the blurring of the boundaries between reality and fiction in documenting and perceiving historical narratives.

In a different way, Kang's process of adaptation echoes Shakespeare's practice since he adapts source texts to make them relevant to new audiences, and in addition uses opacity to explore sensitive topics. By exploring sensitive topics through techniques that ensure opacity, Kang employs aspects of language to reminisce on a Punjab that no longer exists. For example, Kang draws on the humour that is inherent in *The Comedy of Errors* to explore topics that are considered sensitive by Punjabi communities. So, Kang consciously references Shakespeare who, as Richard Dutton argues, deploys opacity in *The Comedy of Errors*, specifically when he shows a Christendom which no longer exists in early modern England. Dutton argues that this was the Old Faith of 'an undivided Christendom' which no longer existed in early modern England.[288] Thus, the examination of *Double di Trouble* shows how Kang utilises the techniques of adaptation and opacity that are inherent in Shakespeare's play, *The Comedy of Errors*, to develop his film into post-partition Shakespeare.

[286] Christian J Krampe, 'Lawrence Hill's Fictional Narratives', *The Past is Present*: *The African-Canadian Experiences in Lawrence Hill's Fiction* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2012).

[287] Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), p. 6.

[288] Richard Dutton, The *Comedy of Errors* and *The Calumny of Apelles*: An Exercise in Source Study,' *Religion and the Arts*, 7:1-2, (2003), p. 11-30.

***Double di Trouble* synopsis**

Song and dance sequences that are central to the opening scene of the film remind the audience of Bollywood styles. The strategy is to introduce to the audience the main hero, Fateh, who lives in a small town, and falls in love with a teacher who works at a local school. The school is regularly terrorised by the village goons who argue that the school belongs to them because their father owned the land on which the school was built. The father of these troublemakers is no longer alive and instead of allowing his sons to inherit the land, he donated it to the headteacher for him to build a school. Fateh and his father, Ajit, both lawyers, intervene in the conflict between the villagers and the thugs, and vow to take them to court to settle the dispute over the school. After Ajit and Fateh have discussed the registration of the land with the headteacher, who does not have the official documents, they decide to go to the land registry in Chandigarh, in order to obtain the official documentation to prove to the court the headteacher's rightful ownership.

In Chandigarh, Ajit's and Fateh's identities are severally mistaken for those of Ekam and Manjit, who are their twins that live in Chandigarh. Fateh and Ekam are unaware of each other's existence; however, Ajit knows that he has a twin brother, Manjit, but the audience is informed that Ajit has not seen Manjit since the 1947 partition of India. Ajit knows of Manjit's existence because their mother, Bebe, often recounts the story of their separation.

Once in Chandigarh, Ajit and Ekam retrieve the documents they require to settle the dispute but, as it is late in the day, they decide to stay in Chandigarh for one night

before returning home. On their way to the hotel, a jeweller mistakes Ajit for Manjit and compels him to take a diamond ring, which was supposed to be an anniversary present for Manjit's wife. After much confusion, Ajit is arrested and the whole family ends up at the police station. Ajit and Ekam escape from the police station and when, following a car chase, they are eventually caught, Ajit is recognised by his father, Bapuji, and introduced to his twin brother Manjit. Fateh and Ekam are also introduced to each other, and they discover that they were separated at birth and adopted by Ajit and Manjit, respectively. All the families unite when both sets of twins and Bapuji travel to Ajit's hometown to meet with Bebe and tell her that they have found each other.

Smeep Kang biography (1973-)

Smeep Kang was born in Patiala, Punjab. He is a writer, director and actor who has been a part of the Punjabi film industry since the late 1990s. Kang is best known for writing and directing comedy, he has directed and/or written over 20 films and most of these are comedies as well as thought-provoking films that explore serious social issues. For example, his film *Lock* (2016) illustrates the patriarchal structures which dominate the lives of women and subject them to the male gaze.[289] Another example is *Widow's Colony*, which has not yet been released, and explores the highly politicised events of 1984 in India, through the perspective of the mothers and wives left widowed by mass killings of Sikh men and boys.[290] In *Double Di Trouble*, in which

[289]Smeep Kang (dir), *Lock* (2016, Ekrehmat productions). Available online: Lock - YouTube. Date accessed: 23/12/21, 07:13.

[290] Smeep Kang (dir.), *Widow Colony* (trailer). Available online: *Widow Colony* | Gippy Grewal, Gurpreet Ghuggi, Smeep Kang | Official Trailer, Release Date - YouTube. Date accessed: 21/12/21, 15:42.

he capitalises on opportunities for the main female character to be able to tell her partition story, Kang is responsive to the debates which highlight the lack of autonomy and agency that women have in narrativising their experiences.

How foregrounding Shakespeare as a source contributes to doubleness and hybridity

I use Homi Bhabha's discussion of post-colonial identity, in his essay 'Interrogating identity'[291] in which he argues that writing identity for post-colonials is always an act of doubleness and hybridity. Bhabha focuses on Adil Jussawalla's poem, 'Missing Person', in which Jussawalla uses the symbol for a Hindi vowel, which is written in English with Roman script. Bhabha argues that this authorial strategy has a doubling effect because the sound of the Hindi vowel letter is spoken not only once when it first appears but also a second time with the same pronunciation even when Jussawalla reverts to using the English language. Bhabha describes this as 'cultural translation' because Jussawalla's writing carries double value as it crosses culture and language.[292] The idea of 'cultural translation' employed by Jussawalla underlines Kang's strategy which capitalises on the doubleness and hybridity that are used as idiomatic expressions in English and transliteration in his film.

The title of the film, *Double di Trouble*, is an adaptation of the English idiomatic expression 'double the trouble', which signifies the chaos and confusion which arises from misidentification when there are two sets of twins in the same city who are

[291] Homi Bhabha, 'Interrogating Identity' in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 59.

[292] Ibid, p. 59.

unaware of each other's presence. Significantly, the title is written in English but spoken in a Punjabi accent due to the definite article being spelt as '*di*'. In this context, Kang has used the 23rd vowel letter[293] of the Punjabi alphabet which is voiced unaspirated[294] as well as the Bihari vowel sound[295] so that in Punjabi, 'the' becomes 'thee'. The appropriation of 'the', as well as the whole of the English phrase 'double the trouble' domesticates the English language and repurposes it so that it takes on new meaning in Punjabi. So, cultural translation, as described by Bhabha takes place in Kang's title because not only does '*di*' carry meaning in Punjabi, but it also sounds like Shakespearean language in English, as 'thee' often appears in Shakespeare's plays. Bhabha's illustration of Jussawalla's poem and his concept of doubling in writing is useful for analysing why Kang decides to harness both an English phrase and the Punjabi language in his title. Additionally, it allows us to understand why all three writers, Achhru Singh, Surjit Hans and Smeep Kang foreground Shakespeare in their work. Signalling that the work is Shakespearean by the Punjabi writers, as well as using the Punjabi language gives the adaptations the 'double' identity that Bhabha refers to in his essay. According to Bhabha, such doubling does not take place consecutively but happens simultaneously. As we see in *Double di Trouble* the title of the film deploys both Punjabi and English in one utterance, and when the same word carries meaning in both languages at once, the doubling known as cultural translation takes place. Thus, the phrase that Kang uses is a common English phrase but the use of the '*di*' in place of 'the' signifies a Punjabi pronunciation of the title but at the same

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[294] Mangat Rai Bhardwaj, *Panjabi: A Comprehensive Grammar* (London: Routledge 2016), p. 42.

[295] Ibid, p. 51. (ਦੀ)

time when '*di*' is spoken as 'thee' in English, cultural translation takes place because the different words, although pronounced the same, carry meaning in both, English and Punjabi, linguistic and cultural systems.

This cultural translation of the title, *Double di Trouble*, makes it hybrid in nature because it is two things at once. The hybridity of the title foreshadows the hybridity that is to yet come in the film. As Bhabha suggests, 'hybridising language' provokes an anxiety because it produces an indecisiveness in relation to boundaries. He states:

> 'The anxiety provoked by the hybridizing of language, activated in the anguish associated with vacillating boundaries – psychic, cultural, territorial – of which these verses speak. Where do you draw the line between languages? Between cultures? Between disciplines? Between peoples?'[296]

In Kang's title, there is not a distinct boundary of the kind that Bhabha discusses, because there is not a specific point at which the English and Punjabi are distinct from each other. As discussed, the title is English and Punjabi at once, when '*di*' is spoken in Punjabi, its articulation plays upon the fact that, it also sounds like Shakespearean language; 'thee'. The anxiety lies in determining its nature: is it Punjabi or is it Shakespeare? The sense of undecidability and/or hybridity that is created means that the film ends up carrying a double consciousness.[297]

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[296] Homi Bhabha, 'Interrogating Identity' in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p.59.

