



RESEARCH PAPER

Transcultural Adaptation of Brecht's Work by Ajoka Theatre in Pakistan: A Critical Review

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ABSTRACT

Transcultural theatrical adaptation has become an increasingly significant domain of inquiry for scholars of language and literature and also a key issue due to its collaborative creative mode as process and continuing popularity as a product. As the foremost representative of Brecht's radical dramaturgy in Pakistan since 1983, Ajoka theatre utilized these adaptations as socio-political spaces to challenge dominant discourse on the rise of dictatorship and capitalism in Pakistan. Detailed literature review result showed that in Pakistan's context, there is dearth of comprehensive research regarding the historical intentionality in indigenizing of Brecht's work by Ajoka Theatre. This study outlines and examines relevant literature regarding the adaptation of Brecht's selected work in Pakistan by Ajoka Theatre. It also asserts that Brecht's "canonical" literary works, controversial indigenization in Pakistan, offers a striking account of valuable and interesting transcultural adaptation study because it was performed through a 'radical' theatre with a distinct dramaturgy and political philosophy in two different cultural contexts and also in distant historical frame of reference

Introduction

Transcultural theatrical adaptation has become an increasingly important and emerging domain of inquiry for scholars of language and literature because through indigenizing and twisting old stories it illuminates points of contention, raise questions, problems and allow multiple perspective to suggest answers to the contemporary issues (Sanders, 2006; Whittington, 2008; Gupta, 2013; Leitch, 2008; Cardwell, 2002; Burrough, 1991). These interesting elements can be observed in the Gauhar's statement cited at the outset which showcases the complexity and multifaceted challenges in adapting Brecht's selected work in Pakistan. In this context, it is also a key issue and vigorous focus for dramatists and artists in "storytelling" due to its "collaborative" creative mode as a process, "continuing

popularity” as a product (Hutcheon, 2006). Storytelling is therefore a key element in discussion of Transcultural adaptation.

Similarly, Kinney (2013) in his critical review of Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) considers it as a unique process worth examining and exploring because:

Storytelling allows for the sharing of ideas and the teaching of ideals across cultures. Common themes can be communicated to a number of audiences through culture traditions that both show – through theatre, film, television – and tell through novels, books radio- human values. Many of these stories and lessons have been told and told again, yet they continue to find a place in our cultural landscape. This occurs through the unique process of adaptation. (p. 7)

In modern theatrical context, on one hand, Brecht’s political work is considered as one of “the most important, most indispensable plays of the modern theatre” due to their distinctive political appeal, enduring relevance, narratology, representative characterization and unequivocally theatrical form. On the other hand, it was considered as “irrelevant, dead and out-dated” like communism due to the change in economic and political philosophy of the contemporary world. At first sight there is much to support the first perspective. For instance, Clurman, in introduction to *Nine Plays of the Modern Theatre* (1981), states Brecht selected play, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* as among the most representative play of our era:

There is another respect in which Brecht is contemporary and pre-eminent: his work is cast in unequivocally theatrical form. Along with poetically inspired dialogue he employs song and musical accompaniment, innovative scenic inventions rarely found in the drama which runs from Ibsen through to German expressionists. Brecht’s formal means which mark to return –he said ‘Japanese’- and new kind of direction (demanded by the texts themselves), have influenced a large area of contemporary stagecraft, whatever their ‘ideology’. (p.9)

Due to this fusion of Western and Eastern dramaturgies, Brecht’s theatrical work has an international appeal for adaptation. Canonical plays became a source of inspiration for Asian dramatists in India, Bangladesh, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, in both content and form (Khatoon, 2011; Gupta, 2013; Bannerjee, 1990). Political theatre across Asia innovatively adapted Brecht’s plays in Asian theatrical landscape according to their own immediate socio-political context. Bannerjee (1990) in his seminal work, “Brecht’s adaptation in Modern Bengali Theatre: A Study in Reception” also points out and asserts the significant research potential in this area due to this re-contextualization of both culture and language in them:

A study of the reception of a dramatic text by a theatre belonging to a different language and culture should ideally constitute research and analysis at many levels. No reception study can claim to be complete, however, it can only

