

# Psychoanalysis of Female Characters in Vishal Bharadwaj's Trilogy *Maqbool*, *Omkara* and *Haider*

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## Abstract:

Freud's theory of psychology that he referred as psychoanalysis has been accepted and extended in analyzing literature and other arts too. Freud believes that literature and other arts are like dreams and psycho symptoms which contain imaginative fancies, so literature and other arts are capable to fulfill wishes that are commonly restricted by social standards and norms. My research paper is an attempt to focus on the psychoanalysis of female protagonists in Bharadwaj's worldwide acclaimed movies '*Maqbool*', '*Omkara*' and '*Haider*' which are an adaptation of Shakespeare's famous tragedies '*Macbeth*', '*Othello*' and '*Hamlet*'. These female characters are just like puppet in grip of unconscious urges. This study further analysis human's helplessness under the arrest of its uncontrolled passions. Through this study, I want to find out the strong and weak unconscious fancies of Nimmi, Dolly and Gazala and their fight against their own id, ego and superego which brutally influenced them mentally as well as physically. Nimmi who is a complex character, struggles as a mistress of don and as a beloved of Maqbool. Dolly suffers mentally due to male's suspicious nature and patriarchal society whereas Gazala tries to make conciliation with her second marriage and with her adult obsessive son.

Keyword: psychoanalysis, sex complex obsessive, conflict.

Shakespeare's plays have been adapted all over the world due to his universality and cosmopolitan nature. In India Shakespeare has been alluring readers, spectators from the very beginning. From Bangali to Parsi theatre, Shakespeare's domination can never be undervalued. In film industry, Shakespeare's adaptations had been initiated from the mid- nineteenth century. Actually his arrival in India was the outcome of the colonial expansion of British Empire. Britishers spread English education with political purposes which consequently brought Shakespeare in India. Shakespeare very easily encrypt from Indian theatre to film industry. He was the master to demonstrate human sentiments and emotions in a very realistic way because of his deep psychoanalysis power. His timeless writing extended the spark of the screenwriters and adaptors to take theme from his dramas and presented them with new forms and shapes without destroying the original spirit.

Vishal Bharadwaj tried to access the psychology of Shakespeare in his famous trilogy *Maqbool*, *Omkara* and *Haider*. Female characters in this trilogy possess some psycho problems. Female characters in these movies are very complex especially the character of Nimmi and Gazala. Keeping in mind the mastery of Shakespeare's psychoanalysis insight of characters, Bharadwaj very skillfully portrayed the obsessive and inner conflict of his characters especially the female characters in a very microscopic way.

## Nimmi in Maqbool

Maqbool, adaptation of Macbeth, was released in 2003. Worldwide acclamation of the movie proved Bharadwaj in queue of great directors and producers. It is set in the criminal underworld of Mumbai. Bharadwaj converted sixteenth century character of Macbeth in present day of Mumbai. Bharadwaj depicted all characters according to Indian environment. It is thrilling tragic movie with complex characters. The most questioning character is of Nimmi who played the role of Lady Macbeth in a very realistic way. Tabu adapted this character more fantastic way and excelled to Lady Macbeth in some matters. She has dual personality. As a mistress of Abbaji and beloved of Maqbool, she trapped herself in endless depth of psycho bottom.

Psychoanalysis is a study of human's inner behavior and feeling. Sigmund Freud was one of the great psychoanalysis who focused his study mainly on human behavior. Human being is a slave of desire, passion, fear and conflict. Freud finds three elements of human personality. They are id, ego and superego. Id is the primitive part of the mind. Id comes in form of thirst, hunger, sex. It is the unconscious part of the mind. It is unwilling to do any kind of compromise. It is ready to fulfill his desires at any cost without considering its consequences. Superego is related to the social and moral values. It decides the social norms in which we live. It is an idealistic part of someone's personality. It resides in preconscious mind of human. It is a kind of speculation of right and wrong. Ego is the outcome of id. It is related to the reality or the conscious part of the mind.

If we analyze the character of Nimmi in this movie, she is not typical Bollywood type idealistic heroine. Nimmi wants to become actress. For this, she comes to magical world of Mumbai from Lucknow. She becomes the mistress of Abbaji but she does not like him. She was deeply frustrated and has no option to return her home. She knows very well that being mistress is very disgusting. This speech manifests her mental condition very well "kis muh se ghar vapas jaau...sabko pata hai ke jahaageer ke rakhail hu"(can't even go back home...everyone knows I'm jahangir's concubine.(Bharadwaj and Peer 78) She was not satisfied with her because of age gap. She feels disgusting with Abbaji. She says, "mere baap ke umra ka hoga vo kam se kam...nanga kitna ghinona lagta hai" (he looks so repulsive naked...must be as old as my father(Bharadwaj and Peer 78). She finds her love in Maqbool. Even in matter of love, she forces Maqbool to accept her love at gun point. "The loaded gun in Nimmi's hand speaks to Maqbool's helplessness relative to the intimate, intimidating presence of Nimmi's seductive sexuality" (Fereman, 2009:4). Gun symbolizes her sexual power over Maqbool. It was Maqbool in whose arms she finds satisfaction. Her 'id' leads her to the way where she does not care of the result. Actually "wished are permitted to achieve a fantasied satisfaction in distorted forms that serve to disguise their real motives and objects from the conscious" (Abrams 321). Her decision of murder to Abbaji is also the result of her jealousy after arrival of Miss Mohini. She triggers Maqbool very much which leads to Don's murder. She urges him, "Abbaji ke jagah tum kabhi nahi le sakte "you never take place of Abbaji)(Bharadwaj and Peer 18). Nimmi was suffering with many arrogant desires like ambition to become a heroine, jealousy because of Mohini, lust for sex because hatred feeling for Don, fear after the murder of Abbaji, internal conflict after Maqbool doubt about her child's biological father which results in form of her insanity and finally her tragic death.

