

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print); 2321-3108 (online)

RE-VERSIONING OF SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDIES AND RE-LOCALIZING IN BOLLYWOOD

ANWESHA ROY CHAUDHURY

NSHM Knowledge Campus (WBUT Affiliation), Durgapur, Burdwan, West Bengal, India.



ABSTRACT

As the great bard, Shakespeare has oriented his plays for the Elizabethan audience so does the Indian auteur manoeuvre his skills to show that poetry of earth never dies. Adapting Shakespeare's work to Indian ethos is the latest "in" thing in Indian cinema. In this showing modus the words are condensed, meanings extended making it a matter of few moments through a montage of several scenes that appeals us aesthetically focussing on subjective details. Bollywood has tried out with this art of performative transculturation, transposing and relocating the source text not only generically but culturally, geographically and temporally. This paper particularly studies how Vishal Bhardwaj's art of cinematography has captivated and displayed on silver screen the three epochal tragedies Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet and glocalizing it as Maqbool, co-related the events and happenings of the plays with the intrigues and conspiracy of the Mumbai underworld of Muslim dominance, Omkara Set in the rural areas of the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, hemmed with systemic and symbolic violence, and Haider, a tragedy of dejection and revenge set in the backdrop of inter-state turmoil of Kashmir. The interpretative spaces have been maximally utilized to interpret the cultural changes and restructuring to suit Indian lenses.

Key-words : transculturation, adaptation, transpose, relocate

©KY PUBLICATIONS

Cinema once looked down upon as a low form of art has created epochal works on celluloid. Revolutionary celluloid advancements have made captivating adaptations of literary classics which has stimulated us visually rather than textual reading as the fictional world is directly presented to the spectator. Virginia Woolf wrote that 'cinema has within its grasp innumerable symbols of emotions that have so far failed to find expression in words.' (Freedman:2015) the cinematic frame effects the target audience directly, sensually and perpetually with its cultural and semiotic

codes. During 19th and 20th century with 'Indian Renaissance' a massive interaction of East and West occurred with the absorption of Western Culture in mainstream Indian cultural landscape resulting in translating, adapting, assimilating Shakespeare in multifarious Indian languages. Western stories were introduced in performance art for the purpose of fostering cultural harmony. Intellectual exchange of this sort made its way into the Indian ethos, and attracted a majority of Indian population. Speaking about Shakespearean plays it can be observed that his plays were introduced in India for the purpose of

promoting English language in India core values of Western civilization. "Each new generation attempts to define Shakespeare's genius in contemporary terms projecting its desires and anxieties onto his work." (Marsden:1991). The earliest Indian Shakespearean film *DilFarosh*(1927) a remaking of The Merchant of Venice by Mehdi HasanAhsandates back to the silent era. The first talkie Shakespearean film was *HathiliDulhan* (1932) an adaptation of The Taming of the Shrew. Similarly in the latter half of the twentieth century the trend of adaptation flourished with the release of the film *Angoor* (1982), which was directed by Gulzar. A recent remake of *Angoor* directed by Sajid Khan is titled, *Hamshakals*. *Romeo and Juliet* was adapted of late by Sanjay LeelaBhansali as *Goliyon Ki RasleelaRamleela* (2013) in a Gujarati milieu. Shakespeare constituted a key catalyst in the cultural imaginary of Indian intelligentsia, and the reactions to him enact several of the tendencies central to colonial modernity. Shakespearean Tragedy rather than the Comedies confront us with profound truths about morality and the human world, exposing an uncomfortable reality and therefore solicit complex response arousing emotions of pity and fear.

As Andrea Nightingale says: "Aristotle offered a different and quite original theory of the audience's response to tragic literature. Why, he asks, does a viewer experience pleasure at the artistic representation of tragic events that would horrify him in real life? Plato issued rather a blunt answer to this question: human beings have, among their many psyche appetites, the desire to weep, feel anger, and express strong emotions. They long to experience these emotions, and take pleasure in tragedy because it satisfies their appetite for emotional indulgence. Tragedy represents character experiencing intense sorrows and emotions, and it encourages the audience to feel the same feelings as the characters (i.e. to sympathize, Or 'feel with' them. Tragedy does not bring a healthy release of pent-up emotions; rather, it leads the reader or viewer to be more emotional in everyday life rationally. (Nightingale:44) This paper focuses on Vishal Bhardwaj's adaptation of three epochal tragedies - *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*

reworked as *Maqbool*(2004), *Omkara*(2006) and *Haider*(2013) respectively without adulterating the complexities of Shakespearean tragedies yet transposing from one genre to another and rather recontextualizing i.e. extracts texts, signs or meaning from its original context in order to introduce it into another context through the dialogical process between the literary text and performative art and in doing so contributing to the cultural process.

