



A STUDY SELECTIVE OF SHAKESPEAREAN ADAPTATIONS IN INDIAN POPULAR CINEMA

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Abstract:

Shakespeare's plays provide as examples of both successful and unsuccessful human reactions to authority. These graphics capture the viewer and look great on the silver screen. This essay aims to investigate the popular culture adaption of Shakespeare in India. It examines how India's imagination has completely swallowed Shakespeare. This work primarily examines four recent Indian cinema adaptations of Shakespeare: *Maqbool* (directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*), *Omkara* (directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, based on Shakespeare's *Othello*), and *Issaq* (directed by Tiwari, based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*). Shakespeare was never more domesticated than in these highly successful Indian productions. This research investigates the ways in which cinematic representation reinforces the status quo social structure. This article examines the ideology that directed the film's development and the messages it conveys. **KEYWORDS:** Popular Cinema; Shakespearean adaptations; Bollywood.

Introduction

Shakespeare arrived in the Indian subcontinent through colonialism. India has a long history of cultural dominance stemming from colonial rule. Shakespeare and other western classics were widely used in India's colonial educational system. The inclusion of Western literature, particularly Shakespeare, in the colonial education system held political significance as well. For instance, Shakespeare's works were incorporated into the curricula not only as the embodiment of literary and artistic excellence but also as a testament to the fundamental principles of Western tradition. Shakespeare had been translated, modified, and absorbed into numerous Indian languages by the twentieth century, and his legacy was being maintained by authors and performers in the broader Indian cultural scene. Shakespeare's writings provided a wealth of inspiration for the Parsi Theatre. Shakespeare's works have impacted and been absorbed in Indian literature and culture in a variety of ways, including theme, character development, genre, and structure. The way we navigate this connection has become more problematic as a result of advancements in the fields of performance and cultural studies, translation and adaption studies, globalisation,

and internationalism. His concepts of gender, women, friendship, the outsider, the racial other, family relationships, same-sex relationships, generational conflicts, the idea of the twin or the double, violence, conflict, emotions, the idea of empire, the idea of the nation, kingship, good governance, politics, law, order, disorder, disguise, appearance and reality, nature, landscape, geography, supernatural, and prophecy have a lasting wisdom that has found strong foothold in international cinema. Bollywood's temperament, which features song and dance, love triangles, humour, melodrama, star-crossed lovers, irate parents, cunning villains, opportune coincidences, and mistaken identities, may be described as blatantly Shakespearean. Nevertheless, the Bard of Avon is frequently overlooked in the process of adaptation, even in a vast cultural business. Nonetheless, more recent Bollywood productions, like the 2004 film *Maqbool* (directed by Vishal Bhardwaj and based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*), the 2006 film *Omkara* (directed by Tiwari and based on Shakespeare's *Othello*), and the 2012 film *Issaq* (directed by Tiwari and based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*) are of their predecessors and cite Shakespeare as the source text or inspiration. *Maqbool*, the *Macbeth* adaptation directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, is a Shakespearean play.

Indian writer-director Vishal Bhardwaj's (*Makdee*) *Macbeth* is set in Mumbai's criminal underworld and is a retelling of Shakespeare's classic tale of ambition and greed. The iconic actor from Bollywood, Irrfan Khan (*Slumdog Millionaire*), plays *Macbeth* stand-in *Maqbool*, the formidable mafia leader *Abbaji's* (Pankaj Kapur) right-hand man. *Maqbool* persuades her boyfriend to kill *Abbaji's* employer and steal his position as the head of the city's crime syndicate after she starts an illegal romance with his stunning young mistress, *Nimmi* (Tabu). *Maqbool* is *Abbaji's* real protégé. He will obey his every order, and *Nimmi* will stop at nothing to enfold *Maqbool* in her arms. *Abbaji* is engaged in a struggle to maintain his supremacy. *Maqbool* believes that he is being excluded from the entire event without a good cause. He therefore acts independently. Once more, *Pandit* and *Purohit* (Om Puri and Naseeruddin Shah), the two police officials, enter. They foretell that *Maqbool* would lose the power struggle, much as the witches' prophecies in *Macbeth* did. There are harsh sequences that bring to mind *Macbeth's* and other *Sorcerer's* films. Another connection between the blood war and "Tarantino" In many ways, *Maqbool* is a masterpiece. Firstly, it goes against the established Bollywood formulas of a love triangle between a hero and heroine and a plethora of other dancers performing tree rounds. It also lacks a conflict between right and wrong. In this movie, the terrible meets the worse. The heroine is not a propagandist. She doesn't hold back her appetite. The film also explores the difficult moments of denial. It discusses denying one's wishes, one's power, and one's superiority. With the intention of mending the lives in their own unique way, each character struggles against these denials. Even if the fundamental plot of the movie (*Macbeth*) is centuries old, the struggle is for the individual rather than for society, and this very approach gives the movie a realistic and extremely modern appearance. *Maqbool's* success in both local and foreign markets may be attributed to its ability to blend the dark, menacing Mumbai underworld with Shakespeare's themes of treachery and mayhem. In addition to the love stories that are central to mainstream Bollywood productions, *Maqbool* addresses issues of communal unity, terrorism, and corruption that have emerged as major themes in contemporary Hindi films. Shakespeare and the underworld seem to go along very well, at least in Bollywood. An Indianized adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* set in a different era and