Her obsessive condition of mind after the death of Don plunges her into insanity. It becomes very difficult for her to erase the horrible act from her conscious. Maqbool's doubt about the baby's father also increases her mental agony to the unbearable stage. In original text, Lady Macbeth urges Macbeth to use his power to gain the kingdom but Nimmi is a woman who knows the uncontrolled journey toward gaining power. It was id of Nimmi which woven the thread that tangles Maqbool and even becomes the cause of his death too. In Macbeth, Duncan was killed because of Macbeth over ambition but Don is killed by Maqbool because his love for Nimmi.

Nimmi opens the freeze desires in Maqbool's heart. She openly says, "Aaj kal tughe pyas nahi lagti Miya" (you don't feel thirsty nowadays, Miya) (Bharadwaj and Peer 31). Nimmi represents those women who have the power to change the dictatorship of Mumbai's male-dominated underworld. She transgresses the area which is considered prohibited for females and challenges in the patriarchal society. Her controlling over two protagonists shows her power of male dominated society. She "create confusion in the realm of mental representation by exhibition the so-called masculine traits of their character: aberrant, uncontrolled, having a will of their own and imposing that will on their male counterpart" (Mondal, 4-5). Murder of Abbaji plunges into a gutter of guilt to both Nimmi and Maqbool and finally they meet a death.

### **Dolly in Othello**

In his second adaptation, Omkara (2006) Bharadwaj chose Kareena Kapoor for his female protagonist as a Dolly in role of Desdemona. She is excessive beautiful with pure woman qualities. She elopes with Omkara and decides to marry her because she loves her very much. She was rebel and did what was banned by the society. Though the social structure in matter of marriage issues has changed its norms yet in large number in India, arranged marriage is preferred than love marriage. In many families even in modern times too, girl is considered as an object of 'ijjat'(honour) for the family. And if she chooses her groom of her own choice, it becomes 'Kalank'(blame) for the reputation of the family. Dolly accepts to marry Rajan under the pressure of family but unable to resist her feeling for Omi and decides to elope even at the time of marriage. She did not want to suppress her feeling of love. She did not want to strangle her desires. She openly accepts before everybody "hum to apni marji ke gulam hai bas...hum Omkara ke bina jinda nahi rah sakte(I've always followed the tune of my own heart...I can't live without Omkara)".(Bharadwaj and Peer 23-24) Her father was unable to believe that her educated girl can accept uneducated Bahubali type groom for herself. She is strong enough to take this bold step. A traditional woman's love is very encompassing as according to Beauvoir in beginning. She is strong enough to take this bold step. With a dream loving world, she holds hand of Omkara. In spite of deep love feeling for her, Omkara is a symbol of male jealousy and is guided by patriarchal society norms and standard. In fact he could not estimate strong instinct of love which Dolly was suffering. Even in village, she learns to sing English song to his college friend Kesu. It shows her liking for western but she accepts a village life because her deep love for Omkara.

Dolly is bold enough to surrender into physical relationship to Omkara before marriage which is not acceptable in Indian society. Though her physical relationship only to prove her unconditional love she possesses for Omkara. The boldness of Dolly's character disappears gradually because she was unable to guess the male-dominated mentality of Omkara. She has good friendship with Kesu and this friendship becomes the cause of her death with

the leading circumstances of the incidents. Dolly is the perfect manifestation of emotions with psychic oppression in male dominated society. Waistband which was given to her by Omkara was the symbol of honour not for the family but it becomes honour of Dolly too.

Waistband also becomes sexual object for Dolly because after bearing it, sexual intercourse happens between Omkara and Dolly. So it was waistband not Dolly which incites Omkarsa towards her. Woman becomes only a puppet in the hand of man. College going Dolly surrenders in household duties without any complain. She accepts tradition and ritual of village life. “She was anxious to be the perfect wife” (Cherry and Shahani 118) but did not fight against the patriarchal mentality of male. She never defends herself. She never thinks that waistband becomes so important for jealous mind Omkara. Dolly is suffering very much when she finds change behavior of Omi. She is too innocence to apologize for having fallen asleep and not receiving his call.