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is based on Holinshed's Chronicle of England, Scotland and Ireland- "a Scottish Thane Macbeth killed King Duncan and King's son Malcolm Cammore took revenge for his father and destroyed Macbeth (Draper:1938) but Shakespeare's play during the reign of James made a theatrical presentation with sleepwalking, apparition, dead king's body represents the cultural codes suited to the target audience or target culture.

Similarly Vishal Bharadwaj's adaptation of *Macbeth* to *Maqbool* with transnational (across borders) and translational (exchange of language) Bharadwaj's *Maqbool* did startle the audience with a remarkable proliferation of its underworld theme with subverted laws and political rivalry with a new level of naturalism in both mise-en-scene and dialogue. Being ostensibly faithful to the demographics of a significant part of the Mumbai underworld with a predominance of Muslim milieu the director has cleverly adapted an Islamic name of the anti-hero. Moinak Biswas in the essay "Mourning and Blood-Ties: Macbeth in Mumbai" views about *Maqbool* "It reveals how all that dynamism of survival on the street, the logic of violent justice, the exuberance of life on the brink the elusive but profound comfort of fraternity that the underworld genre offers, harbour the possibility of a tragic form in the old sense." (Biswas 2006, 78) When Vishal Bharadwaj adapted Shakespearean play to cinema he presents the local cultural patterns projected by the landscape and personal experiences and the social interactions in that territory i.e. restructuring universal themes through Indian lenses witnessing an age of New Cinema. While the witches in *Macbeth* enigmatically state *Fair is foul and foul is fair*, thus establishing the atmosphere of the Shakespearean play; the gory

future of Mumbai is foretold in the film at the very first scene. It is a stormy, windy Mumbai night where blood splashes against the window screen and someone murdered 'Saari Mumbai khoon se bhaari di' (Look! You have drenched the whole of Mumbai in blood) warns the audience of the inevitability of bloodshed. Bhardwaj's *Maqbool* transposes the cultural setting to the underworld Muslim dominance where Abbaji and his Muslim mafia lieutenant Maqbool are the rulers of the criminal world of Mumbai. Bhardwaj creatively transforms or rather recontextualizes Lady Macbeth's character in the form of Abbaji's mistress (biba) Nimmi (Tabu) rather than making him Maqbool's wife thus increasing the psychological pressure on the audience by portraying the illicit love-affair that unfurls a saga of massacre. Here the director becomes the auteur who creates a role juggling different pressures, engaging traditions and articulating personal convictions, the interliminal space between the telling modus and the showing modus is used by the director's camera eye that exuberates the couple's erotic charm and the stark beauty suggesting gratification of undying passion. Bhardwaj presents a universal theme of undying passion that transgresses morality, an evil that ultimately burns himself in an Indianized backdrop that necessitates a geographical, cultural, ethnical shift. Another structural shift is the love affair between Guddu (Macduff) and Abbaji's daughter Sameera that would culminate in marriage which announces the impending termination of Muslim authority and the beginning of Hindu regime. Nimmi (Tabu), who also loves Maqbool and goads on his unrelenting ambition to usurp the godfather's place in the hierarchy of the gang, and suppress the loyal Hindu gangsters Kaka, Boti and Guddu (a passive suggestion of Muslim subtext at work). Being threatened of power from and unpredictable quarter Maqbool sours his personal relationship with the Hindu sect breeding in-gang rivalries. Bhardwaj uses pastiche in the seduction scene where Nimmi in alluring Maqbool reworks the romantic sequence of Ganga Jamuna of 1960's, here with the background score provided by Rekha Bhardwaj Maqbool recovers her *jhumka* with a lighted faggot. If in *Macbeth* Lady Macbeth brutally