location is called "Maqbool." This drama has been presented on stages all around the world several times. A few films have also been produced, but not in an Indian setting. "Maqbool" is a trailblazer in several aspects and excels in terms of style and presentation.

Shakespeare's Othello, directed by Vishal Bharadwaj, is titled Omkara. The opening credits of Omkara state, "Vishal Bhardwaj's adaptation of Shakespeare's Othello." The characters in Bhardwaj's film, such as Omkara (Othello), Ishwar (Iago), Dolly (Desdemona), Indu (Emilia), Kesu (Cassio), Billo (Bianca), and so on, have the same initial letters as those in Shakespeare's play. 2007 is the 385th anniversary of Othello's initial publication. For those who are unfamiliar with Othello, the Bard's Venetian domestic tragedy, Omkara can be described as a worldwide meditation on the topic of suspicion leading to death. Those who haven't read Othello, however, will probably like the movie more because they won't be expecting the finale. The Omkara narrative, which takes place in the rural regions of the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, tells the tale of Omkara, also known as Omi, a political goon who falls in love with Dolly, a lawyer's daughter. Dolly and her beloved, Omkara, elope since her father had planned for her to wed Rajoh. Two of Omkara's closest allies are Ishwar "Langda" Tyagi. Ishwar, also known as "Langda" or "Lame," is a cunning, vicious, and power-hungry sniper. He is wed to Indu, the big sister of Omkara's gang's thugs, including Omkara herself. Omkara selects Kesu over Langda as his main lieutenant in order to capitalise on Kesu's sizable political base and guarantee Bhai Sahib's electoral victory. When Bhai Sahib, being perceptive, queries, "What about Langda?" In response, Omkara foolishly says, "He's like my brother. He'll get it." Omkara has complete faith and respect for Langda, yet he never bothers to provide him an explanation of his actions. Because of this one episode, Langda becomes determined to pull Omkara and Kesu down, planting doubts in Omkara's mind that Dolly and Kesu are having an affair. Together with Rajoh, who is bitter since Dolly rejected him for marriage, Langda gradually gathers circumstantial evidence that leads Omkara to believe Dolly is having an affair. In Omkara, Saif Ali Khan, who usually presents himself as a leading man with stylish clothing, a chocolate-boy appearance, and a power-hungry, illiterate goon with a great sense of humour, provides a restrained, superb performance. Khan does a fantastic job at turning Langda into a charming villain despite his dishevelled appearance, abrupt words, and limpness. Even when he is not delivering lines, Khan performs brilliantly. In order to elicit sympathy from the audience when Langda is not appointed lieutenant, Khan gives him a respectable appearance. Khan gives his persona a distinct emotional history. Langda's face widens into an expectant smile as Rajoh makes him wear sunglasses and dances about him while yelling "Langda, Bahubali" (Langda, ChiefLieutenant!). After that, Omkara passes up on Langda, and Khan's heated, disappointed expression subtly expresses his character's grief and astonishment. Ultimately, to make matters worse, Langda is requested to inform the people who are waiting outside about Kesu's appointment as chief-lieutenant. He never yells, cries, or asks questions; instead, he does everything with a calm grandeur. Later, he declares himself to be a lieutenant by smashing his own reflection in the mirror and applying a tilak—a mark on the forehead—made with his own blood. Khan gives Langda a formidable presence, which is uncommon for a villain. Indu, Langda's wife, is portrayed by Konkana Sen, who appears to embody the part. She has little trouble fitting into the role. Throughout the entire