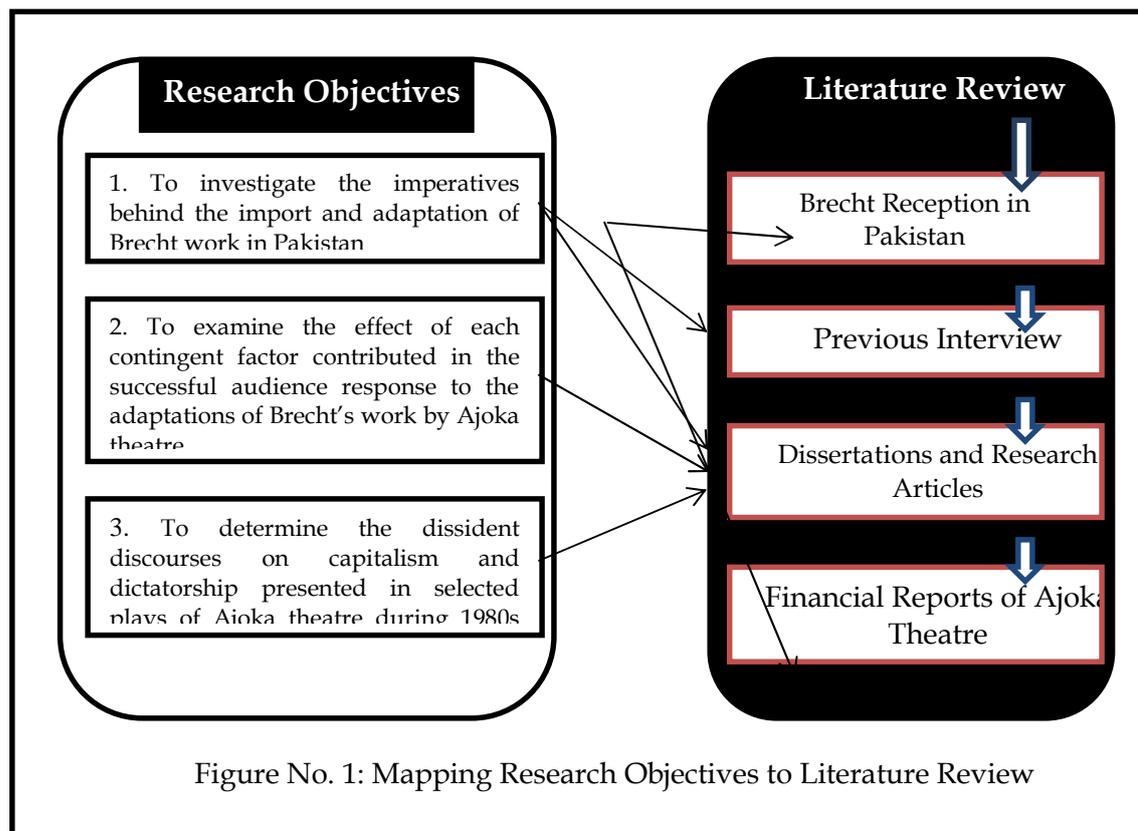
aspire to focus on few chosen areas and scrutinize data and documents for some kind of answer. (p. 1)

Research Methodology

In light of New Historicism, a detailed search of literature (brochures, dissertations, history and political science books, journals, financial reports of Ajoka theatre and conference papers) produced from early 1980s to 2016 was carried to collect relevant information. The prime objective of this review article is to conduct a comparative literature review of the studies on the adaptation of Brecht's work in Pakistan.

Literature Review

This study utilizes "literature review as a research vehicle" (Biggam, 2011) to address the inter-related objectives of the study. It presents and critically examines the main issues surrounding the transcultural adaptations in their historical positioning i.e. dictatorship and capitalism as historical context; the social and political imperatives which necessitated the import and adaptation of Brecht's selected plays, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* and *Threepenny Opera* and the three contingent factors that contributed to the unprecedented reception of these plays respectively during the times of dictatorships and rise of capitalism in Pakistan.



In light of new historicism which advocates to 'map' various connections and relations between the discourse of literary text and the other context such as social, political and historical, a synchronic reading of both literary and non-literary texts is undertaken as it is important to locate the kind of discourse generated by the adaptations of selected Brecht's work in Pakistan. Therefore, the literature review focuses on research objectives established in light of the research problem.