[297] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk (*Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1903). In this book, Du Bois describes what he means by "double consciousness": "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-

Kang's changing of the English idiomatic expression, 'double the trouble', from 'the' to '*di*/thee' is reflective of the language used by Shakespeare himself. Hugh Craig found through his computational study that 'thee' was amongst the fifty most common words used in Shakespearean plays.[298] Craig's study shows that there are some particular words, such as 'thee', that are seen in Shakespeare's work regularly. This regularity of the words in his plays means that the words have come to be known as 'Shakespearean'. When scholars of Shakespearean studies and people who are involved in the production of theatre refer to 'Shakespearean language', it is these words, as well as the poetic quality of his language, to which they are alluding. However, the phrase is not restricted to experts or professionals alone, even people without academic insights might have an idea of what 'Shakespearean language' might look like, just as they recognise Hamlet's famous lines 'To be or not to be',

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consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife- this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face" (p. 2-3).

[298] Hugh Craig, '"Speak, that I may see thee": Shakespeare Characters and Common Words,' *Shakespeare Survey, 61* (2008), p. 285.

without necessarily knowing the play. There is an assumption inherent in the discussion of 'Shakespearean language', that there is a collective understanding of what Shakespearean language entails. So, when Kang uses a specific word, or language, which is recognisably Shakespearean in the title of the film, he is making a point of aligning his work with Shakespeare from the outset. While Kang uses Shakespearean language to infer Shakespeare as a source for his film, he also does this more directly when he provides an introductory statement at the beginning of the film to explain Shakespeare as his source, as discussed in the introduction of this chapter.

As I discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, when introducing their collections of translations, Surjit Hans and Achhru Singh also explicitly state Shakespeare as their source text for their reworkings. Both Hans and Achhru Singh's collections have had limited copies published and the majority of these are physically located in university libraries. Digitised copies are not currently available of the translations.[299] Therefore, it is likely that the readership of Hans and Achhru Singh's collections would be students and/or academics; even so, it cannot be categorically asserted as to how many readers would recognise, without being made explicitly aware in the introductions, that the adaptations were based on Shakespeare. *Double di Trouble* has certainly had a much wider reach, in terms of audience, because it was released as a commercial film. Although, if it had not been stated by Kang in a voice-over in the statement at the beginning of the film, it is unlikely that people who watched the film would have known

[299] It was challenging to obtain copies of the translations for this study as only a small number have been printed and they are not available widely, also I was only able to locate them in Punjabi University, Patiala, India, and they were sent to me in the UK from the university library in Patiala.

what it was based on. Although this knowledge provided by Kang as a writer and director would mean different things to different people, as some may be aware of Shakespeare's work whilst others may not, when Kang, and the other writers, Hans and Achhru Singh directly cite Shakespeare as their source for their work, they are signalling the doubleness and hybridity of their translations and adaptation because they are categorising their work as belonging to two cultures or worlds; a world of Shakespearean drama, as well as Punjabi language translations or adaptations.

Other post-colonial writers have similarly foregrounded Shakespeare in their work, and, like the Punjabi writers, this signals a doubleness and hybridity. For example, in Djanet Sears' introduction to her play, *Harlem Duet* (1997)[300], she says:

> 'As a veteran theatre practitioner of African descent, Shakespeare's *Othello* had haunted me since I was first introduced to him. Sir Laurence Olivier in black-face. Othello is the first African portrayed in the annals of western dramatic literature. In an effort to exorcise this ghost, I have written *Harlem Duet*.'[301]

Sears' work is written in English and draws upon 'western dramatic literature', yet she is clear that her play is a form of catharsis which brings out her 'African Descent'. The act of being Shakespearean as well as Canadian/African makes her work hybrid; however, at the same time there is a self-divisive anxiety in the tone of her introduction.

[300] Djanet Sears, *Harlem Duet,* (Canada: Shillingford, 1997).

[301] Ibid, p. 14.

In relation to Punjabi Shakespeare, the writers are aware that Shakespeare as the source will remain as an imprint in their work and thus, they cite him as their source. Yet simultaneously they introduce new ways of reading Shakespeare, by domesticating the plays and appropriating the language so that it is relevant to their indigenous Punjabi audiences and readership. For example, in Kang's voice-over introduction, as discussed, he foregrounds Shakespeare by introducing his play as the source of the film while at the same time inviting the audience to 'forget' the original play and 'watch' what happens in the context of the Punjab where his characters are located.[302]

Like Sears, Kang is aware of the influence of his source but keen to release the Punjabi consciousness in *Double di Trouble*, too. In *Angoor*, Gulzar's Bollywood adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors*, the hybridity and self-divisiveness of the film is visually represented in the opening credits, when the heads of the actors who play the twins are replicated several times and then divided in two. Their facial expressions show them as confused and then angry, ending with a distressed and hopeless look. In the final credit, Dromio's head is smashed into several pieces as Antipholus plays the trumpet in his ear. Elsewhere, the opening credits of *Angoor* capture the anxiety of being two things at once and what an explosive experience this might be. The post-colonial adaptations capitalise on this inherent theme in the play which manifests itself through twinship and doubling. Whilst the hybridity of these adaptions, *Double di Trouble, Harlem Duet and Angoor*, can be a collaborative and celebratory experience which the writers and directors also capitalise on, it can also be full of anxiety and tension as Sears shows. Therefore, although the writers cite Shakespeare as their

[302] *Double di Trouble*, 00:00:50.

source, they are also quick to point to their own indigenous heritage represented in their work, whether that is the Othello of 'African descent' in Sears' work or Shakespearean characters in the context of the Punjab in Kang's work.

Refocussing the theme of separation for *Double di Trouble*

Separation is one of the major themes in *The Comedy of Errors*. It is introduced in the very first scene when Egeon, a merchant from Syracuse, recounts his story to the Duke of Ephesus. He poignantly describes the single moment on the ship in which the members of his family are separated from each other:

> 'We were encountered by a might rock, / Which being violently borne upon, / Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst; / So that in this unjust divorce of us, / Fortune had left to both of us alike/ What to delight in, what to sorrow for.'[303]

When the ship is violently broken in two, Egeon, his son, who is a twin, and a servant, who is also a twin, are separated from Egeon's wife, as well as the remaining twin and the other twin servant. Egeon experiences yet further separation when his son and his servant, Antipholus and Dromio, embark on a search for their lost brothers, leaving Egeon alone in Syracuse. As Egeon continues his story to the duke, the audience learns that he has ended up in Ephesus because he set out to search for Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant, Dromio of Syracuse, since they both left Egeon to search for their respective long-lost twins.[304] Thus, in *The Comedy of Errors*, Shakespeare's

[303] *Norton*, p. 756, I. I. 101-106.

[304] *Norton*, p. 757, I. I. 119.

narrative is dependent upon the physical separation of the family during and after the shipwreck because only when the characters are separated can the plot be driven forward as they commence a search for each other.

Kang maintains this theme of separation in his presentation of Punjabi Shakespeare when in *Double di Trouble*, the character of the mother and father, along with the twins are separated, but he changes the reason for the separation. In *Double di Trouble*, Bebe recounts the separation in an emotional scene, she states:

> 'Bebe: *santali de raulia vich, tere judwe praa nu khadaan de bahane bahar leke ge si, tekha jaa varre, ajje tak nahi murre*
> Manjit: *bebe, bebe, bali jasbaati naa hoya kar, tenu dukhi vekh ke meri saari uthr jaandhi a, naa chete karia kar, mere vi mann kendhe, oh aunn ge, bapu te veer zaroor aun ge, vaheguru leke au ohna nu, dukhi naa hoya kar'*
> [trans. Bebe: In the riots of 1947, your father took your twin brother out under the pretence of taking him to play out, but he ended up in the alcohol shop, he still hasn't returned.
> Manjit: mother, mother, don't get so emotional, when I see you upset my alcohol wears off, don't think about it, my heart says that they will come back, father and brother will definitely come back, *Vaheguru* (wonderful Guru) will bring them back, don't keep getting upset][305]

[305] *Double di Trouble*, 00:07:29.

Bebe and Ajit discuss how his father, Bapuji, took his twin brother, Manjit, under the pretext of taking him out to play when his intention was to purchase alcohol from a shop. She cries that since that day neither has been seen. She remarks that this happened during the chaos of the partition; 'In the riots of 47', she states.[306] Here, Kang has departed from the original play significantly, because instead of the plot device of a shipwreck, he uses the partition, specifically mentioning the riots which took place at this time.

