Chapter – 4

*Macbeth in Euro–Australian Experiences*

This chapter as the name suggests investigates selected film adaptations of *Macbeth* from UK, USA and, Australia stressing on how these films adapt Shakespeare’s plays to their respective contexts.

**Shakespeare in European Milieu**

In this section the European adaptations of *Macbeth* are discussed. This section includes Roman Polanski’s *Macbeth* (1971), Trevor Nunn’s *Macbeth* (1978), Jeremy Freeston’s *Macbeth* (1997) and, Rupert Goold’s *Macbeth* (2010).

The scholarship of cinema in Europe, attained extraordinary prestige in the aftermath of 1960s, when, appealing openly with practices and politics of cultural activists, scholars used cinema as a stage to discover better methods than were existing in the study of literature for understanding the working of industrial cultural practices as developments that assist to endure or to interrupt the given financial dynamics leading social relations.

A movie all the time mediates in the certain social situations of existence: while being made by economic powers that entail and endure certain societal activities, a film, or rather, filmic treatise can position spectators in relation to what is given to be seen as the real in such a way that it makes possible different locale.
Roman Polanski’s *Macbeth*


Roman Polanski adapted *Macbeth* as a film in 1971. He took Jon Finch as Macbeth and Francesca Annis as Lady Macbeth. Polanski’s film sets the play in a pagan world amid Neolithic and the middle age. He inserts new possibilities by recreating key scenes imparting his own ideas. His actors are young energetic and tries to revive Shakespeare’s characters on screen.

The main star cast was as:

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<td>Francesca Annis</td>
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<td>Nicholas Selby</td>
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<td>Stephan Chase</td>
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In the very beginning there is a scene where a stick is held by the witches that gives a sense of furtive and enigmatic deed. In a long shot, there is sharp line that separates earth and sky. Functioning in cycle, as Charles Forker maps, the prolonged reddish landscape goes gradually to dark blue and there the obtrusive black stick makes the audience alert at the onset to the frequent invasions upon each other of dark and light, night and day, sleeping and waking simultaneously.

The description is stretched conspicuously and the audience are provided with numerous imageries of dawn or dusk to conjure the liminal spaces between cognizance and oblivion, transparency and anonymity, candidness and invisibility, innocence and guilt, future hopes and doom (2012: 191). The black stick of the witches is a symbol of tortuous skirmish amid imposing desire and the “horrible imaginings” that “Shake … [Macbeth’s] single state of man” (1.3.137–9) and therefore, is a primary signal of their influence upon Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. It also heralds the way in which their common fault will lead them more and more away from each other towards mental isolation and terrible craziness. Along with certain cuts, there are physical, socio–political, moral and psychological correlations in Shakespeare’s and Polanski’s
Macbeth. To start with the witches, there is difference in the portrayal of the three witches. In Polanski’s version they are divided by age and are “juggling friends” who “palter with us in a double sense” (5.8.19–20).

The two foul witches are of old age and one fair witch is young. The witch who told Macbeth that he will become next king is shown blind which signify both – the shrewd obscurity of her prophecy and the moral blindness of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The weird sisters design a fabric where fair is foul and foul is fair, where battles are lost and won, where men are both “Lesser ... and greater” and “Not so happy, yet much happiest” (1.3.63–4). Their stick is used in a situation linking to the upcoming violence of severing heads and limbs and extending the way towards brutal assaults.

In addition to the stick the other things held by the witches are – a severed arm gripping a dagger in its hand and a hangman’s noose. These are the pre–components of upcoming murders. The graphic hints to the separateness are, as Buchman records, well supplemented by the device of voice–over, cast–off constantly to indicate changes between dialogue and soliloquy, words for socio–political consumption as separated from utterances projected only for the undisclosed identity and demonstrating introspection.

The acute internal anguishs of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth dramatically occur through this fidgety back–and–forth (1991: 70). The ineffably secretive feelings are seldom articulated in an open situation, as, for instance, at the banquet staged to entertain Duncan, in Shakespeare only implied by a short, nonverbal demonstration of “a Sewer, and divers Servants with dishes and service over the stage” (1.7.1–2). In the banquet scene, Polanski offers the spectators a close graphical portrayal of the internal juxtaposition of ecstasy and illicit unease within Macbeth.
Another image Polanski use in his film is the “circle” that the witches make with the stick. Within the circle they dig a hole to bury the human arm and the noose. This circle symbolizes an endless cycle – the cycle of crown. The dirty politics behind the crown in well displayed – the crown transfers from Duncan to Macbeth, then from Macbeth to Malcolm and so on. Duncan wears this crown in the battle with Thane of Cawdor (after winning which he declares Macbeth the next thane of Cawdor) and he also wears this when the ex–thane is executed. Duncan declares Malcolm his successor. Macbeth – his would be assassins – is also sitting over there. Macbeth is in astute hungers for the crown and goes to murder Duncan. Duncan is sleeping and the crown rests by his bed.