and artfully plays only for power, in *Maqbool*, Bhardwaj relocalizes Lady Macbeth's desire for power and passionate love- 'You can die for me; you can also kill for me'. Nimmi in *Maqbool* transgresses modesty to acquire Maqbool as she is not pretentious and claims modernity of her sex. She voices the spirit and attitude of New Woman who professes and achieves her love. Both Nimmi and Lady Macbeth tempt their men into sin, in which both of them yield being obsessed with progeny and desperation for crown goaded by the prophecy "king of kings". The timeless paradigm, the interplay of power and personal relationships where a change in one inevitably affects the other, a conflict between filial and sexual love makes Maqbool give up one for the other. In a mess of lust, greed, jealousy and suspicion Maqbool kills Abbaji incriminating the loyal bodyguard whose gun served as a murder weapon. Maqbool takes charge of the business publicizing his affair which made Kaka (Banquo) unfriend him and losing political support. To make himself invincible he erases Kaka (Banquo)- a scenic parallel with Banquet scene where Maqbool gathers for a meeting with his comrades gives a heightened effect when. . Being an accomplice Nimmi like her original counterpart too suffers from guilt and hallucinations, tries to rub off the blood splattered at her face *Gunaahkiyahain... namiya, humne?* and admits her sin. Maqbool confused at Nimmi descending to madness unleashes a mayhem of crime and gore, shaking the very roots of the closely-knit mafia family. As circumstances spiral out of control, so does Maqbool's sense of discretion slowly being trapped in the orchestrations of his opponents. The most creative transposition is the central image where Nimmi new-born is cradled by Guddu and Sameera " Pity like a naked new born babe/ Shall blow the horrid deed of every eye/ That tears shall drown the wind " (Macbeth I, vii) which weakens Maqbool's ferocity and covers with self-pity. The camera stills on his dropped gun and shawl signifying surrender in remorse leaving a tear stain at the glass visor to mark his repentance and self-realization at the futility of blood lust. When Boti shoots him down in the hospital premises there is no blood spilling, indicating peace restored and the time is free. The

last scene is “borrowed shot-for-shot from Luc Besson’s *Le’on*(1994)” (Jess-Cooke 2006,178) In the memorable final shot, Maqbool’s dying impressions are conveyed by a gradually reddening screen, as noises of commotion gradually fade into nothingness.

In stage art it is the language that creates the atmosphere and the setting whereas cinema visual metaphors aid the interpretative space that the director employs using cinematography to emblemize the horror in the actor stimulating a cognitive fear among the audience. The Maqboolhallucination of blood of a butchered ghost not washed clean on the wedding night, Banquo’s dead body leaves a ghastly expression on Maqbool as he hallucinates Kaka’s still gaze on him, a collaborative of Abbaaji’s death gaze. Both Khan’s and Kapoor’s low voices and dark, mask-like faces register an extraordinary spectrum of emotional nuance: genuine, assumed, or suppressed, and their complex “father-son” relationship—always overshadowed by its foreordained outcome—is one of the film’s achievements. In a postmodern blend the supernaturalism is naturalized in the form of the prophesying astrologer, a pair of conniving clairvoyant cops, Pandit and Purohit, who monitor the underworld with their kundali charts using ketchups, food tit-bits, cigarette stubs to sketch the charts aiding to the comic relief. The historical shift, the cultural shift and the generic shift makes Bhardwaj adapt to these changes unadulterating the complexity if the play.

In the words of Cartelli and Rowe nothing ‘has been adapted to the screen as provocatively as Othello has in the last twenty years. ‘(Cartelli:120)“As Shakespeare’s plot requires the gifted black protagonist to devolve once again to murder,(each production) locks these films into a storyline that suggests racial stereotypes are inevitably self-fulfilling. In different ways, each prompts the question: can Othello be successfully updated and what would success mean if it could?” Othello ‘remains haunted by its own cultural history’ (Cartelli:123) Bhardwaj’s *Omkara* creates a unique cultural hybrid by appropriating both Othello and Bollywood filmi conventions. Ania Loomba points out that *Omkara* is a contemporary take on

Shakespeare’s tragedy of difference “within indigenous performative and intellectual histories.”(Loomba:159)*Omkara* is a spicy kind of masala film relevant to the context elaborating contemporary liberal independent India with changes in politics, economics, social and moral values.*Omkara* exposes the dark political conflicted Northern region of UP through itskhariboli dialects and profanities as Bhardwaj aimed at a kind of Wild West setting making *Omkara* a half-Brahmin, a local goon in the employ of parliamentary candidate Bhaisaab the leader of Brahmin Youth Party runs operations from jail.*Omkara* in Plato’s version is a highly ordered soul, a spirited part of a soldier. His male honour and dignity is his strength that paradoxically makes him vulnerable to perpetrate the honour crime. *Omkara* is a multi-layered narrative of male honour which is retained by symbolic violence(in signs, language and its form) and systemic violence (inherent in a societal structure to sustain relationships of dominance and exploitation) that fatally affects the disempowered members of the domestic sphere.A subjective violence (violence performed by identifiable agent) starts when *Omkara* selects Kesu Firangi as Bahubaali disowning fifteen years of loyalty of Lyangda Tyagi. *Omkara*’s choice of Bahubaali being outside the ring of the original outlawed group and assimilation with the hegemonic social body is a systematic violence that throws inside out rather than outside in as in the original. In this scene of anointing Bahubaali there is a build-up expectation among Langda and the viewers which Omi crushes as he coronates Kesu, a political move to win students favour. The cinematic effect of this shot and the flushed disappointed face of Langda conveys hurt and justifies our sympathy for him. A fine semiotic reworking of Bhardwaj to portray the hurt in the betrayal he makes Langda the uneducated, power hungry rustic goon in a self-reflexive mode to majestically smash down his own reflection and coronate himself with a blood tilak, a patische used by archetypal revenge movies. The film then moves on to show how Langda capitalizes on the insecurities of the jealous lover Omi to pave his own way for power and dispose of Kesu, his rival victimizing Dolly’s chastity and playing on her