History of Reception of Brecht's Plays in Pakistan

The second objective of the current study deals with the possible factors in the successful reception of the transcultural adaptation of Brecht's work and lists three factors for exploration and investigation such as (a) socio-political condition, (b) adaptability potential of Brecht's work in Asian theatrical landscape and (c) the distinct adaptation process developed by Ajoka theatre.

Hussain (2011), one of most distinguish novelist and dramatist in Pakistan, declares that Nadeem's plays exclusively performed by Ajoka theatre as a product of socio-political environment based on the issues close to heart and minds of Pakistani society. He writes in his article, 'Ajoka's Magic Kaleidoscope':

The current social and political environment defines the scope of Shahid Nadeem's writing. The travails of women in today's society do not let his attention to wander to other subjects. He portrays them in a realistic style but does not feel constrained to follow to dot the rules that were laid down for it by the progressive writers. (p. 40)

In summary, it is also observed that even the leading writer's view Ajoka's selected work from a feminist perspective. There is a need to view his writing from other perspectives too.

Review of the Related Studies on Brecht's Adaptations

It is argued that Pakistani theatre groups such as Ajoka, Dastak and Lok Rehas have demonstrated Brecht's Epic theatre which can be performed successfully particularly in the developing corners of the world (Khan, 2005; Khatoon, 2011) so far however, there has been little critical discussion and investigative research about the transcultural adaptation of Brecht's work. Studies related to transcultural adaptations relatively scanty and in bits and pieces. This section outlines, explores and evaluates the sources of information such as published interviews, academic journals, books, general articles and brochures on adaptation of Brecht's work in Pakistan.

Previous Published Interviews

Traditionally, a good source of information about performance is theatrical organizations staff, director, writers and actors. In case of Pakistani political theatre few names are highly important: Shahid Nadeem, Madeeha Gauhar, Sewara Nadeem, Kanwal Christofer at Ajoka theatre Lok Rehas theatre, Lok virsa organization at Ajoka theatre. Since much of the work is voluntary – from writers to actors there was a dearth of professional feedback and record of commentary.

Although highly creative and talented in work, these theatrical organizations lack organization in non-aesthetic matters. Researcher has to visit them several times to get the recordings of the plays, Past official brochures and cuttings of newspaper and magazines reviews. In one of the official brochures celebrating 25years of Ajoka under the title, *Musafat Theatre Festival Nadeem*, the key dramatist of Pakistan, establishes the immediate link between the turbulent socio-political history and the continuous performances of Ajoka theatre in Pakistan over three decades:

Ajoka has been engaged in the struggle against this Islamic cultural conditioning engineered by Zia for the last three decades. Only a few cultural institutions have been able thrive, even survive, in the climate of hostility and apathy towards performing arts that has existed in Pakistan for many years. Ajoka is an exception. (p. 3)

However, in his multiple articles published in the book, *History of Ajoka Theatre*, he does not elaborate the process, model and technique of his adaptation of Brecht's work even though he considers Brecht's work highly relevant to Pakistan's environment.

Similarly, Madeeha Gauhar, the founder and dramaturge of Ajoka theatre, further professes the significance and struggle of a political theatre in the absence of other vital state institutions during martial law years such as independent media, impartial judiciary and vibrant parliament in her incisive interview to *Express Tribune*, the English newspaper in March 2009:

The vision of Ajoka from the beginning was to create a cultural and political space which was rapidly shrinking during martial law years. Considering how Naheed Siddiqui (famous cultural artist) program had been banned and many other symbolic things that happened during Zia's time, culture and art was facing much restriction. (p. 2)

She highlights the continuous struggle but does not discuss the technicalities and her experience of incorporating western model of theatre in Asian theatrical experience in her published interviews and articles. During preliminary investigation of their (both Shahid Nadeem and Madeeha Gauhar) work, researcher noticed that they were so immersed and indulged in the performances of their works that they had no time to put theatrical theory behind

their work, "It's role of researcher to find out what model we follow or construct through our enactments" (Gauhar, 2011).