During the struggle between Macbeth and Duncan the crown falls on the ground spiraling and clattering. Later it blazes from Macbeth’s head when Macbeth, wearing white ceremonial robes, is standing bare feet in the elevated plate. He says goodbye to Banquo ordering him, “Fail not our feast” (3.1.29). Both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are shown covered during the banquet where the ghost of Banquo appears. After which Macbeth feels troubled and find his crown “fruitless” and his scepter “barren” (3.1.62–3).

In the dream Macbeth longs for the crown stolen by Fleance. Banquo is smiling approving his son’s self–crowning. The boy in armor is seen jumping on the bed set to kill the sleeper thereby replicating Duncan’s murder and he places the tip of an arrow at the sleeper’s throat and Banquo puts his hand on Macbeth’s mouth to suppress his shriek. Macbeth awakens to discover his wife’s hand to come out the nightmare. During Macduff’s fight with Macbeth the crown is knocked with Macbeth’s head rolling chaotically later removed by Ross who offers it to Malcolm – the right heir. Polanski, in
this way, exposes the disconsolate political state of Scotland where self-proclamation
and violence is necessary to transfer the crown from one head to another.

In the last scene, Macduff declares, “The time is free” (5.9.22) and Macbeth’s
severed bloodied head is mounted upon a soaring pole to display in public. But the
cycle of crown is not stopped here only and it may recommence again. For Polanski
shows Duncan’s second son Donalbain (deliberately shown as physically handicapped
with a leg) visiting to the witches’ cave in order to get consultation; this meeting can
resume the cycle of the transfer of throne to another head.

Moreover, there is a hazy sunrise and seascape of lonely beach, and then a
crooked stick enters the frame from right followed by two withered crones and a young
woman, whose fairness gaps with the filthiness of the elder women: “Fair is foul, and
foul is fair” (1.1.11). From a squeaky, decrepit cart, these less than supernatural hags
remove an assortment of ghastly objects, among them, a hangman’s noose and a
severed arm, into hand of which they insert a dagger. In close-up, the crackling trio
bury the arm in the sand and pour a vial of blood over it. A gull squawks, a mascot of
galaxy of birds’ cries to follow, all of which echo Shakespeare’s own ornithological
obsession in *Macbeth*: Lights thicken, and crow / Makes wing to the rooky wood.
(3.2.50–1)

Fog and mist roll in with superimposed titles fading in and out, while the Third
Ear Band provides dissonant violin and bagpipe music for the departure of the witches’
rickety cart. The soundtrack echoes with horses’ hooves, shouting and screaming,
clashing of swords, the whinnying of horses, human wailing, coughing, and moaning,
while the superimposed credits continue to roll on the now completely fog-bound
screen. After the fog scatters, dead and wounded litter the battlefield at Forest. In mid–
shot a soldier stops by an injured man lying face down on the ground, pulls at his boot,
and the man stirs. The injured man feebly lifts his head and the soldier shatters his spine with two or three sickening whacks with an iron ball on a chain. The camera moves on to the bleeding sergeant’s battle report and then to a bloodied Thane of Cawdor bound and stretched out on a horse-drawn litter (Leggatt 2006: 112).

Polanski crafts his aural and visual images the way a good writer squeezes words. The mist and fog again suggest the play’s motif – the equivocal nature of reality – “Is this the dagger which I see before me?” (2.1.33). The splendour of nature contrasts with the ugliness of battle. The medallion and the ceremonial chain that Duncan lifts from the defeated Thane of Cawdor prefigures more chain images, to include the iron collar and chain around the neck of Cawdor at his horrific execution, an episode only reported in the play (Leggatt 113).

A defiant endomorph, Cawdor oozes contempt for his captors, especially the double-dealing Rosse, and leaps off a castle parapet to die brutally at the end of a chain fastened to an iron collar around his size twenty-two neck, “nothing in his life. Became him like leaning it” (1.4.7–8), reports Malcolm to Duncan. Chains hold the bear to the stone column in the baiting scene before the disastrous banquet. Later, Macbeth awards Lennox’s medallion and chain to Seyton as a payoff for his corrupt services.