supposed treachery “biswasnehihota oh Kesutha or samajmeinnehiaarahaki Dolly kesaath oh akelegharmeinkyakarrahatha” (I can’t believe that it’s Kesu, what was he doing with Dolly single at home) and shakes Omi’s pride and honour. Lyangda is the Fate itself who wearing a mask of honesty cuts the thread of everyone’s life without any iota of doubt. Unlike Iago Langda is socially disabled, isolated, foul-mouthed, a malcontent of a political climate. “*Virtue? A fig! 'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus.*” (I, iii) makes him a vice incarnation. Bhardwaj uses a beastial imagery to signify his less than human nature as his wife Indu later states, “jaanvar pal rakhahaitu ne apne under”(you have been nurturing a beast inside you) puts the villain into self- doubt of being a cheetah, a lion, or a wolf. The roller-coaster ride that the film goes through is due to the manipulative scurvy Langda, who in the words of Ankhi Mukherjee is “undoubtedly an artist extraordinaire of psychological manipulations and torture, is also a little man whose sense of subjection and humiliation is ultimately related to economic inequalities, social injustice and uneven developments. He is a symptom of a failed state not its cause.” (Mukherjee: 2015) According to Kristeva transposition for adaptation involves ‘condensation’ where one sign indicates multiple signifiers, a visual presentation judged from the spectator’s perspective. Tyagi’s visible presence or rather his body politics is sign/spectacle/theatrical symbol that signifies cunningness, invincible authority, strength, malign power, an animal prowess. A spectacle is a public display of human frailties in a particular cultural code, an intermedial collaboration of physical and technological aspects of the story is visualized by the contemporary audience that generates a cognitive sense among the audience quite unlikely in a reader. The opening scene with its cinematic techniques brings in the ambivalence in sight and cognition and initiates Langda, his schizophrenic attitude, his crippled move, his towering posture as the camera-eye follows him to the edge of the cliff as he overlooks the barren desolate ground below at the beginning of the movie and on the eve of announcing the name of the new Bahubaali with the back towards the audience suggestive that it is Tyagi who retains the

dynamics of the movie. In spite of the hatred that Omkara’s racial status, his class contributes, Dolly’s father Raghunath Shastri a white collared agent of law who warns Omkara of women’s infidelity “A girl who can deceive her own father can never be possessed by anyone else” sharing a male bonding with the half-caste and segregating Dolly to a mere reflection sets in the male dominance in an Indian context, a similar incurrence of the original that stung Othello: “Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: She has deceived her father, and may thee.” (Othello I,iii). The seeds of deception that has been sowed recurs in multiple associations. Bhardwaj’s cinematic style uses a deflecting song in a sufi tune “Nainakee math suniyo re.../Naina thug lenge.../ warning against the deceptive poison vision, even while celebrating and basking in romance. The song stresses on the visual uncertainties of characters crippled by doubt faces ontological crisis and self-denial of subjectivity. Othello stresses on the unreliability of sight searches for ocular proofs to confirm empirical truths – “I’ll see before I doubt” (Othello III,iii) whereas in Omkara the songs paves the doubt before a phenomenological and ocular proof. Bhardwaj uses the intertextual space to absorb and synthesize sources, modes and art- dialogism in practice. In Omkara he identifies his true inner-self as he calls himself a cheetah, a wolf, a chameleon after the gyre has been plotted. The silhouette walk of Tyagi through the dark corridors of the hospital after enmeshing Dolly, Kesu and Omkara in his vicious trap shows him as an evil perpetrator of crime. Indu is his competitor- Indu a subaltern woman provides a colonial resistance that marks the re-writing of Shakespeare. “Bhardwaj introduces a dimension of female vigilante as a climax and the radical rearticulation of the traditional practice of self-immolation after her husband’s death” (Chakraborty:2015), Indu on knowing the truth behind the violence girdled with jealousy hacks her husband taking the form of avenging Hindu goddess Kali – wild with rage, open haired, with a sickle in hand she paves out justice to restore peace and throws herself into well.

