



From Story to Script: The Adaptation Process of Vijaydan Detha's Umar Ka Parwana

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Abstract

The folk narratives of India have been able to retain the collective human experiences, social values and cultural memory for a long time. Folk stories play more than a recreational role; they also help to communicate cultural identity and social awareness. Vijaydan Detha is one of the most important folk litterateurs of India, who brought the oral stories of Rajasthan to literary works. He is intimately involved with folk culture and the emotions, social relationships, and moral conflicts. The present research paper investigates the process of narration of the dramatic conversion of a popular folk tale, Umar Ka Pawana of Vijaydan Detha. The paper explores how the literary folk narrative is adapted into a theatrical script through the use of dramatic structure and scene division, dialogue creation, improvisation, and character development. The study also touches on the work of the people who have developed theories on adaptation to show that the process of adaptation of a dramatic text is a process of re-enthroning the original story rather than adaptation itself. The research method used in this research is a qualitative method, which is widely used because it relies on the collection of information that can be analysed based on the text itself, the script, observation, and interaction of the participants in the process of creating the script. The study demonstrates that the process of converting the story into a script is not a straightforward process of turning stories into dialogues, but a creative process which was collaborative and experimental. The folk narrative, through the process of adaptation, gains a new dramatic identity, but it retains the emotional and cultural core of the folk story.

Keywords: Folk Narrative, Adaptation, Dramatic Structure, Script Development, Vijaydan Detha, Story to Script, Folk Theatre

Introduction

Indian theatre has always had a close connection with folk tradition, the oral narrative and performative culture. The historical role of folk stories is to provide entertainment, education and cultural preservation. Each region of India has its own unique folklore, which involves storytelling elements and values, beliefs, and collective experiences. These traditions have been a constant influence in Indian theatre in terms of themes, modes of presentation, music and narration.

Literature has been adapted to a stage production in many ways in modern theatre. But turning a story into a stage script is not an easy job of putting the narration into dialogue. It needs structural change, creative interpretation and dramatic reconstruction. The elements of the narrative need to be reframed in scenes, actions, dialogue and performance moments appropriate to the theatre. Linda Hutcheon states that adaptation should be considered as a "creative reinterpretation" of an original text, not a copy. (Hutcheon).

Vijaydan Detha is one of the most influential writers of Indian folk literature. He transformed Rajasthani folktales into literature with the spirit of the oral tradition and the cultural essence. His tales delve into the topics of social conflict, morality, justice, human desire, power dynamics and emotional turmoil. His stories have strong theatrical possibilities because they are so dramatic and have a folk atmosphere. The folk narrative of *Umar Ka Pawana* is one of the important folk narratives of Detha, which contains emotional conflict, supernatural, revenge, fear, courage and justice. There are dramatic situations in the story that make it suitable for theatrical adaptation. Thus, the shift from narrative text to a dramatic script in the study of its adaptation is important in the knowledge of adaptation in the contemporary Indian theatre. This paper discusses the process of adaptation of *Umar Ka Pawana* and how the narrative structure was shifted to a Dramatic (dramatised) structure using scene division, dialogue improvisation and collaboration in the development of the script.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the narrative structure of Vijaydan Detha's *Umar Ka Pawana*.
2. To examine the adaptation process from story to dramatic script.
3. To analyse the transformation of narrative elements into dramatic structure.
4. To study the role of improvisation and collaboration in script development.
5. To understand the process of dialogue creation and character development in adaptation.

Research Methodology

This research paper is based on a qualitative research methodology. The study is largely descriptive and analytical in nature as it focuses on the transformation of the folk story, *Umar Ka Parwana* of Vijaydan Detha, into a dramatic script.

The research focuses on narration-to-dramatic structure as it is transformed into dramatic structure through the divisions of the scenes, dialogue, improvisation and character graphing. Script analysis and rehearsal observations were also used to gain an understanding of the creative process of adaptation.

The research also involves personal encounters and creative conversations with the people involved in the adaptation process and the production. Theories of adaptation, such as those of Linda Hutcheon, Robert Stam, and Julie Sanders, have served as a way to approach the study of the relationship between literature and dramatic representation.

This research is analytical and descriptive, and tries to analyse the processes of making the folk narrative into a dramatic form by interacting with each other in the theatre.