The chain motif also stands for Macbeth’s self–enchainment, who, as has rightly been said, murdered himself when he murdered Duncan. Hanged men dangle, slowly twisting in the wind, from crudely constructed gallows, while, below several more of the condemned are queued up awaiting their turns. Those uncooperative with their hangman are pummelled into submission. A twitching and jerking wretch is hoisted up high by a rope around his neck (Leggatt 113). Off in the distance, a mounted Macbeth and Banquo impassively watch the chamber of horrors, a Brueghel–like nightmare; in
the words of the bleeding sergeant, “another Golgotha” (1.2.41), the place of the skull (Leggatt113).

By the end Lady Macbeth has cast off crown and robes, the last resemblances of social position and mental decorum, to become a restless sleepwalker, vulnerable in her nakedness and her delicate corpse barely warrants a comment in passing from Macbeth. Macbeth, clean–shaven as the film opens, increasingly develops a full beard. He has aged as well as hardened in his sensibilities, as if the foul wilderness of his mind has been turned inside out.

Macbeth’s castle ‘hath a pleasant seat’ to quote Duncan. Like its owners, it is attractive. It bustles with domestic life as the preparations are made for Duncan’s visit: servants sweep the banquet hall and catch pigs, Lady Macbeth prepares Duncan’s bed with rose petals, and the lord is welcomed home from the wars. As the film progresses, however, the castle is no longer a hostel of hospitality, and the cheerful domestic population is replaced by surely cut–throats and rogues. When they abandon Macbeth in the end, the empty castle becomes a metaphor for his own isolation. A major change is ‘privileging’ of Ross whom Polanski advances to one of the prime agents for defining the politics of film.

At a second glance he seems omnipresent on screen, even when in the background. He is at once the ‘maker’ and ‘un–maker’ of kings, a likable but facile fellow–traveller, opportunistic and deceitful, who always goes unpunished (Gunter 132). He serves Duncan, Macbeth and finally Malcolm. He is ever hovering in the background: when Banquo is assassinated and when Lady Macduff is raped and her children are slaughtered.

Not rewarded, Ross abandons Macbeth, journeys to Malcolm, informs Macduff of the annihilation of his family and then hands him the sword that will be undoing of
Macbeth. He literally ‘makes’ Malcolm king of Scotland when he hands the crown just off of Macbeth’s head and with a smirk cries out, ‘Hail, king of Scotland.’ Like the Macbeths, he is proof of witches’ dictum that ‘fair is foul.’ The film closes with Ross. For Polanski, kings are not determined by divine right but ‘made’ by the likes of Ross (Gunter 133). The way Polanski has portrayed human emotions with attention to minute details is something only a genius of his class can achieve. His approach to manifest the significant issues of Shakespearean text in his movie and his treatment of themes and motifs is noteworthy.

With a political and even polemical outlook, he engraves the play transmuting the political parable of the film development into an internal excursion which is together spiritual and psychological, working out within the text injecting his own anguish after losing his wife and children. However, aesthetic concerns also play their role in his adaptation, along with the deeply individual ones. The subsequent adaptation process makes this film into an additional story of personal choice in the surface of humanoid goodness.

The finale of film provided by Polanski gives a sense that he has been inclined by the Marxist critic Jan Kott, who construes Shakespeare’s histories and tragedies as exemplifying a bleak machinery of humanoid tyranny. Here the influence of the Holocaust by Nazis and Soviets followed by the murder of his wife by the Manson Gang is strongly evident. As Forker comments,

Polanski reinforces his conception of power politics endlessly repeating itself by refusing to romanticize any of the characters and by deliberately muting contrasts between good and evil. The “gracious Duncan” (3.1.67) is a pragmatic monarch whose generosity to Macbeth seems more expedient than magnanimous. When he scornfully removes the medal of rank from Cawdor’s wounded torso without dismounting, he shows no sign of grief at having been betrayed by a bosom friend; we feel no profound disappointment in his assertion that “There’s no art / To find the mind’s construction in the face,” while the “absolute trust” (1.4.11–4) that he claims to have built upon the traitor comes across as a
formulaic statement required by a situation hardly unusual or surprising. (2012: 199)

The ex–thane of Cawdor before being hanged says, “Long live the king”. He repeats his words without showing any sorrow but ironically conforming to a ceremony compulsory of any doomed person on the gibbet. Malcolm, deprived of any sentiment speaks, “Nothing in his life/Became him like the leaving it” (1.4.7–8). Malcolm is also transformed entirely. When he is seen for the first time, he is a stroppy young fellow who fears from his father. But in the end when he becomes the king he appears matured enough to become a politically vigilant ruler. Probably, that is why his final speech is shortened by Polanski, “promising to rule by the grace of Grace” (5.9.39).