Bhardwaj himself has stated in an interview that he aimed to go beyond Indian audiences: as he

says, he "wanted to touch a chord with international audiences, so there were many commercial considerations" in adapting Shakespeare (Sen, "Today *Othello*" 2006). David Damrosch uses the term 'glocal' meaning 'think globally and act locally' in 1990's with reference to non-governmental groups. In literature, glocalization takes two primary forms: writers can treat local matters for global audience i.e. working outside or observing their locality from outside as a microcosm of global exchange. Omkara engages Hindu mythology and deities with specific colour hues in skin and costumes creating visual effects those transpositions in culture, time, and space with an appropriation that keeps the moral crux of the text but in a new form making a global theme local and thereafter presenting the localization to the global. Indu observes on Omi-Dolly relation: 'jaise kahrakan hai yake hotomein bansuri' (the flute in the lips of Lord Krishna) transpositioning in culture, time, and space making a global theme local and thereafter presenting the localization to the global. Ania Loomba found that in 'its powerful appropriation of this story of difference it was anxious to craft a vocabulary to experiment with plays like *Othello* without violating its own specific codes of signification.' (Loomba:153) The words are raw yet poetic, abusive yet literate, mundane yet metaphoric drawn massively from the UP dialects sets up wry humour in the re-versioning of the classical text. "Soiled with heartland grime, the dialogues come at you with a superb realism disarming to most of us used to synthetic (at best; usually just trite tripe) often-familiar Hindi screenplays.

Omkara presents a disturbed dustbowl of Indian modernity where guns and goons and mobile phones keep up the era of political, social and economic post modernization. Omkara, Tyagi, Rajju reveal the maladies and dysfunctions of a dominant culture and also the changing India where youths protest against the prevailing societal norms. Omkara breaches decency in having an affair beyond caste, religion and introduces new behaviour and upsets the traditional laws of religious hierarchy and political power. Dolly's breach of norms by opposing the arranged marriage and favouring love marriage

which eventually becomes her death trap shows the evolution of contemporary India. Indu, Tyagi's sharp tongued wife speaks up for Dolly to Omkara recuperating Ramayana and Mahabharata where woman's chastity is put to test, "agni se bhinikeljavetho sage nehithage hi kahelave" (even if she walks over fire she will still be called a deceiver). She brings the awareness of women's lack of power in this machoistic patriarchal society as she tells Dolly that women should leave their men somewhat hungry otherwise the day they are satisfied they'll puke you out like nobody's business. A local flavour is brought in the byahahaath (purification ritual) before wedding signifying union a swooping hawk drops a cobra in the upton (turmeric paste), an occurrence of a dark foreboding poison replaces purity. Bhardwaj associating with Indian mythology gives it a sense of impending disaster. Dolly's henna fingerprints at the door can be associated with the colour of blood and her death. Bhardwaj's adaptation of Shakespearean play to cinema presents local cultural patterns projected by landscape implementing territory and personal experiences of the characters in that landscape restructuring the universal themes from Indian lenses. "The film is brilliant in its portrayal of the rugged landscape of the North Indian heartland, blood and gore oozing from every pore. The cinematography is spectacular, as the camera zooms in and out of the earth tones of mud homes and thatched cottages to the craggy exteriors and rocky plains. At times it is reminiscent of old westerns with its vast muddled terrains and drunken revelries, but here it is an authentic Indian wildwest."

Bhardwaj uses the mob movie genre by changing the handkerchief to a richly adorned waistband (kamarband) that introduces fragility and entrapment, betokens romantic love, relating to the binding and unbinding power of women sexuality. Omkara hands this family heirloom to Dolly which is of his mother who ensnared a Brahmin by her bewitching charms. It gives a woman the power of a temptress as it adorns Billo Chamanbahar a career courtesan in one of the item songs. Indu wife of Langda covets it and steals it as an object of desire. Thus women in the act of empowering themselves with the coveted thing eventually

disempowers themselves with fatal results. This kamarbandh raises the questions on women fidelity as with Dolly, the honour crisis of Omkara, the disbelief of Indu for Tyagi culminating in murder, and the disowning of Kesu's love relation by Billo. It is used as a cinematic prop for seduction and deception in Billo's dance scene where Tyagi distracts Omkara's attention for the final revelation through a conversation as Langda says "It was so sparkling and it was shining so much on her (billo) waist that one did not need electricity in the room." (Cabaret:115) Credit needs to be given to represent both the romanticism and the pathos of the moment, the climactic scene on the wooden swing that transpires between the newly wed on their first night together. By dripping the words in poetry, Visha gives the characters the much needed menacing power, "he kathor" (O Wretched), gently chides Omkara, when the waist bracelet grips his lover a little too tightly. "hekathor", laments Omkara when the same bracelet causes him to take extreme action on his unwitting lover, suspecting infidelity.