Whereas this chapter is focused on the notion of separation in *Double di Trouble*, there are narratives of separation during the partition which have been recorded in different ways. These include, Guneeta Singh Bhalla's '1947 Partition Archive'[307] which was started in 2008, Aanchal Malhotra's *Remnants of Separation,*[308] and Amrita Pritam's novel, *Pinjar* (1950).[309] *Pinjar* is a work of fiction but could seamlessly fit into Bhalla's or Malhotra's respective historical documentary collections. Bhalla and Malhotra have produced collections of stories that try to capture the real-life experiences of the

[306] *Double di Trouble*, 00:07:40. Bebe: '*Santali dhe raulia vich'.*

[307] *The 1947 Partition Archive: Survivors and their Memories,* Stanford Libraries Available online: https://exhibits.stanford.edu/1947-partition. Date accessed: 15/03/22, 22:32. This is an archive of nearly 10,000 digitally recorded interviews with the survivors of partition. Currently, it is not available to the public, but a sub-set of interviews is available to researchers at Stanford Library and there are some short clips available on YouTube.

[308] Aanchal Malhotra, *Remnants of Partition: 21 Objects from a Continent Divided*, (India: HarperCollins, 2017).

[309] Amrita Pritam, *Pinjar* (Delhi: Tara, 1950).

refugees of the partition. They both categorise themselves as oral historians and accept that their work is reliant on memories which can be unstable and malleable. According to Christian J. Krampe writing about the blurring of boundaries between reality and fiction, African slave narratives could be categorised as 'faction' because they blend fact and fiction whilst 'collapsing autobiography, history, social commentary and fiction.'[310] The same can be applied to partition fiction, whether it be written like Malhotra's collection, or visual like Bhalla's archive, because it is often based on the real-life narratives of partition.

Guneeta Singh Bhalla's digital archive is a collection of stories that partition survivors have recounted of their experiences. Bhalla's archive captures the anxieties of separation that people experienced, not only separation from people that they knew (families, neighbours, and communities) but also separation from the homes and land which people were forced to leave behind. [311] In one of the collection's most memorable stories, a 107-year-old man, Naseem Mirza Changezi, is interviewed. He recounts that he was 37 years of age at the time of partition and that his father taught him to 'die upon the soil which he was born', thus despite the risk to his life, he remained in Delhi under a false Hindu identity.[312] His story evokes the attachment people felt for the land where they were born; he felt that the anguish he would

[310] Christian J Krampe, 'Lawrence Hill's Fictional Narratives' *The Past is Present*: *The African-Canadian Experiences in Lawrence Hill's Fiction* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2012).

[311] *The 1947 Partition Archive: Survivors and their Memories,* Stanford Libraries Available online: https://exhibits.stanford.edu/1947-partition. Date accessed: 15/03/22, 22:32.

[312] Naseem Mirza Chengezi, YouTube. Available online: The 107 year old man who hid Bhagat Singh: Naseem Mirza Chengezi - YouTube. Date accessed 14/02/22, 20:15.

experience if he were to separate from it was greater than death. Nevertheless, land, and its ownership, is presented in different ways in *Double di Trouble*. This shows that Kang is using the same anxieties that are presented in the partition narratives collected by Bhalla in *Double di Trouble*. When Ajit and Ekam decide to travel to Chandigarh because they must obtain the legal documentation for the school land, it becomes clear that the ownership and proprietorship of land can be a complex matter in the context of the Punjab. Later in the film, they regret their involvement in the land dispute of the school.

Another example of how partition narratives are recorded is Malhotra's book, *Remnants of Separation,* which documents the material possessions that the refugees of partition carried with them during their migrations. Malhotra interviews the survivors of partition about the memories and significance associated with the possessions. The objects discussed include photographs, documents, jewellery, a shawl, a plaque, and utensils. It is significant that the refugees still have these objects because along with violence carried out on people, possessions were looted and destroyed too. For example, a man remembers what happened when his family home was ransacked during the partition riots:

> 'The family was rounded up and pushed outside, though no one was harmed. Then the mob went around inside the house, breaking the furniture and setting rooms on fire…that day, the mob took away many things – the musical instruments that my mother owned, objects and artifacts of importance and value, and… the books. They destroyed all the books. My grandfather's

> great library, his collection of English, French and Bengali books, my mother's collections of poetry – they were all mostly destroyed. When they realized that they didn't have enough time to tear or set all the books on fire, they filled the grand bathtubs with water and immersed the books.'[313]

Each object discussed in Malhotra's interviews has a story, and as the owners recount the stories their memories are evoked, and this can be upsetting for them at times. In some cases, the partition survivors also pondered about being able to forget, as well as remember, about separation. For example, a wife talks about how her husband's medical condition has meant that he can no longer remember the significance of the objects or his experience during the partition:

> 'The human mind is a fascinating organ, with the ability to both assist and deceive us. Sometimes I think it's a good thing he no longer remembers. You can't hold on to everything, that's just not possible. One has to learn to sift, weigh and then maybe forget. In his case, the forgetting has happened for unavoidable medical reasons, but maybe that's not the worst thing. Forgetting is as important as remembering. We must clear some space let in some light. Otherwise, the world would be too heavy, our hearts would

[313]Soni Wadha, '(68) 'Remnants of a Separation: A History of the Partition Through Material Memory by Aanchal Malhotra' (unknown date). Available online: (68) " Remnants of a Separation: A History of the Partition Through Material Memory " by Aanchal Malhotra | Soni Wadhwa - Academia.edu. Date accessed 02/03/22, 16:45.

be too heavy. Like his used to be before … weighted and overcast with longing.'[314]

Malhotra's work shows that these possessions have become signifiers of separation, especially in relation to the pain people faced. Kang, like Malhotra, uses signifiers of separation in *Double di Trouble* to remember but also forget the pain of partition. When Bebe remembers how the twins and Bapuji were separated during the partition, it is because Ajit has drunk alcohol which reminds her that Bapuji left the house with Manjit to buy alcohol. The smell of alcohol exuding from Ajit reminds Bebe of the pain she endured since the separation, and she begins to cry. Ajit cries too and promises to stop drinking alcohol if she stops talking about the separation from Bapuji and Manjit. So, although Bebe wants to recount their partition experience, Ajit wants her to forget. Moments of stress in the film also become signifiers of the partition for Ajit, because when he encounters a stressful situation, he reverts to speaking Urdu which he states reminds him of an undivided Punjab where communities and families were not separated from each other.

Several films and books of fiction have been produced which document the emotional anxieties concerned with separation as a direct result of the partition. For example, Amrita Pritam's novel, *Pinjar* (1950), is based on a young woman's plight when she is accidently separated from her family as they are migrating. She bears further

[314] Soni Wadha, '(68) 'Remnants of a Separation: A History of the Partition Through Material Memory by Aanchal Malhotra' (unknown date). Available online: (68) " Remnants of a Separation: A History of the Partition Through Material Memory " by Aanchal Malhotra | Soni Wadhwa - Academia.edu. Date accessed 02/03/22, 16:45.

separation from her husband and child when she must stay at a partition refugee camp. A film directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi in 2003 is based on Pritam's novel. *Double di Trouble* also follows this typical trope of family separation found in partition novels and films when Bebe and Ajit are separated from Bapuji and Manjit. It is emphasised in the film, that despite their efforts to continue with family life, Ajit and Bebe are haunted by the loss and separation of Bapuji and Manjit. This is shown when both Bebe and Ajit display signs of distress and emotion when they discuss Manjit and Bapuji's separation from the rest of the family. Bebe shows that she yearns for her separated child, Manjit, in the same way that Puro, the mother character in *Pinjar* wants to see her child. Both characters, Bebe and Puro, cry at their fate and remark at how they have had to endure the pain of separation. Ajit becomes so upset that he begs Bebe to stop talking about it and their emotion is uncontrollable when they both start crying. Thus, *Double di Trouble*, diverting from humour in this scene, takes on an emotional charge when the partition and the consequential separation are discussed, which is imitative of the stories of separation that have been documented by historians, such as Malhotra and Bhalla, and authors such as Pritam, of the partition.

Since the partition has had such a profound impact on the history and people of the Punjab, the subject, directly or indirectly, is a recurring meta-narrative in Punjabi literature. So, in Chapter 4, where I analysed and discussed Achhru Singh's translations, *Toofan* and *Romeo te Juliet*, translations that reflect themes and motifs from partition literature, I developed the phrase post-partition Shakespeare. I argued that Achhru Singh's translations can be read through this critical perspective which combines Shakespeare and partition. In a similar way, Kang's film, which draws upon the separation anxieties found in partition literature and partition documentaries, can

also be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare. Comparably, the famous Indian painter, Satish Gujral, argues that the pain and suffering that he experienced on his partition journey from Pakistan to India, had such a massive impact on him that it infiltrates all his artwork, which resonates with my arguments here and from Chapters 2 and 4, that suggest partition unconsciously infiltrates Punjabi writing in direct and indirect ways.[315] Krampe's work on faction and slave narratives is relevant to partition fiction too because although Kang's film is a work of fiction it blends the boundaries between fact and fiction by replicating real-life partition narratives.