Vijaydan Detha and the Folk Narrative Tradition

Vijaydan Detha plays an important role in the Indian folk art as a preserver and rewriter of folk tales of the Rajasthan region. He was not only an anthologer of folk tales but a creative writer who adapted oral stories into printed versions and maintained the folk character of the stories. His tales are a mix of old folk imagination and new social sensibilities.

The stories of Detha are simple in narrative style, have symbolic meaning, rich in dramatic scenarios and intense emotions. His stories are frequently about social inequality, morality, power, gender, justice and human relations. These are the qualities that make his stories good for dramatisation.

Umar Ka Pawana has a deep connection to the folk narrative tradition in Rajasthan. Supernatural elements like ghosts, spirits, and *Tantrik* powers are present in the story, adding to the mystery and suspense. Meanwhile, the characters' emotional arc adds dramatic depth to the story. Themes of folk imagination and of emotional conflict make for strong theatrical potential in the story. (Detha).

Adaptation as Creative Reinterpretation

Adaptation studies scholars believe that adaptation is not simply a reproduction of an original text. According to Linda Hutcheon, "adaptation is repetition without replication," meaning that, whenever you adapt an idea, it is always reinterpreted and transformed by the medium and context. (Hutcheon).

In the same fashion, Robert Stam questions the concept of fidelity in adaptation and holds that "adaptation is not a copy of the source text, but is an autonomous art form. (Stam). Julie Sanders additionally clarifies that adaptation varies in relation to the historical, cultural and performative contexts. (Sanders). These theoretical thoughts are reflected in the adaptation process of *Umar Ka Pawana*. The script was not directly transferred to the story. Rather, narrative sections were converted into dramatic scenes, dialogues, stage actions and theatrical situations. A number of dramatic transitions and performance aspects have been introduced to adapt the script for a dramatic performance.

As a result, adaptation was a process of reinterpreting the folk narrative creatively so as to give it a new dramatic voice without losing its emotional and cultural underpinnings.

From Story to Script: Adaptation Process

Umar Ka Pawana was a process of creative development from a story to a script. The adaptation process started by analysing the texts of the original story. The creative team thoroughly analysed the plot, the ideas, the characters, the inner and outer conflicts, and the possibilities for drama in the text.

The story was then divided into separate scenes based on the scenic requirements. Seeking to portray literary narration directly on the stage, descriptive passages were transformed into actions, dialogues, and visual situations. Emotional or event-explanatory parts of the narratives were converted into dialogue between

characters and/or movements.

Another part of the adaptation was the process of finding the theatrical worlds in the story. Dramatic settings were set up for the villagers' world, Bhanu's emotional world and the mysterious world of the *Tantrik*. These worlds assisted in the orchestration of the script's dramatic process.

Improvisation played an important role in script development. For rehearsals, the actors and the director tried out different movements, dialogues, and scene structures. There were some scenes and dialogues created by improvisation instead of writing. This process enabled the script to develop on its own to suit the needs of the performance. (Interview with Bishal Prasad, Assistant Director, Narrator and *Gramin* Role Performer).

Narrative events were also simplified and restructured in the adaptation process. Some parts of the story were shortened or represented symbolically in order to keep the story theatrical and appealing to the audience. The dramatic sequences were linked together with folk narration and transitional scenes.



Figure 1: Stage Adaptation of *Umar Ka Parwana*

Adaptation shifted the folk story into a dramatic form that is appropriate for theatre.

Dramatic Structure and Scene Division

The modification of the narrative structure into a dramatic structure was one of the most significant elements in adaptation. The original story was written in a literary style with the expectation that the script would be performed in a dramatic manner.

The script's dramatic structure consisted of the beginning, the conflict, the climax and the resolution. The first scenes set the mood of the village and family life, and the nature of the emotional connection of the characters.

The audience was introduced to the world of the story by these scenes, prior to the supernatural conflict.

The fear, mystery and revenge were slowly woven into the narrative through the *Tantrik* world as the narrative developed. Emotional shifts and conflict escalated toward dramatic tension. Bhanu's character arc was carefully crafted to allow viewers to feel his transformation.

Careful consideration was paid to scene division so that the drama would flow. Scenes were connected smoothly by folk narration, transitions and group sequences. The climaxes were built on confrontation, emotional tension, and drama.