Financial Reports of Ajoka Theatre

Interestingly, the financial record of this period (1983-88) reveals and verifies the scarcity of resources due to these restrictions. Ajoka has kept this 'record' as a 'souvenir' to celebrate their resolve against Zia's repressive regime. In the book, *History of Ajoka Theatre* (2010), it has been stated that the corporate and business sector during these striving times refused to support theatre with social and political content (p. 9). Ironically, pure commercial entertainment theatres such as Tamaseel (means Play) and Mahfil (Party) flourished and popularized through the business sector efficient contribution in the form of Zakat (donations) and effective sponsorship and solidarity through paid advertisement during the same time. However, it is pertinent to note that all of the Brecht's adaptations were partially funded by the Germany Embassy (*History of Ajoka Theatre* 2010) and later on by the German non-profit organization (*MusafatAjoka Brochure* (2010), *Burqawaganza* (2008) was financially supported by Norwegian Embassy (Ajoka Brochure 2008). All of these organizations support secularization, democracy and inter-religion harmony which Ajoka advocates. This also exhibits the generous support and an international recognition Ajoka enjoys among European countries.

Dissertations and Research Articles on Ajoka's Work

There are a quite few research studies on the gender perspective of Ajoka theatre's work. However, studies on political work of Ajoka theatre are rare to find in literature. One of the most prominent and comprehensive research works, conducted by Asma Mundrawala, titled as *Shifting Terrains: The Depoliticization of Political Theatre in Pakistan* (2009). This doctoral dissertation closely "examines the shifts in the practices of political theatre in Pakistan through the study of two theatre groups, the Tehrik-e-Niswan (The women's movement) and Ajoka theatre (Dawn of a new day) that emerged in the late 70's and 80's respectively under Zia ul Haq military regime" (p. 1).

Specifically, Mundrawala cites two prime reasons of depoliticization of Pakistani contemporary theatre since 1990s. Firstly, the drastic and positive change in socio-political environment with the restoration of democracy and secondly the sudden arrival of Non-government organization (NGO) based social theatre. She asserts that there is enormous change in political landscape due to the advent of democracy in 1988, therefore political theatre in Pakistan particularly Ajoka theatre and Tehrik-e-Niswan have shifted their focus from political issues to social issues. Following paragraph seems to portray her main line of argument:

Following the death of Zia and the election of Benazir Bhutto, state opposition to political theatre lessened considerably and theatre groups

performing previously under harassment by the state were now invited to perform at the provincial government – supported annual theatre festival in Lahore. In the 1993 winter festival in fact, theatre groups played to a packed audience. During the various democratic governments of the 1990s, the political theatre group saw a gradual acceptance by the state and the society alike. Interestingly though, what was evident was the fiercely engaged political theatre that had been marginalized earlier now shifted its focus from political commentary, gradually being incorporated into the dominant culture. (p. 2)

However, it can be argued that Mundrawala's above mentioned line of argument presented throughout the thesis seems flawed and limited due to its simplistic and linear view of history. Many pivotal points appear to be overlooked. Firstly, Ajoka performance history exhibits in *History of Ajoka Theatre* (2011) that many politically charged plays, such as series of adaptations on Brecht's work i.e. *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (1996) and *The Threepenny Opera* (1997) were performed after the departure of Zia-ul-Haq military regime and in so-called democratic civilian governments.

Unfortunately, she ignored the significance and political value of the Brecht's work adaptation in Pakistan by not citing them in her dissertation. She, although, points out the significance of Brecht's influence on these Pakistani political theatres but does not debate the transcultural adaptations in her dissertation. It can be argued that in adapting *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, Ajoka exhibited that "although Zia is gone but his protégé, Nawaz Sharif is here" (brochure, 1997). His sudden rise to power was because of his Business Empire and lack of resistance among masses for rising civil dictatorship and capitalism (Baker, 2005; Talbot, 2010).

It is also worth noting that doors of Alhamra Art theatre were locked just few hours before the performance of the adaptation of *The Threepenny Opera* (Dawn, 1993; Rumi, 2010) which clearly indicates the extension of Zia-ul-Haq both oppressive and discursive practices against the freedom of expression and rise of dictatorial and capitalist tendencies among the so-called democratic leaders of Pakistan.