Also, scholars, like Ritu Menon, argue that the abundance of political reportage on the partition is matched by the 'paucity of social histories of it.'[316] This gap has however been filled by literature and film and can be considered a social history because it approximates to reality.[317] Therefore, Kang contributes to this documenting of social history because he has refocussed the reason for the separation as partition in his film and this makes it relevant for the Punjabi audiences. When Kang, in *Double di Trouble*, reinterprets Shakespeare as post-partition Shakespeare this enables new ways of reading and resists the traditional interpretations of Shakespeare, so that rather than produce a continuation of Eurocentric Shakespeare, a Shakespearean production that is contextually, as well as materially, Punjabi is presented.

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[315] *The Day India Burned* (2007). BBC documentary. Available online: Partition The Day India Burned (Full) - YouTube. Date accessed: 02/03/22, 21:09.

[316] Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), p. 6.

[317] Ibid, p. 7.

The Woman's Voice in Partition

Kang further deepens the connection to partition in his film when he reflects current debates about partition. For example, there is a growing body of scholarship which develops the thinking about how best to record women's experiences of partition through their own voices. Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, in their 1998 book, *Borders and Boundaries; Women in India's Partition*[318], state that:

> 'To the best of our knowledge there has been no feminist historiography of the partition of India, not even of the compensatory variety. Women historians have written on this cataclysmic event but from within the parameters of the discipline, and well within the political frame… They (women) have been supplementary to male action, rather than actors in their own right…'[319]

Menon has attempted a feminist reading of the partition because she argues that women have been silenced in this sphere; moreover, while they are not totally absent, they are only ever present as 'objects of study, rather than as subjects.'[320] Menon suggests that when we begin to delve in women's history, we see a difference in what has been constructed as history and how it has been constructed. Although Menon analysed official government reports, records, and documents to gain an understanding of women's roles in partition, it was not until she interviewed and spoke

[318]Ibid, p. 9.

[319]Ibid, p. 9.

[320] Ibid, p. 11.

to women about the partition that she realised the value of oral history in helping to reconstruct a feminist reading of the partition. She argues that women, themselves, had rarely used the written word in documenting history, but in oral history there was a richness and quality that was not available elsewhere. Menon notes that partition fiction, film or written, was richer than official documents because it was here that women spoke for themselves.

Interestingly, when writing about unvoiced women in partition fiction, Kavita Daiya[321] describes how Ayah, a character who is raped in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Cracking India* (1991)[322] remains silent, she states:

> 'Sidhwa's account of this "intricate invasion" of history into the "recesses of the domestic sphere" does not attempt to reveal Ayah's feelings—her pain—or to give her a voice. Instead, it dramatizes her abduction as a visual spectacle; its 'telling details' about her lips, throat, mouth, bare feet, torn sleeve, the stitching of the blouse seams, her eyes and hair signify the material, bodily rupture of her every day in postcolonial Pakistan.'[323]

[321] Kavita Daiya, *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender, and National Culture in Postcolonial India*, (Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 2008).

[322] Bapsi Sidwha, *Cracking India*, (Minnesota: Milkweed Editions, 1991).

[323] Kavita Daiya, *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender, and National Culture in Postcolonial India*, (Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 2008), p. 73.

Daiya's analysis of Sidwha's novel shows that partition literature has left women unvoiced. The traumatic experiences of women and their treatment can be seen because it is documented in literary works, but it is not women themselves who recount these experiences. Two well-known Bollywood films, *Gadar*[324] and *Shaheed-e-Mohabbat*,[325] based on the subject of partition, especially women's suffering in the crisis of partition, are similar to Sidhwa's novel in that the experiences of the women in the films are always overshadowed by the heroics of the husband in attempting to keep the women safe from the physical and sexual violence of the partition.[326] Thus, for some scholars, despite the abundance of partition narratives and literature, women continue to remain silent in these records of partition. Joan Kelly's work is valuable in understanding how women's history should be reconstructed when there is an opinion amongst partition scholars that this has not been achieved. Kelly states the aim is to 'make women a focus of enquiry, a subject of the story, an agent of the narrative.'[327] The aspect of Menon's work which directly contacted women to seek their stories resonates with Kelly's advocacy and was successful in capturing women's experiences as told by women.

In Kang's adaptation, the narrative of the partition is narrated through the female character of the mother, Bebe (Emilia's counterpart in the original play), which is a contrast to the original, in which Egeon, the twin's father, explains to the Duke of

[324] Anil Sharma (dir.), *Gadar* (Zee telefilms, 2001).

[325] Manoj Punj (dir.), *Shaheed-e-Mohabbat: Boota Singh* (Eros International, 1999).

[326] In both films, the husband is the protagonist and the suffering faced by the women/wife is always in the shadow of the challenges that the husbands undergo in keeping them safe.

[327] Joan Kelly, *Women, History & Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 1.

Ephesus how the family becomes separated through the shipwreck. In Kang's film, Bebe recounts what happens during partition at the beginning of the film when she advises Ajit to consume less alcohol. Bebe instigates the conversation about partition by making the link between alcohol and their separation, as discussed earlier. Here, Kang has written the role of a woman partition survivor who is able to tell her own story. When discussing the separation and partition, she dominates the conversation by talking more than Ajit, and this enables her to show her heartache and anguish.

The concerns around separation as a consequence of partition, have been discussed previously in this chapter. Bebe relays her pain through tears as she remembers her story and invites Ajit to feel her pain, she tells him 'I have never seen your father or brother since the riots…'[328] Bebe also uses idiomatic language, such as the term 'the riots of 47',[329] which not only shows her cultural knowledge and lived experience of the partition but is reflective of the devices used in oral history. This enriches the narrative and evokes Menon's argument that women's history is garnered better through oral history. Ajit opines that Bebe recounts the story often and complains that she gets emotional when she does.

> Manjit: *Bebe, Bebe, bala jazbaati naa hoya kar, naa hoya kar, tenu dukhi dekh ke meri uttar jandi a, saari uttar jandi a, naa cheta karia kar, mera vi mann kendha oh aun ge bapu te veer*

[328] *Double di Trouble*, 00:13:51.

[329] Trans. *santali dhe raulia vich*.

aunge, Vaheguru ohna nu zaroor leke auga, tu dukhi naa hoya kar.[330]

[trans. Manjit: Bebe, Bebe, don't get too emotional, don't, I sober up when I see you upset, sober up, don't remember, in my heart I know *Bapu* and brother will return, *Vaheguru* will surely bring them, don't get upset.]

Interestingly, in the above quotation, despite Manjit's plea to Bebe to stop being emotional, she is unapologetic, and refuses to stop at his request immediately but does eventually succumb to his request. Thus far, in *Double di Trouble*, Kang gives Bebe, a female character, a voice to tell the audience about her experience of partition, however, when Ajit interrupts Bebe's story, asking her to stop which she does, he disrupts her narrative and, like other women in partition fiction, Bebe is silenced.

The other main female characters in *Double di Trouble* are Pammi, who is the counterpart of Adriana from the original play, and the wives of the adopted twins, Ekam and Fateh. The wives' roles are an addition by Kang to the original play. Despite the film having a contextual background rooted in the partition, these three female characters never acknowledge or address the consequences of partition that are a part of their family history and are presented in the film by Kang. These characters are representative of the generations of the Punjabi community that were not directly affected by the partition and so are distanced from the partition, despite it impacting their older family members. Menon states:

[330] *Double di Trouble*, 00:07:30.

> ‘Partition. For a long time, and certainly all the time that we were children, it was a word that we heard every now and again…. We learnt to recognise this in many ways, but always with a curious sense of detachment on our part… Impatiently we would wander off… unconcerned by how we came to be here at all. Just as we hadn’t known British rule so, too, we didn’t know Partition—and Pakistan was another country, anyway. What did we really have to do with it?’[331]

Menon’s childhood experience reveals that different generations of the Punjabi community have different relationships with the partition and whilst these other three characters are voiced in many aspects of the film, Kang’s presentation of their silence about the partition represents different generations of the Punjabi community who may be distanced from the partition.

Kang grapples with several issues and concerns in *Double di Trouble*, in relation to partition, thereby creating a broader discussion of the dialogue between Shakespearean plays and Punjabi post-partition experiences. The only female character in the film who tells her story of partition and separation is Bebe who despite attempts to recount her experience, is silenced by her son. So, whilst Bebe is the subject and focus of enquiry in the reconstruction of women’s history, it cannot be said that she is agent of her own narrative. In this context, Kang’s attempt at presenting a woman’s voice for the partition narrative in the film does not go far enough because

[331] Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), Preface, p. 1.

when a male voice, that of her son Ajit, intercepts her narrative by saying ‘Don’t remember!’ Bebe is forced to stop as she sees she has upset her son. Thus, Bebe’s recounting is quashed by Ajit’s emotion, and this means that Bebe is silenced.