Polanski, with the characterization of Ross, depicts another dusky facet of filthy politics – the prevalent tendency to be with the persons in power. The persons like Ross change their allegiance and go with the one whichever is powerful. In Shakespeare’s Macbeth, Ross is a reliable person full of morality and common human emotions. Polanski however represents him as a pure political and self–centered person. Primarily, he was loyal to Duncan, he becomes loyal to Macbeth when his position changes. With other two murderers, he is the third one among the murders of Banquo and he tries to kill his son Fleance.

He is the overseer of the assassination of his two fellow murders. He also arranges for the slaughter of Macduff’s wife and children without any hesitation. He also delivers a letter to Macbeth from a traitor, seemingly expecting to acquire his position. Further, when he sees Macbeth’s power is going to tumble, he flees to support Malcolm. It is only he who brings the tragic news to Macduff without having any sense of regret or guilt. Lastly, he supplies the crown to Duncan’s legitimate inheritor with the same visage he had shown when he was organizing the murder of Macduff’s family. On
this Forker comments, “John Stride plays the part as a careerist blandly accepting any means to a desired end, as a person who can roll with the tides and, in fact, must do so to survive in a cutthroat world” (2012: 201).

Another key element that helps Polanski to transmute Shakespeare’s 400 years old play into contemporary society is the display of father–son relationships. Father–son relationships have been one of the major themes inherent in Shakespeare’s plays too. In Macbeth, Macbeth is childless and Lady Macduff’s grumbles that her son is “Fathered … yet … fatherless” (4.2.27). Polanski presents the familial relation of Malcolm and Donalbain to Duncan as uneasy, anxious and awkward thereby proposing the suspicions regarding the possibilities of distrust or rivalry between them in future. Banquo and Fleance, on the contrary, seem to share a respect and affection for each other.

As far as the characterization of Fleance is concerned, Polanski shows him more powerful. Fleance is posited as a powerful political figure and big danger to Macbeth than that of Shakespeare. In the beginning, however, he looks very innocent and is singing for King Duncan. Many a time he is seen with his father as for example, he is helping his father in sleeping arrangements if he is not given to say something.

It is only he who frighten Macbeth in his dream by taking the crown himself. This, nonetheless, seems reasonable because in the prophecies made by the witches, it was told that Banquo’s children would become king in future. As it has been revealed by the psychologists that dreams are the unconscious memories of what we see/think in consciousness, it was Macbeth’s fear that Fleance might become the next king. He therefore hires the murders to kill Banquo as well as his sons.

Due to his good luck Fleance escapes but his father is murdered. Moreover, neither Shakespeare, nor Polanski clearly unearth the circumstances which would pave the way for the transfer of crown form Malcolm to Fleance. What is shown by Polanski
is that when the prince advice Macduff to exchange his anguish to revenge, he says, “He has no children” (4.3.218). This, as Forker discovers,

…. refers to Malcolm rather than, as common in many productions, to Macbeth and so helps to call attention to the continuing doubtfulness of the royal succession should a childless king manage to displace a childless tyrant. And if Fate does not ultimately choose Fleance to unseat Malcolm, she may choose Donalbain instead. Polanski suggests that dynasties by their very nature are unstable, subject to sudden disruption, and that orderly transitions according to lineal descent cannot be counted upon. Macbeth’s usurpation, the chief focus of the narrative as dramatized, may serve the audience as evidence of a systemic and perhaps incurable problem in the body politic. (2012: 202)

Polanski’s representation of Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking scene, among others, is highly appreciated as well as criticized world over. He shows Lady Macbeth naked while walking in sleep and then in sitting position when she tries to wash her hands. Her complete bareness works as graphical metaphor for her exposure of a tormented interior life. She confesses all her foul deeds. Her secrets are now uncovered like her. Her doctors are standing close her and noting her actions. The male doctor passes his hands in front of her eyes to check whether or not she blinks. Since the role of Lady Macbeth was played by Francesca Annis, a young and very beautiful actor, the audience feel sympathy with her nakedness in spite of any sort of excitement (upon watching a naked female lady).