Hamlet adapted from a medieval Scandinavian story about *Amleth*, a very straightforward revenger passes through couple of publications in 1603, 1604 and ultimately in 1623. In the early twentieth century Sohrab Modi enacted the role of Hamlet in his movie called, *KhoonKaKhoon* (1935). Naseem Bano played Ophelia, and Shamshad Bai played the role of Gertrude. The Indian adaptation was written by Mehdi Ahsan. Its latest performative transculturation in the hands of Bhardwaj bent on completing his tragic trilogy gave Shakespeare a greater exposure. In his trilogy Vishal Bhardwaj adapted Shakespeare into film to reflect violence and vicissitudes of modern India – Maqbool the underworld in a cosmopolitan setting building the tragedy of ambition, Omkara the political corruption and the tragedy of power, honour and jealousy, *Haider* portrays tragic human cost of conflict and uncomfortable political reality of an Indian administered Kashmir, its nether world of disappearances, military torture and extra-judicial killings. Bashrat Peer's novel *The Curfewed Night* acts as a sub-text of the movie that graphs the traumatic experiences of the homeless, fearful

nights of search mission, the unbearable silence of the women for whom everything changed overnight. The psychological trepidation is manifested through a psychopathological character who stands at the entrance of his house fearing entrance as he has been habituated to repeated surveillance and security checks. Bhardwaj picks up the issue of missing people a gross human injustice which Ashish Vidyarthi (a high official of the Indian Army) a voice of the state disqualifies "What about three lakhs Kashmiri Pandits who are forced out of Kashmir? Are they not the missing people of Kashmir?"

Bhardwaj transposes the story of human existentialism and vacillation to a political space where a domestic tragedy, entangles with a political tragedy that of a people struggling for azadi. On being asked how he was able to translate writings of Shakespeare, into the contemporary reality of the Kashmir politics in Haider, Bhardwaj said "It's about the politics behind humanity, their emotions and their conflicts. The politicians or ministers have changed. But the person behind the minister or the person behind the politician, remains the same. The conflict remains the same." (Bhardwaj:2015)

The ironical taxonomies like 'half-widow' is a vacillating state of being and becoming, caught between hope and hopelessness, general atmosphere of the halfness of things, half-formed in which Haider's embittered, schizophrenic self-breathes. Haider (the Indianized Hamlet) is crestfallen, not just because of the arrest and disappearance of his father but also his paternal uncle Khurram's intimacy with his mother (Ghazala, played by Tabu); eventually, the duo marry, further infuriating Haider. Haider's sceptical crisis and dilemma on human relationships and misogynist assumptions along with ruined home, his accused father, the excesses of the security and surveillance exercises, sucks him into the agonized state and makes him politically rebellious as the disturbed Kashmiri. While Hamlet was informed about his father's murder by the latter's ghost, Haider came to know about the detention, torture, and extrajudicial killing of his father by a mysterious, almost ghostly, person Roohdaar, an extremist

who is the physical incarnation for the ghost in Hamlet. He is ever pervading "main tha, main hoon or main hi rahoonga" thirsty for revenge against the betrayal at personal level, an abstract spirit of Kashmir seething within is his militancy ready to strike for a free state who was incarcerated along with Haider's father, also tells the son how Khurram Meer had betrayed his father. He delivers Hilaal's message that Haider should shoot Khurram in his eyes. When Haider learns the truth of his father, the character transforms with a mad streak - head shaved, face painted, gaping, grinning leaves his mother astonished and the viewers dumbfounded. In William Shakespeare's original play, the Prince of Denmark invites his uncle and stepmother to a play he has created and from their expressions tries to gauge if what the ghost had told him is true. This is the mouse-trap a play within a play, a device to expose the truth to himself. On recognizing the truth Hamlet becomes morally free from guilt and builds up revenge. He is a dark, anguished, tormented soul but denied his pulling the trigger on Khurram's head as the later was on his prayer ritual. Haider had two reasons for killing his uncle but the question is why he vacillated. In the original Hamlet suffered sexual fixations, faced oedipal complex and felt his father to be a usurper. So Claudius' relation with his mother gets a justification as Claudius expresses Hamlet's repressed desires. In *Haider* the sexual overtones is much subdued bending it on affection keeping the target audience in mind. He had all the motives and opportunities to kill Khurram as he believes in *Inteqaam* (revenge). A wounded and angry Haider expresses his angst and seems to grapple with his inner demons. In the song *bismil* Bhardwaj uses 200-year-old tradition called 'Bhand Pather', (where they make stories by singing and dancing) exquisitely choreographed before a 1400 years old temple. The grittiness of the song is too situational and gives Haider a confirmation about Khurram's treachery (about which Ghazala was unaware). He flees from the site with the Salman brothers chasing him at close-foot. In a freak of affected madness Haider