In this respect, while Kang has contributed to current debates about the woman’s voice in the retelling of partition and reconstruction of history and is responsive to the argument that women do not have agency to recount their own experiences, Bebe’s voice becomes limited in his film when it is closed off by her son. Nonetheless, this means that Kang’s adaptation, like Achhru Singh’s *Toofan*, converses and interacts with other partition literature and films. Thus, both adaptations contribute to the genre of partition literature.

Land and property: deepening the connections with Partition

Physical land, especially the division and proprietorship of it, is significant in relation to the partition because people had to leave their land and homes when they migrated from India or Pakistan. The land and homes that were left behind were often re-occupied by the refugees migrating from the other side of the border. Furthermore, the Punjab economy was, and still is, reliant on agriculture and therefore, there has always been a strong value attached to soil and land, which also transpires into everyday rural life as sentimental value. For example, in the pre-partition period, it was unusual for farms and land to be sold in the Punjab, it is something which was often passed through family inheritance, and this is still the case. The same land is often owned by generations of families. The Punjabi people consider selling their land akin to selling their mother. The 2020-21 farmers protest in Delhi, India, is evidence of the attachment that farmers and the Punjabi people have for their land and soil. Similar to the notion

of ‘Mother earth’, the soil and land of the Punjab is seen as the ‘great mother’. Examples of this have been rendered in literature; for instance, the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, who is also regarded as one of the first eminent Punjabi poets, writes ‘earth is the great mother of all.’[332] In the years after the partition took place, the Indian government estimated that the loss of property and land in both East and West Punjab was about 600 crores (Indian rupees) or 500 million (pounds) for refugees.[333]

The attachment to land or property, and the pain of separation from it, is a major trope that manifests in different ways in partition fiction. For example, Kashmiri Lal Zakir’s novel, *Karmawali*[334]*,* follows its protagonist, Karmo, who must leave her property at the onset of partition, at a point when she finds out she is pregnant with her first child. Her husband fears violence will ensue from the partition and convinces Karmo that they must both leave behind their home and most of their possessions, since she is newly pregnant. They travel from place to place, each time seeking refuge and trying to resettle and make the new place like home. When they stay with different people, they realise that people are having to make difficult choices about abandoning their land or facing violence. As they move to different refuges, Karmo and her husband move further away from their home, the land where they were born and wed. The novel has been made into a film directed by Manjit Singh Malhotra, which poignantly captures the anxieties and concerns that people had when having to leave their land and properties behind. It also explores the losses that they endured as a consequence

[332]Available online: Sundar Gutka - SikhiToTheMax. Date accessed 30/04/22, 17:46.

[333] Swarna Aiyar, ‘August Anarchy: The Partition Massacres in Punjab, 1947’, *South Asia*, 18, *Special Issue*, (1995), p. 13-36.

[334] Kashmiri Lal Zakir, *Karmawali*, (Delhi: Arsee Publishers, 1994).

of becoming homeless. For Karmo, the consequences are irreversible, the instability of having to uproot means she loses her son. [335]

In *Double di Trouble*, Kang incorporates tropes of land and proprietorship, thereby changing how the dramatic action unfolds from the original play. Ajit and Fateh are required to travel to the city of Chandigarh to obtain some legal documentation. In the village that they live in, there is a dispute about land that a school site stands on. As the local lawyers, Ajit and Ekam are representing the school, thus they must go to Chandigarh to obtain the relevant documentation from the official government authorities to present in court. As soon as they arrive, the confusion starts when each is mistaken for his respective twin because unbeknown to them their twins also live in Chandigarh. The main aim for them is to obtain the documents and return to their village so that the land dispute can be resolved for the local school. When the school principal thanks Ajit, he replies by saying 'I was born and bred here, I could give my life for this land.'[336] Here, Kang presents the same sentiments found in partition literature and Ajit's character can be identified as a partition survivor.

Kang further explores the sentiments concerning land ownership in a dialogue between Ajit and Fateh. Ajit acknowledges that the confusion of misidentification they have faced in Chandigarh has been because they had to obtain documentation for a land dispute. The dialogue between them is as follows:

[335] Malhotra, S., Manjit (dir.), *Karmawali* (2021). Available online: Punjabi Feature Film - Karmawali Mera Ranjha Mera Jogi 1947 Partition of India - Pakistan - YouTube. Date accessed: 15/05/22, 21:42.

[336] *Double di Trouble*, 00:08:07.

Ajit: *Ajj toh baadh kise di jameen de pange vich nahi pena aapa*

Fateh: *Kisa di jameen ch pange ch? Ajj toh baadh aapa aapne jameen de panga ch nahi pena*.

[trans. Ajit: From this day on we will not get involved in anyone's land dispute'

Fateh: 'never mind involvement in someone else's land dispute, we won't even get involved in our own land dispute, whoever wants to take our land, take it.] [337]

Though Kang has included a comical aspect in this scene, as seen in Fateh's reply, it echoes the same helplessness and defeat found in partition films; for example, Karmo's husband's decision to leave their home is one which is borne out of helplessness and because they felt as though they had no choice.

Kang deepens the connection to the partition in *Double di Trouble* by incorporating the tropes concerning partition and changing the way the dramatic action unfolds because of a land dispute that forces the twins to travel to Chandigarh. Although the film is classed as fiction, the concerns which Kang highlights, and can be found in partition fiction, are far from imaginary. Poonam Dwivedi states 'Karmavali is not a fiction but a treatise' echoing the belief that partition fiction is often based on 'true' concerns and anxieties.[338] Krampe and Menon's work has been discussed earlier in relation to women's voices in partition narratives, but it is also relevant here because Kang also

[337] *Double di Trouble*, 1:24:00.

[338] Dwivedi, Poonam, 'Anil K. Sharma's *Lucky Lady* and K. L. Zakir's *Karmavali* – A Vigour of Human Relations in Days of Partition', *Journal of Higher Education and Research Society*, 1:1 (2013).

reflects the concerns of partition in *Double di Trouble*. Krampe and Menon's work is a reminder that the boundaries between reality and fiction can be blurred and so, reflecting these concerns in fiction is a way of reflecting back to the audience what are real lived experiences. It is arguable that all partition fiction does this, however, Kang's work is interesting because it uses Shakespeare as a source, which is far removed from partition, but nonetheless, Kang manages to incorporate the concerns into the film, thus making it relevant for the Punjabi audiences. This adds a layer of complexity to the film because Shakespeare, as a colonial import, is being used by Punjabi writers to open discussion about events that took place as a result of colonialism. It also means that the Punjabi writers, Achhru Singh and Kang, are using Shakespeare for their own purposes rather than for the reasons Shakespeare was introduced to the colonies. The repurposing of Shakespeare as a vehicle of partition narratives, enables Achhru Singh's readership, as discussed in Chapter 4, and Kang's audience, to experience Shakespeare through their own indigenous historical context.

The process of decolonising the play

Achhru Singh in his *Mukh Bandh*, or introduction to the translations, states that

> 'Shakespeare's plays include ghosts, ghouls, djinns, fairies and non-human characters, and belief in supernatural and superstitions which does not match our view of the world.'[339]

This shows that Punjabi writers hold a particular position on the use of supernatural and superstitious elements of Shakespeare's work since according to Achhru Singh,

[339] Achhru Singh, *Shakespeare dian kahaniya, Part II*, p. 12.

the supernatural elements presented in original Shakespeare drama is not compatible with a Punjabi context. Therefore, the Punjabi writers feel a need to address these elements in their own presentations of Punjabi Shakespeare. To Achhru Singh, Punjabi writers must find ways to rework those incompatible parts of the plays so that the translations 'match' the Punjabi world view as articulated by Achhru Singh. In this context, Kang's strategy is to ground the narrative of his film in 'true concerns and anxieties' and remove the references and inferences to witchcraft, sorcery and enchantment that are present in the original *Comedy of Errors*. For example, Antipholus of Syracuse remarks that Ephesus is a deceptive place when he states:

> 'They say this town is full of cozenage:/ As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye, / Dark-working sorcerers that change the minds, / Soul-killing witches that deform the body…'[340]

The original play has a clear theme of the supernatural running through it, and as this is directed at Ephesus, it makes it seem as though this is an exotic and strange place, one that is defined as being very different to Syracuse. The removal of the supernatural aspects from the original play in the reworking of *Double di Trouble* serves the purpose of decolonising the play because the inclusion of the supernatural is a way of othering; so, removing it is a way of eliminating the colonial narrative from the film. As Kang rewrites and remodels the English Shakespearean characters into Punjabi Shakespearean characters, he is careful to translate the characters through a Punjabi lens, not a colonial lens. Tejaswini Niranjana has written about post-colonial

[340] *Norton*, p. 760, II. I. 97-100.

translation, as mentioned in Chapter 2, and she discusses the ways in which 'subjects' are always rewritten through a colonial lens, but she argues that this needs to be changed. She states:

> 'Such a rethinking—a task of great urgency for a post-colonial theory attempting to make sense of ''subjects'' already ''living in translation'', imaged and re-imaged by colonial ways of seeing—seeks to reclaim the notion of translation by deconstructing it and reinscribing its potential as a strategy of resistance.'[341]

Thus, to Niranjana, translation can be a space where the colonial ways of seeing can be resisted because to perpetuate the colonial image would result in 'othering' the Punjabi characters. According to Edward Said, 'othering' is an inherent part of orientalism. In his book, *Orientalism*,[342] Said uses the example of Flaubert's encounter with an Egyptian courtesan. Said states that Flaubert was able to speak for her, represent her and write about her, thus, orientalising her, and creating a mystery and exoticness that surrounded her and eventually became her.[343] This is precisely what Antonio of Syracuse does to Ephesus in *The Comedy of Errors*, he emphasises its foreignness and how it is a strange place. Said argues that when oriental representations become a body of knowledge and 'teachable wisdom' through 'academies, books, congresses, universities, foreign-service institutes,'[344] they

[341] Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), p. 6.