film, you get the impression that she is, in fact, a feisty, smart-talking village belle with no reservations or delusions about life. Othello is now Omkara (Ajay Devgan), a half-caste rabble-rouser and thug working for the local leader/jailbird/parliamentary candidate Bhai-saab (Naseeruddin Shah), rather than a dark and estranged Moorish commander among the Italians. In the exciting opening scene, Omkara's men stop his beloved Dolly (Kareena Kapoor as Desdemona) from getting married to the unfortunate Rajju (the Roderigo character), and they then have to deal with an agitated Dolly's father at gunpoint. Even though Dolly and Omkara are genuinely in love, her angry father's final remarks, which quote Shakespeare, "Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: She has deceived her father, and may thee" (Othello, I, iii), hurt Omkara.

Omkara upholds the spirit of Othello. Bharadwaj used visuals to convey what Shakespeare said orally. The movie is filled with very significant actions and items. In Othello, the misplaced "handkerchief" that leads to Desdemona's terrible fate is substituted by a waist band. The waist band has cultural importance in addition to being an erotic symbol. Characters also sporadically break into songs and dance sequences, in typical Bollywood fashion, although none of them detract from the movie's plausibility.

Director Issaq Manish Tiwari's rendition of Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, the pinnacle of romance, has served as a model for both writers and filmmakers. Over the years, Bollywood has also produced several desi versions of the timeless love tale. Three new adaptations of Romeo and Juliet, a timeless classic and source of inspiration for Hindi filmmakers, are about to be released. Manish Tiwari's film Issaq, which is titled 'ishq' in the traditional Bihari manner, is the first release in this genre. The Juliet in Tiwari's Romeo is called Bacchi (child) because she is a naive youth who is easily shaped and swayed into a 'perfect' relationship. Romeo is a pragmatic, gun-toting assassin from Benaras (read Prateik). Shakespeare's Juliet was a fourteen-year-old girl, according to Tiwari, who cast a fresh face since he was unable to discover his Juliet among the females in the profession. Manish Tiwari's unique Indian adaption of William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet transports the action to Banaras and its surrounding districts, where the urban elite-controlled sand mafia unleashes carnage and Naxalite forces retaliate with equal ferocity. The powerful Banarasi families Kashyaps and Mishras, who are engaged in a violent conflict, are the leaders of the sand mafia. From his first wife, Kashyap has an 18-year-old, attractive, and naive daughter named Bachchi. Amyra Dastur, making her feature debut, plays Bachchi. Rahul, the son of Mishra, is a handsome adolescent who has conventional interests for a lad from his background: girls and guns! Prateik plays Rahul. When amorous yet tough Bachchi and battle-hardened, pleasure-seeking Rahul fall in love, everything changes. The young couple decides to follow their hearts' desires regardless of the repercussions. A fast-paced, action-packed drama ensues. Issaq by Manish Tiwari becomes a statement on what love means in modern-day India!

CONCLUSION

This is a clear outcome of the fast advancement of filmmaking skills as well as other ancillary developments, such as the enormous advancement in the internet era's communication system growth. essentially, the phenomenon known as globalisation. The rapid expansion, in conjunction with additional socio-cultural and economic elements, has substantially transformed the urban audience's watching habits. Nowadays, a wide range of people watch

different types of films. Because of these comforting circumstances, filmmakers are also more inclined to push the boundaries of conventional narrative techniques and preferences and experiment with film's structure and substance. Bollywood now enjoys simultaneous worldwide releases, greater ticket prices, and easy access to a large global audience. In these times, artists who are rooted in literary and cultural history may afford to explore traditional methods rather than just honing their craft in pointless cash-grabbers. Indian film has demonstrated that it is not an exception when the poet says that "all the world's a stage." Bhardwaj's films can be interpreted both within and outside of the subcontinent as attempts to connect disparate strands of a trans-cultural history of art across media, translating the English master into a foreign language while preserving both cultural elements with all of their subtleties and character.

Bibliography

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Issaq, 2013 Indian Hindi romantic film directed by Manish Tiwary and produced by Dhaval Gada and Shailesh R. Singh. The film, written by Padmaja Thakore-Tiwary, Manish Tiwary and Pawan Sony, was released on 26 July 2013.