kills the Salman brothers brutally and starts on his series of murders though in an act of self-defence. Vishal Bhardwaj captures the 'Azadi' sentiment prevalent in the valley (though not all want Azadi in Kashmir) which is manifested by Shahid Kapoor's monologue at the Srinagar city's square. There is 'Chutzpah/AFSPA', 'Separatists India Se Azadi Nahi, Pakistan Se Ghulami Maang Rahe Hain', 'Hum Hain Ki Hum Nahin', is very much the identity crisis of Kashmiri youths in an hour of strife. The psychological dilemma of Haider couldn't be depicted with such specifications had the setting been different. 'Hum Kya Chahte, Azadi' in the film which indicates the political scenario in the valley. It attempts to show the excesses and alleged human rights violation committed by Indian Army. Bhardwaj is unsparing in his depiction of Indian army atrocities as through Haider we witness unmarked graves, horrific torture scenes in MAMA-2, massacred bodies loaded in trucks and protesting half-widows. Bhardwaj faced backlash as many evoked Haider to have anti-nationalist sentiment but Bhardwaj defended. "I'm also an Indian, I'm also a patriot. I also love my nation. So I won't do anything which is anti-national. But what is anti-human I will definitely comment on it." (Pandey:2014)

Ghazala played by Tabu is worthy of recognition one who calls the shots in the film: from bewitching her husband's brother to holding the reins to her son's moods and motives an intertextual element in how she controls the sexual fantasies of Abbaji and Maqbool, if in Maqbool she seduces Maqbool to tragedy of ambition and lust here she makes her way through emotional blackmail. She is quintessential piece of woman desired by husband, brother-in-law and son, strong woman protagonist, the centrepiece of Haider, a mother, wife and lover torn between what is right and wrong. In Muslim tradition, it's not incestuous to marry your dead brother's wife in order to take care of her. Further in Kashmir if a woman's husband goes missing or has disappeared, whether he is taken by army or he has become a militant, the woman has to wait for four years

before she can get married. That's where the concept of 'half-widows' came into that society. But Ghazala refers herself as half-widow and half-bride bringing forth her incestuous relation, a parallel with Hamlet enough to shock Haider on his return. At the last scene when she feels that Haider is at the point of no return she pleads Khurram for Haider's safety and requests Haider to stop the cycle of vengeance as "intequam se intequam hi paidahotehai" (revenge leads to further revenge). Haider's rejection of revenge in spite of Ghazala's desperate solicitings makes her seek freedom in a self-willed way. Ghazala became a human bomb to restore peace and humanity as she feels violence begets violence. She is like Kashmir herself terrained with anguish and strife dejected on disappeared husband, solaced and betrothed by shrewd cunning brother-in-law and carries the stigma of infidelity by son.

In *Omkara* Omi does not kill Langda Tyagi as he says to the Hindu belief that killings would liberate him from moral turpitude which he should endure as a result of his doings. Similarly *Haidertoo* ends with an openness Haider does not kill his uncle leaving him to repent and suffer the pangs of death. In a panorama of explosion, broken bodies, ashes, blood, corpses lay the maimed Khurram Meer where his cry "Bhaiyya" sounds and resounds in the dead air overtly lends poetic justice.

Adaptation depends on what they get adapted into (i.e. adaptation from novel to film) who adapts them (i.e. film maker, a performance troupe, software developer) and when they are adapted (i.e. historical context) (Mac Aurther:2009) So a film adaptation can be defined as transcoding, trans-positioning, and appropriated in scope. So if a Shakespearean play is relocated to a radically different time and space does it still retain the Shakespearean essence of the original text with the cinematic dynamics? Bhardwaj says in one of his interview that Shakespeare was his unpaid assistant and the reason why his trilogy scored hundreds nationally and globally as he feels was he was not burdened by his name and exercised all liberties to the source text keeping the soul of the text

intact. This paper researches into Vishal Bhardwaj's adaptations of Shakespeare drifted from Elizabethan locale, fitted into typically Indian socio-political settings with a creative distinction from the original. Blending the camera-eye with the social structure exposing the post-colonial India with its murkiness, grim reality, political throes, the suffocation caught in trials, and the women who share the men's space, their desires are left with no room to claims have justice in their own way. The poetry of Shakespeare has been presented with a hue that pertains to costumes, landscape, cinematography, with background scores that sets in the hue of India.