Some events were also symbolically represented instead of being staged realistically. Theatrical flow and visual effect were maintained by using symbolic stage actions and transitions as a means of not showing all the events literally.

Dialogue Creation and Improvisation

One of the main developments occurred in the realm of dialogue. The original story was in a more narrative style, so its descriptive elements had to be rewritten in the form of dialogue. The dialogues have been written in simple and folk language, thus preserving the cultural flavour of the original story. Emotional scenes were provided with expressive dialogue to enhance audience engagement. While some scenes relied more on silence, pauses, gestures and movement than on long speeches, at the same time.

Dialogue creation was enhanced by improvisation. Actors rehearsed various methods of speech, action and feelings during rehearsals. Because of this, many dialogues grew out of the interactions during the rehearsals, rather than from literary writing.

Script development was also a key component of collaboration. The directors, actors and creative team all spoke and discussed some scenes, dramatic transitions and character interaction. This process was a co-creative one, and thus the script became a (collective) theatrical document, instead of the work of one writer.

Improvisation and experimentation during rehearsals gave emotional moments to Bela, and the journey of revenge to Bhanu got stronger. This was to give the script a naturalness and emotional depth. (Production Rehearsal Observation).

Character Development in the Script

Building up characters was an integral part of the adaptation process. Not only were the characters from a story transferred to a script, but they were also reshaped to meet some theatrical demands.

Bhanu's character is an embodiment of innocence, courage, intelligence and transformation. The script slowly ebbs and flows his emotional and psychological trajectory. His conversations and gestures were very carefully

planned so that his growth from childhood to revenge to responsibility is displayed.

Bela depicts the character of suffering, inner strength, emotional strength and motherhood. Her monologues and emotional scenes were given special attention to ensure that the audience could feel her pain and struggle.

In the adaptation, the *Tantrik* became one of the more potent dramatic actors. He was the embodiment of fear, magic power, destruction and conflict. His dramatic presence was enhanced by dialogue style, symbolic movements and mysterious dramatic situations. Kessar's role was also expanded during adaptation. The original story contained only a little emotional room for Kessar, but with the dramatic script, there was more emotion and dramatic significance in Kessar's presence.

So emotionally, character development was expanded, dramatically restructured and theatrically reinterpreted in the script.

Collaborative Process in Script Development

Adaptation of *Umar Ka Pawana* was very collaborative. The script development process was a collaborative effort between the director, associate director, assistant director, actors and the creative team.

The final script was developed with the help of group discussions, rehearsal experiments, improvisation with scenes and creative interaction. The script did not have a set process to it; rather, it evolved throughout rehearsals.

The versatility of the adaptation process was also beneficial in overcoming some of the theatrical difficulties with scene changes, dramatic pacing, emotional flow, and the structure of performances. Through creative discussion, suggestions were made to contain dialogue in those parts of the story, symbolism in others and action and movement in the rest.

The collaborative nature of this approach shows that theatrical adaptation is not a purely literary endeavour, but a shared creative process involving the understanding of the text and the imagination of the performance.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this research paper is that *Umar Ka Pawana* is a process of transformation from story to script, which is complex, collaborative and creative. Adapting the process meant more than just transforming novel text into dialogue. It entailed dividing the narrative element into dramatic scenes, developing dialogue, improvising dialogue, and performing interpretation.

This study elucidates the process of theatrical adaptation as a reinterpretation, and not merely a reproduction. The folk story was refashioned in line with theatrical needs, retaining its emotional and cultural mood. The story was dramatically restructured, symbolically presented and collaboratively created for its new performative voice.

The study also reveals the significance of improvisation and group involvement in the writing of the script. The dramatic script evolved through the work of the directors, actors, and creative team. This process of collaboration enabled keeping the script flexible, performative and emotionally engaging.

The adaptation of *Umar Ka Pawana* further shows that the Indian Folk stories still have a lot to offer in present-day theatre. The dramatic potential of folk stories can be realised in a contemporary theatrical context through creative reinterpretation.

Last but not least, this study confirms that adaptation is an autonomous art process in which the interplay of literature and theatre produces a new cultural and dramatic experience. *Umar Ka Pawana* from a story to a script exemplifies how folk stories can be creatively transformed, experimented with and adapted to the demands of the theatrical medium.

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