Moreover, the change in the society's attitude and behavior which consequently changed the horizon of expectations towards issues such as capitalism and dictatorship. It can be argued that due the continuous promotion of dominant discourse by military establishment during so-called democratic regime is also neglected in her dissertation, which ironically written during another military dictator regime, General Musharraf (1999-2008). It is pertinent to note military establishment is the biggest entrepreneur in Pakistan (Ayaz, 2013; Talbot, 2012; Siddiq, 2012; Ali, 2010; Rahman, 2012; Aziz, 1993). On the contrary, she argues that political theatre like Ajoka, with Marxist credentials, gained "acceptance by state and society alike" thus misrepresenting the other version of political history of Pakistan.

This statement also needs further critical review. First, the incidents of harassment and discursive practices as mentioned above remained a 'norm' during Nawaz Sharif two regimes. Second, by ignoring the discussion on Brecht's work, Mundrawala has presented Ajoka theatre as a "voice of few" during martial law regime as she points out that after the advent of democracy they were accepted by the large section of society thus limiting and downplaying the political contribution of these alternative secular theatres and the large section of the society that supported them as claimed by Gauhar (1988) in her published interview and validated by Khan (2006) in *Critical Stage*.

Another factor ignored in her dissertation is the recent nexus between military establishment and religious segment of the society which promoted religious discourse on Islamic Capitalism and need of dictatorship in the times of popularly elected government of Benazir Bhutto. This discourse flourished during these times by military establishment who remained behind the scene and only promoted the political leadership who carried forward their dominant discourse (Talbot, 2012; Ayaz, 2013; Siddiqa, 2007). These above-mentioned factors played key role in changing their "horizon of expectations" of Pakistani audience which resulted in depolarization of Pakistani theatre. Unfortunately, she didn't explore the socio-economic dimension of contemporary Pakistani society in-depth.

Furthermore, she highlighted the unprecedented growth of NGO based theatre training organizations (interactive Resource Centre). This is significant to point out that this type of theatre is usually sponsored by corporate sector constitutes of profit based private business organization who wants to improve the 'image' of their organizations by aligning their brand name with the emerging social issues. She describes this huge shift as:

The impact of finance not only influenced the growth of many small theatre groups that prescribed to the needs and demands of the NGOs under the broader development agenda, but also saw shifts in the work of Tehrik e Niswan and Ajoka, from the voluntary and ideology-based nature of their work to one that was ultimately incorporated into the dominant culture. Moreover, what was evident through the work done by theatre groups under the development agenda was that theatre as a tool for social critique was depoliticized and seen as a commodity, transforming its role from self-directed activism to donor-driven activism. (p. 1)

Importantly, she also points out the influence of "Western Oriented Approaches" to their work. This influence is also central to my thesis. She elaborates her stand by citing Brecht and Boal as alternative secular theatres central Gurus (teachers):

One common aspect between the groups under discussion is their underlying adherence to western orientated approaches to political theatre through the theories of Brecht of Boal, which inform their work in many ways...For both, Brecht's theatre for entertainment and instruction remains an

inspiration. His theatre, that aimed to activate its audience and considered the achievement of social justice as a necessary task continues to motivate the practice of Tehrik e Niswan and Ajoka. Both groups are similar in characteristic to what Baz Kershaw describes in his study of alternative theatre in Britain. This theatre had ideological roots, aspired to make a change in the wider social and political realities, aimed to combine aesthetics and debate to establish an oppositional force to the dominant culture as well as to be populist in its appeal to draw audiences. (p. 2)

Critical examination of her work on the political theatre in her work indicates several 'Knowledge gaps' left by her in the form of lack of discussion on the political value of transcultural adaptations of Brecht's selected work, brief and linear view of history of that time (1985-2008) which unfortunately resulted into lack of representation of other version of history which Ajoka tried to present by adapting Brecht's selected work.

Khatoon (2011) on the other hand, brings Ajoka's transcultural adaptation of selected Brecht work on the center stage of her research article which furnishes a general performance overview on adaptations performed during 2011. She furnishes a 'general performance over-view' on transcultural adaptation of Brecht's selected texts. In Pakistan's context this research article significantly provides the foundation work on issues of transcultural adaptation. Her research article specifically focuses on the *Brecht Theatre Festival* held in spring of 2010 at Lahore Arts Council.