WORKS CITED

- [1]. Andrea Nightingale, 'Mimesis: Ancient Greek Literary Theory', *Literary Theory and Criticism* Ed by Patricia Waugh: An Oxford Guide. (Oxford University Press; New Delhi, 2006). pg-44 print
- [2]. Marsden, Jean I ed. *The Appropriation of Shakespeare* Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991. print
- [3]. Freedman, Jonathan "Novel into Film" *A Companion to the English Novel* ed. Stephen Arata, Madigan Haley, J. Paul Hunter, Jennifer Wicke, UK : Wiley Blackwell publication 2015, pg-165. Print
- [4]. Ljungberg, Christina 'Unbinding the Text' *Semblance and Signification* ed. Pascal Michelucci, Olga Fischer, Christina Ljungberg. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin's Publishing Company, 2011. pg 373 print
- [5]. Biswas, Moinak "Mourning and Blood-Ties: Macbeth in Mumbai" *Salaam Bollywood: Representations and Interpretations* ed. by Vikrant Kishore, Amit Sarwal, Parichay Patra, London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006. print
- [6]. (Jess-Cooke 2006, 178) Carolyn, Jess-Cooke, 2006. "Screening the McShakespeare in Post-Millennial Shakespeare Cinema" In *Screening Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century*. Ed. by Mark Thornton Burnett

- and Ramona Wray. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006, pp178, print.
- [7]. Loomba, Ania 1998 "Local Manufacture Made-in-India Othello Fellows: Issues of Race, Hybridity and Location in Post-Colonial Shakespeares" In Post-Colonial Shakespeares ed. AniaLoomba and Martin Orkin, London: Routledge, 1998.print`
- [8]. Modenessi, Alfredo Michel, "Is this the Noble Moor? Reviewing Othello on Screen through "indian"(and Indian) Eyes" Borrowers and Lenders, A Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation, 7.2 : 2013 Web
- [9]. Mukherjee, Ankhi WHAT IS A CLASSIC? Post-Colonial Rewriting and Invention of the Canon California: California Stanford University Press, 2014. Pg 208.print
- [10]. Cabaret, Florence "Indianizing Othello Vishal Bhardwaj's Omkara" *Shakespeare On Screen Othello* ed. Sarah Hatchuel and Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin Cambridge University Press, 2015, pg 115 print
- [11]. Bhardwaj Vishal. Conversation with Prof James Shapiro *Decoding Shakespeare: Vishal on Haider at NYIFF*, 2015 Web, May 17, 2015
- [12]. Bhardwaj, Vishal. 2003. Maqbool. Kaleidoscope Entertainment and Vishal Bhardwaj Pictures.
- [13]. Bhardwaj, Vishal. 2006. Omkara. Big Screen Entertainment and Shemaroo Video Pvt Ltd.
- [14]. Bhardwaj, Vishal. 2014 Haider. UTV Motion Pictures and VB Pictures.
- [15]. Sen, Raja. 2006. "Today *Othello*, Tomorrow *Hamlet*?" Interview with director Vishal Bhardwaj. online: <http://www.rediff.com/movies/2006/jul/27vishal.htm>
- [16]. Chakraborty, Mala October 2006. 'Othello Revisited: "Omkara" A Movie Review' (http://www.kavitachhibber.com/main/main.jsp?id=movie_reviews-Oct2006) Web
- [17]. Sen, Raja. 2006 Column: "Why Omkara blew my mind' Online: <http://www.rediff.com/movies/2006/aug/02rs.htm> Web
- [18]. Draper, John W 'Macbeth as a compliment to James!' *Englishe Studien*, 1938 :pp207 Print
- [19]. Pandey, Vikas "Haider: Why is 'Indian Hamlet' controversial" BBC Monitoring 7 October 2014 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-29502393> Web
- [20]. 'Performing Adaptations: Essay and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation', *Introduction Performing Adaptations: The Role of Performance in Adaptation Studies* Ed. Michelle Mac Arthur, Lydia Wilkinson and Keren Zaiontz. Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2009 UK, pg-20 Print
- [21]. Chakraborty, Kaustav "Reading the Politics of Violence" *Deconstructing the Stereotype: Reconsidering Indian Culture, Literature and Cinema*, Hamburg, Anchor Academic Publishing 2015. Pg-151, Print