For Dolly, Omkara is God and love is worship but finally she loses her at the hand of the man she truly loves. Omkara misuses those sentiments that are bestowed by Dolly. For a woman, love is an experience in which she satisfied all her desires but it can become sometimes an occasion for monumental pain. “The woman, object of desires though they are, hover on the fringe of the male centered world”(Dionne73). Dolly was in dilemma and was never comfortable neither with her father nor with Omkara. Dolly is the symbol of the female who gave up everything, her ego, her family and finally hear the words of indecent from Omkara which she has no mind, at the time of crossing the threshold of her father for Omkara with lifelong commitment with Omkara “Are kator...band kar ab ye nautanki...nangi ho gaye hai tu (hey hard-hearted...now stop pretending...you’ve been stripped clean) (Bharadwaj and Peer 157) kab se garam kar rahi the tu Kesu ka bister ? hain (since when have you been warming Kesu’s bed)... huh...? Achcha paahli baar kab soi the uske sath... kahi bachcha to ne thara diya na usne tere pet me...? (tell me, when was the first time you made out...are you carrying his seed by any chance...?) (Bharadwaj and Peer 158). She was deeply broken and with tears she rejects his beg of her life... and says “na je bas...ab aur ne jeena hame”... (Heard enough for a life time tonight...don’t feel the need to live any longer) ( Bharadwaj and Peer 158). This speech shows a woman’s trust which was completely destroyed at last. She meets death from her husband whom Indian wife considers her God. Even she dies without saying any words to express her feelings.

### **Gazala in Haider**

Once again we see Tabu in role of Gazala in third trilogy of Vishal Bharadwaj’s Haider which came in 2014. In this movie, she is in role of queen Gertrude. Once again, Tabu is in challenging character. She is a mature woman of forty years old. Bharadwaj has revitalized and revived the character of Gertrude very beautifully in form of Gazala. She is a woman of strong character in beginning. After her husband disappearance, she decides to marry her brother-in-law without delay. She knows very well how to take decision within time. She does not want to suppress her feelings but she is also psycho spirit. Her ‘id’ in form of love for Khurram invokes her to marry soon after her husband’s disappearance. She fulfills her desires and satisfied her ego but her affective nature for her son Haider comes in form of super ego in her marriage life.

From a feminist point of view, her decision for her life is fully justified but she was unable to guess the feeling of her son Haider who just return from Aligarh. He cannot accept that how his mother can remarry soon. It is very strange that a son tracks down his father but his wife takes shelter in the arms of her brother-in-law. But she has a fear in her mind about her marriage to Khurrham. Even after marriage, she thinks about her son. Khurram says to him “apko mugse jayada apne bête par yakeen h...vo pagal hai pagal (your son has crossed over to the other side...He’s lost it. (Bharadwaj and Peer 190). It was kind of Oedipus complex between Haider and Gajala.

The theory of Oedipus complex was coined by Freud and this term was derived from the character of Greek Oedipus who unknowingly marries her mother. Ernest Jones finds this Oedipus complex in Hamlet. While making this adaptation, Bharadwaj also tuned this complex in Haider and Gazala’s relationship. Gazala is torn between the obsessive love for his son and his super ego. Gazala restlessness after Haider’s performance in ‘Bismil’ song worries her very much. According to the Taebi the film is focus so much on Oedipus complex that Indian audience may be shocked. This speech of Gazala is sufficient to show this complex. Speech of Tabu reveals this complex. “yaad hai...bachpan me tu kya kahta tha? Bada hoke Mauje se nikah karuga” (Remember what would you say when were you child? When I grow up I will marry my Mammy) (Bharadwaj and Peer 160)... Roj Rat ko dak sahib aur mere beech aa ke so jata tha. Vo mughe chhote bhe the... to ladtha tha mugse,( you would snuggle between your father and me”... even he touched me you would fight with me”.( Bharadwaj and Peer 161) According to Freud, this type of Oedipus is found in very young age but it ends with child he identify the parents of the same sex. Suppressed desires of the subconscious express in later years in one’s behavior “but remain fixations in the unconscious of the adult” (Abrams 321). Haider does not accept his mother’s marriage to his uncle. This disturbs Gazala very much. She deeply hurts with her word when he says “now his brother touches you what does one say” (Bharadwaj and Peer 161). “The repressed but continuing presence in the adult’s unconscious of the male infant’s desires to possess to his mother and have his rival, the father out of the way” (Abrams 322). Khurrham was his rival; he cannot accept his mother with him and this disturbs Gazala too. This strong woman takes step of suicide only to save his son after realizing her guilt because she was responsible for the death of his husband unknowingly. She tells him “Intqaam se sirf intqaam paida hota h”. jab tak ham apne inqam se azad nahi honge tab tak koi azadi hame azad nahi kar sakti ( Revenge does not set us free...Freedom lies beyond revenge...true freedom...(Bharadwaj and Peer 212). Her step of committing suicide is showing the distress of her heart as well as it is an act of repentance what she did to her family.

#### Conclusion:

It can be concluded that psychoanalysis broadened audience attitude to understand the obsessive conflict of female protagonists in Bharadwaj adaptation. Study of Freud’s theory from feminine point of view is able to judge the inner manifestation of female characters. It contributed to develop a new attitude towards understanding of Shakespeare’s female characters in cinematic adaptation form.

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