More specifically, it can be argue that her research article titled, "Brecht in Pakistan" in a journal titled, "Explorations" provides further significance and justification for a fresh, critical and comprehensive research on Brecht's as she considers these transcultural adaptation of Brecht' selected work have "carved a new history in Pakistan" (p. 30). She appreciates the unique and worth noting indigenizing of Brecht and considers it a stepping stone in the right direction:

The local performances of Brecht's *Galileo*, *the good woman*, *TheThrepenny Opera*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* imply the old flowing gently into the new, history into contemporaneity, and the dramatic dimension of theatre into the social realities of the audience across the globe. It is the experimental quality of the Brechtian theatre that has been fully exploited by the leading Pakistani groups by developing a new theatre for social change. (p. 2)

However, critically speaking, her positive discourse on prevailing social, political and economic conditions in contemporary Pakistan seems highly debatable on historical grounds which according to her have developed an "environment congenial for a productive debate and thought-provoking analysis of contemporary Pakistani society" (p. 18). Her finding seems contrary to the independent studies (Ayaz, 2013; Talbot, 2012; and Ali, 2012) on contemporary Pakistani society in general.

Firstly, Pakistani society moved toward orthodoxy due to the influence of Talibanization of Pakistan during Zia regime which reached its peak level in his protégé, Nawaz Sharif regimes (Ayaz, 2013) and its after effects are still on Pakistani society therefore, currently theatrical audience face life threats “which are more dangerous than the Zia regime where you went to jail on your liberal and socialist thoughts but now you can be physically eliminated by bomb blast” (Nadeem, 2008).

Thus, above mentioned incidents, contrary to Khatoon’s positive assessment, reflect that contemporary Pakistani society is in fact in the grip of religious extremism and capitalism. More importantly, as socio-political conditions play an integral role in adaptations as suggest by Hutcheon in *A theory of adaptation*(2006), more objective view of this prevailing condition is required to critically analyze the social and political significance of these transcultural adaptations of Brecht’s work.

It is also imperative to note that the view which is expressed by socio-political environment for performing art narrated by Khatoon and Mundrawala represent the two poles of opinion on contemporary Pakistani society. Their conflicting nature in the form of discourse also indicate a current need for more objective investigation. Let’s examine their views closely. For Mundrawala, general environment for the performing art in Pakistan is hostile while Khatoon considers it congenial. Mundrawala asserts in her conclusion to her dissertation:

Of course, the theatre groups now face other forms of hostility perhaps more pernicious than the over oppression of the military regime, in the guise of invisible enemy, the silent attacker of performance venues, or the anonymous bomb threat caller before a performance. This is perhaps a deadlier battle to face than the one where activists joined forces because they believed in social change. (p. 323)

In addition, Pakistani society is also represented in different light in these two significant researches. For Mundrawala Pakistani society’s mind set particularly bourgeoisie class has been in process of transformation towards conservatism that “verges on intolerance, the challenges are volatile indeed” (p. 323). On the contrary Khatoon argues that with the revival of democracy in Pakistan, the mind set of Pakistani society is open to “productive debate” and thought-provoking analysis of it (p. 18).

These two contrary representations and assumptions about the mind set of Pakistani society are highly important for further study in drama and theatre. As the historical context of the audience is based on the horizon of expectations which according to Juass means the “range of vision associated with a particular vantage point in history” (p. 12), the previous and future reception of these selected plays of Ajoka theatre depend upon the mindset of the audience.

In nutshell, her seminal work though very brief in nature and lack theoretical framework raises critical issues such as Pakistan's current political environment's desire to change and promising future of political theatre, and need for more Brecht's presence in undergraduate English literature curriculum.

In addition, her research is general in nature and lack critical analysis of these performances. The pivotal socio-political and historical link in the performance history of these transcultural adaptations of Brecht's work during different regimes is also over-looked. Even with these shortcomings, this research article has motivated the researcher to further go deep into these transcultural adaptations through the new historicism lens. There seems to be an urgent need to extend her research and to bring fresh insight into the Brecht's work in Pakistan.