[342] Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, (London: Penguin, 1978), p. 6.

[343] Ibid, p. 6.

[344] Ibid, p. 6.

become influential to the point that they give rise to oriental models. These then become the permanent knowledge and discourse of what is known, enforced and perpetuated about the 'Other'.[345] Said concludes that Flaubert was able to do this because there were historical factors which meant that he was in a position of domination in relation to her; for example, he was foreign, wealthy and a male.[346] So, in other words, he was everything she was not and in the act of othering her, he defined himself. In the same way, this is how Antipholus of Syracuse is able to define himself, to be Syracusan is to be all the things that are not Ephesian; for example, Antipholus is not a 'nimble juggler, working sorcerer and soul-killing witch,' because he ascribes all these traits to those who belong to Ephesus and are thus, foreign or Other to him.

Kang, as a post-colonial writer and film director, is acutely aware of the Other, in Shakespeare's play, as well as the 'othering' of the Punjab in the colonial context. In his adaptation, Kang not only removes the supernatural, but he has also omitted those parts of the play which have a potential to Other people or places. For example, when Ajit and Fateh do not travel out of the country to search for their twins, they only go from a small town in the Punjab to a different city in the Punjab, and thus remain in the Punjab for the entirety of the film, it means that Chandigarh is not Othered by Kang. Therefore, Chandigarh itself is not blamed for the confusion of misidentification that the twins face, in comparison to Ephesus in the original play. As discussed earlier, the blame for the difficulties that Fateh and Ajit face in Chandigarh are attributed to the land dispute matter.

[345] Ibid, p. 6.

[346] Ibid, p. 6 and 7.

Furthermore, Kang completely removes the scene in which the duke sets up the theme of nationalism in the original play (Act 1 Scene 1). This allows the play to remain solely in the context of Punjab and means that foreignness cannot be developed as a theme in the adaptation. Thus, those themes which are explored through the lens of nationality and foreignness, such as identity and self, are not developed in Kang's *Double di Trouble* in the same way that they are in Shakespeare's original drama. These themes can only be explored and defined in relation to the other, so Kang's removal of them also prevents instances of Othering to take place in his film. This delineates the major themes of the original Shakespearean play, *The Comedy of Errors.*

Kang carefully avoids Othering places in his presentation of Punjabi Shakespeare as well as the characters in his film. He strategically removes scenes depicting 'exorcism,' such as the scene in which Adrianna pays Dr Pinch to exorcise her husband,[347]and other scenes that have a supernatural or strange elements. This signifies his objection to the perpetuation of assumptions associated with the Orient because during the colonial period these aspects were associated with, and representative of, the Orient. By doing this, Kang can be seen to be taking part in a form of decolonisation as observed by Kirsten Knopf's writing about the decolonisation of post-colonial cinema in Canada, Brazil, Australia, and Nigeria.[348] Knopf argues that postcolonial media artists interrogate the politics of representation and assert a postcolonial voice and

[347] *Norton*, p.785, IV. IV. 53.

[348] Knopf, Kirsten, 'Decolonisation and Postcolonial Cinema in Canada, Brazil, Australia and Nigeria', Jenni Ramone (ed.), *The Bloomsbury Introduction to Postcolonial Writing: New Contexts, New Narratives and New Debates* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), p. 191-203.

control over their products. She discusses the way in which representations of non-Europeans in mainstream cinema are the product of the coloniser's gaze and decolonisation, thus refusing to adopt the coloniser's gaze can be seen as a way of reversing the gaze to assert self-representation.[349] Knopf's assertions help to understand why Kang chose not to include the supernatural references in his adaptation and keep his film geographically located within the Punjab. By not othering the places and characters, Kang has chosen to self-represent rather than perpetuate the perceptions or stereotypes associated with the Punjab or Punjabi peoples. Kang's authorial choices here, as writer and director of the film, contribute to the process of decolonising the play because the othering that is inherent in the play is removed in Kang's film. In this way, Kang stages the resistance that Niranjana advocates because he refuses to reimage the Punjabi characters through colonial ways of seeing.

Making use of the humour in *The Comedy of Errors*

The farcical elements in Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* take the form of a considerable amount of slapstick violence used mostly against the Dromio twins, and Dr Pinch is also subject to 'strikes' from Antonio of Ephesus.[350] Dramatic irony also gives rise to humour when the misidentification of the two sets of twins quickly becomes a source of frustration for them whilst the audience is of course aware of the reason for the confusion. However, the comical elements in the play are often underscored with serious and dark undertones. For example, Egeon's death sentence issued by the duke in the first scene hangs over the entire play as he has only until the end of the day to borrow the money required for his pardon. Another serious issue

[349] Ibid, p. 193.

[350] *Norton* p. 785, IV. IV. 55.

is explored in the original play, that of marriage. For example, Egeon and Emilia are separated by the shipwreck in an 'unjust divorce'[351] and their happy marriage has not been sustained. Also, Adrianna discusses the way in which she feels unfairly treated in marriage; she states, 'Why should their liberty than ours be more'[352] and argues with Antipholus throughout the play. G. R. Elliot's article, 'Weirdness in *The Comedy of Errors*' reflects on the darkness that can be inherent in the comedy. He argues that in Shakespeare's play, where the comedy is the 'most keen' is where it is most horrific. For example, there is such an emphasis on human individuality that the twin's misidentification produces a sense of darkness and horror, where it becomes apparent that two human identities are enmeshed into one.[353] Elliot's arguments show how the comedy in the play can produce more than one reading or interpretation of the play.

For Kang, unlike Shakespeare, comedy is useful as a veneer to explore serious and contentious issues, thus producing multiple interpretations and readings of the comical elements of the play. Kang's strategy is to refocus the issues and locate them in the Punjabi context of partition whereby he is enabled to present the idea of reunification or an undivided Punjab in the film. When Ajit and Fateh stay overnight in Chandigarh, the confusion faced during the day for Ajit becomes unbearable and during the evening he suddenly starts to speak in the Urdu language. After this spontaneous moment of speaking in Urdu, he explains to a bewildered Fateh, that whenever he is feeling overwhelmed, he reverts to speaking in Urdu as a way of remembering the 'pre-

[351] *Norton*, p. 756, I. I. 104.

[352] *Norton*, p. 760, I. II. 10.

[353] G. R. Elliot, 'Weirdness in The Comedy of Errors', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 9:1 (1939), pp. 95-106.

partition days.'[354] He feels that a united Punjab is a source of comfort for him and speaking Urdu reminds him of how Punjab used to be before the partition. Kang uses comedy in these scenes to provoke thinking about the issue of reunification in Punjab.

The reunification of East and West Punjab is an issue that is often explored in Punjabi literary works. For example, in Sadat Hasan Manto's short story, *Toba Tek Singh*,[355] the prisoners are unaware that the partition has created two sides, East and West Punjab. Manto's story is the perspective of partition through the eyes of the prisoners and their inability to envision the border means that the border becomes indivisible. Thus, for them, the Punjab is one unified area. A character in *Toba Tek Singh* uses English, Punjabi and Urdu together in his nonsensical sentences, which evokes the period before partition, in which these three languages were in circulation in an undivided Punjab. In *Double Di Trouble*, Ajit uses language to imagine a united Punjab and reminisce of times gone by, when he lapses into moments that reflect a time when Urdu and Punjabi were spoken on all sides of an undivided Punjab. Whilst Ajit's sudden convulsions into another language provide a comic effect for the audience, they also evoke a sense of nostalgia which is reminiscent of pre-partition Punjab. Thus, Kang uses the veneer of comedy for an issue such as the reunification of Punjab to make it less painful for his audience.

At the end of the film, Kang uses humour to evoke a taboo subject, that of women abduction, related to the consequences of partition. During the riots of the partition,

[354] *Double di Trouble*, 00:25:20 (there is more than one instance of this).

[355] Sadat Hasan Manto, '*Toba Tek Singh*' (1955). Available online: Toba Tek Singh (rekhta.org). Date accessed 23/12/21, 21:11.

many women were abducted, and they often ended up marrying their abductors; however, in response to this crisis, the Indian and Pakistani governments set up a bilateral recovery programme with the aim of returning women to their families. However, by the time the programme was initiated, the women often had children, and thus some refused to go back to their families, knowing that they may be rejected by their home communities. In the final scene, when both sets of twins, as well as Bebe and Bapu Ji, are reunited, Bebe states:

> Bebe: '*hun mein sare pind nu dassu ke mere dho dho putt te dho dho potte hoge*'[356]
> [trans. Bebe: Now, I will tell everyone in the village that I have two sons, and I have two grandsons!]'

Fateh has a worried look on his face, and asks her:

> Fateh: '*par asi ki dasange ke saade dho dho peo ho*ge?'[357]
> [trans. Fateh: So, what will I tell people, that I have two fathers?]

Bebe responds to Fateh by playfully smacking him. Whilst this adds a farcical comical element to Fateh's exaggerated concerns, it also addresses a highly sensitive consequence of partition that is not openly discussed. When Fateh exclaims that he may have to tell people that he has two fathers, he is directly invoking the consequence of partition, which for some women meant that when they returned to their families,

[356] *Double di Trouble*, 1:41:40.

[357] *Double di Trouble*, 1:41:47.

they would have to leave their children behind or remarry, or both. For example, in the film, *Gadar*, despite having a child, the female character is expected to return to Pakistan through the refugee programme. This film, however, focusses on the obstacles and challenges that her husband faces rather than the perspective of the woman. This is often the case because to explore the narratives and experiences from the women's perspective is seen as contentious, due to the sensitivities around returning to families that may reject the women or that the honour of the women had been violated by the abductors. The narratives of partition document these experiences, but as discussed earlier in this chapter, often they are not through the women themselves. Kang's use of comedy in this scene, allows him to allude to issues that remain contentious and sensitive. Other partition writers have also tackled this subject; Bede Scott discusses how the consequences of state intervention has been captured in partition literature. Scott argues that the writers present a heterogenous picture, his analysis shows:

> 'State intervention in the literary narratives we have been discussing, a picture emerges of a state that is both structurally and operationally heterogeneous – responsible for intolerable abuses and appalling failures, yet also capable of genuinely 'therapeutic' interventions…'[358]

Scott alludes to a double nature of the state that is reflected in partition literary narratives, the state fails but is also therapeutic. The exploration of sensitive issues

[358] Scott Bede, 'Partitioning Bodies: Literature, Abduction and State' in *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies,* 11:1 (2009), p. 35-49.

which have this double nature can also be seen in Kang's adaptation, where the humour is used as a source of 'therapy' for the 'failures' of the partition. For example, Fateh's concerns about familial relationships could be seen as the tragic consequences of partition but instead they are side-lined by Bebe with slapstick comedy. Thus, Kang deploys the comedy inherent in the original play as a veneer to contribute to debates surrounding the consequences of partition.

Conclusion

The examination of Kang's *Double di Trouble* demonstrates that his film mostly aligns with Achhru Singh's approach to translation which can be defined as post-partition Shakespeare, but also has some commonalities with Surjit Hans' approach to translation. The film can be viewed as post-partition Shakespeare, like Achhru Singh's *Toofan* discussed in Chapter 4, because it displaces the themes that are present in the original play, to replace them with themes and motifs that feature in partition literature. Kang displaces the shipwreck in *The Comedy of Errors* and replaces it with the partition as the reason for the family's separation. Furthermore, Kang's development of the anxieties faced during separation in the film echo the same anxieties that are presented in partition fiction and documentaries. *Double di Trouble* contributes to the debates that discuss the engendered retelling of partition, in relation to the construction of women's experiences during the partition. Kang uses a female character to recount her story about partition, but this is problematic when her son resumes to silence her. Kang also capitalises on the opacity that is inherent in Shakespearean drama to open up discussion about taboo subjects, for example, when women had to remarry or leave their children during the aftermath of partition. *Double*

di Trouble also aligns with Hans' translations when it foregrounds Shakespeare emphatically through its opening statement. Like Hans, Kang uses language to draw attention to the hybrid nature of his work when the title of the film, *Double di Trouble,* partakes in cultural translation, as evidenced by Bhabha's discussion. Therefore, Kang's film can be seen to be presenting the features that define both of the approaches that Achhru Singh and Hans use in their process of translation.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This thesis is presented to initiate a discussion, and as a motivation to others to investigate in breadth and depth Punjabi Shakespeare which could only be narrowly examined here. I have analysed and discussed four Punjabi Shakespearean translations and a Punjabi Shakespearean film adaptation because they have not been submitted to the kind of study that they merit. In my introduction (Chapter 1), I invoked the assertions of Khushwant Singh, who argued that Punjabi literature and writing, including translation, has not yet received the critical attention that it deserves.[359] He states 'we (*Punjabi writers*) have no school of critics.'[360] Khushwant Singh made this statement in 1969 and although since this time there has been an extensive amount of study into the history of Punjabi literature, for example, Kartar Duggal and Sant Sekhon published their volume on this in 1992, there is still a lack of Punjabi criticism.[361] So, I agree with Khushwant Singh that there is a vacuum in Punjabi literary criticism that exists and thus, present this dissertation to provide insights into notions of interpretation and reading. To achieve this, I have critically examined Punjabi Shakespearean translations through the lens of historical, cultural, political and ideological viewpoints to find that they produced a multiplicity of readings that co-exist and extend beyond the confines of Shakespeare. The study gives further

[359] Mohinder Pal Kohli*, The Influence of the West on Punjabi Literature*, self-published by the author (1969). Available online: ..:: Panjab Digital Library ::.. (panjabdigilib.org). Date accessed: 13/04/22, 21:13.

[360] Ibid, p. 2.

[361] Kartar Singh Duggal ans Sant Singh Sekhon, *A History of Punjabi Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1992).

analytical and discursive insights into how the writers, Surjit Hans', Achhru Singh's and Smeep Kang's intentions, and material positions as post-colonial Punjabi writers of Shakespeare, can be used to read the Punjabi Shakespearean translations.

The critical framework for the analyses of Punjabi Shakespeare is informed by the arguments made about post-colonial translation by Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi, who state that rather than continue to view translation as an 'aesthetic act', the 'ideological problems' should be drawn out.[362] Thus, I do not confine *Jhakhkhar, Romio te Julit, Toofan, Romeo atte Juliet and Double di Trouble* to singular readings but show that they are hybrid in nature and produce multiple readings, concluding that these translations should be read and viewed as new work that draws on Shakespeare as a source. I have used Homi Bhabha's discussion of hybridity and the doubling effect[363] to evaluate the translations, finding that these are realised in Smeep Kang's film, *Double di Trouble*, where words carry meanings in English and Punjabi; as well, Surjit Hans in *Romio te Julit* code-mixes to produce a hybrid translation. As Lesar Ahmed argues, code-mixing reinforces difference, as well as hybridity, reflecting the post-colonial psyche.[364] In *Romio te Julit*, discussed in Chapter 3, this is realised when Hans resists Western impositions in his translations so that the latter can be viewed through a Punjabi lens. The study has shown that while Punjabi writing and

[362] Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi (ed.), *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 6.

[363] Homi Bhabha, 'Interrogating Identity' in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 59.

[364] Lesar Ahmed, 'Code switching or code mixing as the postcolonial counter discourse strategy in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel Ice-Candy-Man (Cracking India)', *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 7:5 (2019), pp. 1-12.

Shakespearean forms can come together collaboratively, they also have differences that cannot be reconciled in the Punjabi Shakespearean translations. In arguing that *Jhakhkhar, Romio te Julit, Toofan, Romeo atte Juliet and Double di Trouble* cannot be limited to singular readings, I have produced multiple readings of the translations and film using Salman Rushdie's claims about translation. He asserts that:

> 'The word 'translation' comes, etymologically, from the Latin for 'bearing across'. Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately to the notion that something can also be gained.'[365]

In this way, I have approached the Punjabi Shakespearean translations as open texts which draw upon their own indigenous Punjabi heritage that includes a vast pre-colonial literary tradition. I discuss new critical perspectives, such as a Sufi inspired Shakespeare written by Hans, post-partition Shakespeare seen in Achhru Singh, and Kang's work which also centres around the partition, are demonstrative of the interaction between Shakespearean and Punjabi writing, as well as between the English and Punjabi language. In the study, I have endeavoured to show how the engagement of Punjabi styles and forms with Shakespeare produce new readings of Shakespeare as well as hybridised Punjabi literature. I have demonstrated, through analysis and discussion, that *Jhakhkhar, Romio te Julit, Toofan, Romeo atte Juliet and*

[365] Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London: Penguin, 1992).