Two other current dissertations on Ajoka's selected work seem significant in the discussion of problems created by the nexus of dictatorship and capitalism in Pakistan. Both dissertations used different theoretical framework and showcased Ajoka in different light. Aslam (2011) brings feminist perspective and shows Ajoka's selected work as the core function of "Feminist theatre" while Afzal (2012) sees the Pakistani theatre especially Ajoka as a "theatre of prophecy" instead of present.

Mohammad Ali Aslam (2011) in his dissertation, *Contemporary Pakistani Drama: The Case of Ajoka Theatre* locates the contemporary Pakistani drama written in English with reference to the plays of Ajoka theatre. He remains focused on gender prospective and acknowledges the Ajoka thematic concerns regarding women issues thus highlighting the role of Ajoka theatre as a feminist and Sufi theatre at the same time without relating these two aspects or giving concrete evidences.

However, he renders concise character study of the female protagonists of four plays; *Bulha*, *Kela Meda Bhes* (Black are my robes), *Barri and Burqavaganza* and compares their themes with modern Western Literature other than Brecht. The connection Aslam presents seem weak due to the cultural, contextual and content differences between South Asian literature and Western literature. He briefly hints at the impact of Brecht, Boal and the applied theatre on Ajoka theatre however, avoids the discussion of Brecht's adapted plays by Ajoka.

Taking one step further, Sameer Afzal (2012) interestingly and bluntly declares the Pakistani drama as *Theatre of Prophecy*. He especially cites the dramas of Ajoka theatre written by Shahid Nadeem as evidence to his core argument. He enthusiastically illustrates that two plays *The Thirdknock* (1970) and *Destination USA* (2012) prophesize the arrival of martial law and Pakistan blocking of NATO supply while, according to him *Hotel Mohenjodaro* (2007) and *Burqavaganza* (2007), two other prominent plays predict violent events in future due to religious extremism.

Sameer, unfortunately, fails to address the socio-political situation at the time of these plays performances which actually gave birth to these plays. After 9/11 historic event Pakistan became the front-line state against the war against terror and consequences of his decision already being envisioned by the leading critics of Musharraf regime. While *Burqawaganza* premiered in 2007 almost six year after the decision of Musharraf regime to participate in it under American threat (Ali, 2003).

Unfortunately, research methodology of this particular research also appears weak and unclear compare to the ambitious and powerful research objectives it established. Sameer admits that his research does not follow any one methodology "but it will be loosely based on the framework of Liberal Humanism" (2). Brecht's influence on Shahid Nadeem is briefly discussed but examination of his adapted work on Brecht as theatre of political prophecy is not touched nor cited.

Conclusion

The study of relevant socio-political conditions during the production of adaptations of Brecht's work and diversified transcultural adaptation literature revealed that indigenization is a complex and paradoxical process which requires intense investigation and exploration however, there is limited work existed on the Brecht's adaptations performed by Ajoka theatre in Pakistan. In addition, the limited work conducted was with the gender perspective. Highlighting this theoretical gap, the literature review suggests the new historicist interdisciplinary approach alongwith Hutcheon's theory of adaptation to achieve the three inter-related objectives of the study.

There were several limitations and weakness in previous studies. Mundrawal's (2009) study took a simplistic and linear view of history, while Khatoon (2011) presented only the positive view of the selected work and lacked critical appreciation. Both have contradictory views about the society in which Ajoka performed these plays. There is a need for a study which can explore the relationship between these literary text and complex socio-political conditions operating at that period.

The literature review investigated the imperatives and identified them as the emergence of fundamentalist martial law regime, rise of capitalism with nexus between it and the religion. The imperatives need to be further explored through the detailed new historicist study of the selected texts. The literature Review also located the contingent factors that contributed to the unprecedented success of these selected adaptations. These factors can be enlisted as: socio-political conditions operating at that time (1988-2016), Brecht's theatre adaptability to the Asian theatrical landscape and Ajoka's distant transcultural adaptation model. These factors need to be verified by the new historicist analysis of the selected adaptations of Brecht work in Pakistan.

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