Double di Trouble advance beyond Surjit Hans', Achhru Singh's and Smeep Kang's initial aims of introducing Shakespeare to a Punjabi readership and audience, by also engaging the readers/viewers through cultural and political contexts that speak to their concerns.

This thesis concentrates on showing the diverse critical perspectives through which the translations can be read and viewed to demonstrate the multiplicity of readings. This diversity of the perspectives is seen in Achhru Singh's *Toofan and Romeo atte Juliet*, where he draws upon the *Qissa* oral storytelling tradition and uses the partition as a context to emphasise and enlarge themes of resettlement and belonging. It is also visible in Hans renaming and recharacterising of his characters to produce a reading of *Jhakhkhar* that aligns with Sufi characters and literature, as well as using appropriation to recontextualise the narrative of *Romio te Julit* through a Punjabi lens, where Hans' characters can be identified as Punjabi. In the context of this study, I use the term recharacterization to define where characters have been recrafted by the Punjabi writers but still retain some of their Shakespearean originality.

The strategies that Surjit Hans, Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang employ and the authorial choices that they make in creating their translations have been discussed in relation to the writers' processes of translation, which enables a meta-context to be developed that can be used by their audience/readers to decode meanings in the translations. For example, Hans' discussion about translating names in the introduction to *Jhakhkhar* reveals that like Lesar Ahmed, who explains that code-mixing is a way to resist Western and colonial impositions, Hans engages with

strategies that avoid 'blindly follow(ing) the English.'[366] When Hans' characters take on the Punjabi culture through his appropriation of familial relationships, it becomes clear that it is important for Hans, who has cultural knowledge, to draw upon his indigenous culture in presenting his characters to the Punjabi readership, rather than present a continuation of the English culture that is inherent in the original Shakespearean plays. The study engages with the writers' own discussion of their translatory practice and processes, for example, as shown in chapters 3, 4 and 5, Surjit Hans, Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang are keen to cite Shakespeare as their source and elaborate on the challenges that they faced through the process of translation, as well as the limitations they encountered in translating Shakespearean plays; collectively, this allows an insight into how Punjabi writers interact with Shakespeare and his work. That said, Hans' foregrounding of Shakespeare in his translations becomes contradictory when he reworks Shakespeare for his own purposes, because he ends up introducing Punjabi Shakespeare as manifest in his translations rather than the Shakespeare that he describes in his introductions to the translations. For example, as I discuss in Chapter 3, as much as his objective of introducing Shakespeare to the new Punjabi readers is underlined by the practice of maintaining the dramatic form and essence of the original plays mostly using transliteration as an alternative to translation, he also accepts that

> '*angrezi samaj sada jeha nahi*'[367]
>
> [trans. The English world/society is not like ours].

[366] *Jhakhkhar,* p. ix.
[367] *Jhakhkhar,* p. ix.

As the study shows, the dilemma of reproducing Shakespeare, without any consideration to the different worlds that Hans and Shakespeare inhabit which would alienate Punjabi readers, resonates with the post-partition angst. Thus, Hans recharacterises his characters, through the use of cultural appropriation and basing his characters on Sufi archetypes, to present a version of Punjabi Shakespeare that can be seen to belong to the Punjabi world.

The central argument of this thesis is that, while Surjit Hans, Achhru Singh and Smeep Kang attempt to introduce Shakespeare as authentically as they can to their new Punjabi readership and audiences, they are careful to avoid perpetuating Western and colonial impositions that are most relevant to the context of Punjab in their process of translation. This resistance enables a space where new interpretations and perspectives can be developed which means that the writers do not continue to interpret the Shakespearean plays in ways that they have been previously, and traditionally, interpreted. As the discussion shows in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, these new versions of Punjabi Shakespeare draw upon Punjabi literature, especially pre-colonial literary traditions like Sufi writing and *Qissa* narratives, as well as contexts, such as the 1947 partition of the Punjab, to create new interpretations of Shakespeare that are resistant to western and colonial impositions of thought.

In Chapter 2, I have discussed and theorised the critical perspectives that have been used to facilitate analysis of the Punjabi Shakespearean translations and film adaptation. This study combines analyses and discussions of the translations using an approach that articulates their meaning through diverse critical perspectives that

give rise to what I have termed as approaches to Punjabi Shakespearean translation. These approaches have commonalities but based on the critical perspectives that feature in each approach, they are also significantly different. In Chapter 3, I argue that Hans pioneers an approach to translation where texts are written using strategies that are Sufi-inspired. In this context, I argue that Hans recharacterises Prospero as a Sufi *peer* and decentres humanist readings of *The Tempest*, instead engaging the characters, in *Jhakhkhar*, in Sufi philosophical positions where they dismiss individual responsibility, preferring to believe in divine will. As discussed in chapter 4, Achhru Singh uses an approach in which he deploys the writing strategies that are used in partition literature. In my analysis, this is most evident in *Toofan* where Prospero and Miranda's resettlement on the island is emphasised and used to draw out themes of belonging and home, themes that resonate with those are found in partition literature. Significantly, Smeep Kang's *Double di Trouble* aligns strongly with Singh's post-partition Shakespeare approach because he uses the partition as a context for the theme of separation in his film.

Building upon the early Shakespearean translations that were produced by Punjabi writers during the colonial period and just after independence, Hans' approach to translation intersects Shakespearean dramatic form with pre-colonial literary styles, such as Sufi literature, recreating the characters so that they speak to the Punjabi readership rather than remain solely Shakespearean. Thus, Chapter 3 examines the writing strategies of Surjit Hans in his presentation of Punjabi Shakespeare, where renaming and recharacterisation in two selected translations, *Jhakhkhar* and *Romio te Julit,* enable the relocation of the characters to the Punjab and lead to the recontextualization of the selected plays. In Chapter 3, I argue that Hans' use of

transliteration and appropriation demarcates the differences between the original Shakespearean play and the Punjabi language as a vehicle of translation but in addition it reinforces the hybrid aspect of the Punjabi translations through. Ultimately, through the writing strategies he deploys, Hans' school of translation enables his readers, through the writing strategies he deploys, to access and experience Shakespeare through a Punjabi lens, which incorporates their own indigenous cultural and literary heritage.

In Chapter 4, through critical analysis and discussion of two selected translations, I have examined a second approach to translation, which is based upon the collection of Punjabi Shakespearean translations written by Achhru Singh. I have developed the phrase 'post-partition Shakespeare' in relation to Achhru Singh's *Toofan* and *Romeo atte Juliet,* in an effort to capture how he displaces themes and motifs that are present in the original Shakespearean plays, to be able to refocus and present his translations in relation to the context of the partition. Achhru Singh does this through the recharacterisation of his characters, as well as through the emphasis and enlargement of the themes that are also found in Partition literature and film. In this way, he repurposes Shakespeare to suit his own political and ideological concerns. To underscore these concerns, Achhru Singh incorporates the pre-colonial techniques and style of *Qissa* narratives, which serves to create an affinity between the Shakespearean translation and its new Punjabi readership.

There are some fundamental differences between the approaches that Achhru Singh's and Hans deploy; for example, Achhru Singh's drawing upon Partition literature is not seen in Hans' translations. However, the two approaches also have a considerable

amount of overlap, when they both revert to the use of pre-colonial traditions in their presentation of Punjabi Shakespeare. I have used Chapter 5 to reflect on the overlap between the two schools of translation in my examination of the Punjabi Shakespearean film adaptation *Double di Trouble.* Whereas the film adaptation relates to both approaches to translation, I argue that it aligns more closely with Achhru Singh's approach because the writer of the film, Smeep Kang, significantly reworks the action and narrative of the original play so that the film is recontextualised in relation to the partition, focusing on some of the more contentious and sensitive consequences of partition by capitalising on the opacity that is inherent in Shakespeare's plays. Thus, Kang presents a post-partition Shakespeare that is in dialogue with the historical, ideological and political context of the Punjab.

The most significant discovery that has emerged from the exploration of Punjabi Shakespearean translations is that they are complex texts that cannot be simply categorised as Shakespearean, or translation, or Punjabi. Significantly, the translations and the film adaptation extend beyond the initial writers' aims of introducing Shakespeare to a Punjabi audience and readership through the process of translation. In fact, they enable discrete and multiple readings, that intersect with history, culture, politics and ideology, and so demonstrate how Shakespearean texts that are representative of the colonial encounter can be used to channel concerns that are relevant to and in dialogue with a contemporary Punjabi readership and audience. However, only five translations, including one film adaptation, have been examined for this study, therefore, there are translations in the collections of Punjabi Shakespeare that remain unexamined, to further define the approaches and understand fully the

different critical perspectives that the writers and filmmakers deploy, these remaining translations also require critical analysis and discussion.

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