Polanski shows Macbeth in night dress with bare chaste, just after the murder of Duncan. This is an effort to conjure a sense of physical and mental susceptibility. Even in his dream, his chaste is exposed by Fleance with an arrow. The leitmotifs of nakedness handled by Polanski signify innocence and guilt simultaneously and make the audience aware of the repercussions of regicide:

And pity, like a naked newborn babe
Striding the blast, or heaven’s cherubin horded
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. (1.7.21– 25)
Forker’s analysis upon the use of nakedness by Polanski is as:

The image of naked forces from eternity impinging so terminally upon human activity, expands the context of nakedness, innocent or guilty, to the level of metaphysical judgment. Polanski, however, although he retains the speech, seems to discount the likelihood of divine intervention. (203)

Moreover, it is a co-incidence that as Polanski projects Donalbain as physically handicapped with a leg. The same is done by Vishal Bahrdwaj in his filmic version of Othello as Omkara (2006). In this film he has portrayed Iago as Langra Tyagi who is disabled with a leg. Due to the seeds implanted by him in Omraka’s mind, Omkara does not trust his wife and smothers her at the first night of their marriage. For in India (especially in north India) it is a common supposition that a person with some disability – disabled with one leg, or blind with one eye must have some wickedness. So is proved by Langra Tyagi and Donalbain also would.

Chains are, of course; also have ample significance in Polanski’s film. The thane of Cawdor is prisoned by four chains and hanged by chains only. The bear is teased by crowd is also tied with chains. Macbeth is so disturbed by Banquo’s ghost that he recoils on the ground at the pillar with its now unfixed chain where the bear had yielded to its nasty aggressors on “Hence horrible shadow” (3.4.106). Samuel Crowl enunciates it as, “Polanski links power, rank, ambition, and appetite into a telling chain of destructive consequences” (2008: 26).

Use of animals and birds are also an essential aspect of Shakespeare’s plays. In Polanski’s film, the figurative birds of death used by Shakespeare – ravens, owls, crows, rooks are much heard than seen. The seabirds are heard screeching at the beginning where Duncan’s soldiers are passing through after winning the battle. Polanski shows the desires and cruelties of medieval people. There are pigs and cooks
Polanski’s employment of landscape, architecture, and other atmospheric conditions help him to adapt Shakespeare’s play with appropriate aggressiveness seems original. When the three witches enter to encounter Macbeth and Banquo, the background is foggy and filthy which enhance the ambiguity and mysteriousness and help the witches in making impression upon Macbeth and Banquo. Human cruelty is associated with thunder, rain and wind in Shakespeare’s Macbeth. In Polanski’s Macbeth all this is presented in more sensory ways.

On the night when Macbeth murders Duncan, the atmosphere is scary. The window curtains blow fiercely awry and the candles are dowsed by the wind. The whole castle is filled with the catastrophic blazes and lightning coming from outside. Additionally, when the Macbeth is planning to assault Macbeth’s family, he is in bed with his lady and the room is filled with the reddened light of sunset. Macbeth reveals, “I am in blood/Steeped in so far that shou/ld I wade no more, /Returning were as tedious as go o’er” (3.4.136–8).

Stairs also uphold deep implications in the film. There are many scenes where stairs reflect not only physical and but psychological ups and downs. When Lady Macbeth, for instance, reads the letter she does so while ascending the steps with the letter. As she climbs up, she nurses her ambitions but fears for her man “is too full of the milk of human kindness / to catch the nearest way” (1.5.15–6). She is very happy when Macbeth comes. She climbs down hurriedly to welcome him. In the end when there is a combat between Macbeth and Macduff, Macbeth struggles for life and climbs up the stairs wearing the crown. When Macduff cut his head down, the crown tumbles
down with the severed head. The film delivers a strong message that if someone gets a highest position unethically the downfall is inevitable.

Through *Macbeth*, Polanski has tried to foreground the dirty nature of contemporary medieval politics. Polanski’s Macbeth and Banquo are not friends but, unlike those Shakespeare’s, seems to be competitors of each other. In Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, for example, Banquo reads Macbeth’s nervousness at once in response to the prophecies made by the witches that “he will be king hereafter”, and says, “Good Sir, why do you start and seem to fear / Things that do sound so fair?” (1.3.48–50). Polanski does not insert these lines (as well as this spirit) because he thinks it would be quite amusing to expect this kind of affinity and wholesomeness between two politicians (particularly when they hold almost equal position).

Polanski’s film was of course appreciated for ‘appropriate and reasonable’ editing of scenes, subplots and other situation changes. But many critics comment upon the lack of the inclusion of contemporary cultural values. Forker notes that the Christian traditional beliefs and values and, Jacobean worldview (provided by the playwright of the source play), the foundational leitmotifs and symbols are not included by Polanski.

In his words,

Polanski’s script mutes Shakespeare’s metaphysically startling image of the king’s dead body, described in terms of the opulently gilded iconography of martyrology: “Here lay Duncan, / His silver skin laced with his golden blood / And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature, / For ruin’s wasteful entrance” (2.3.104–7). In the film these lines are reduced to the much plainer and less religious “Here lay Duncan, his skin laced with his golden blood. Shakespeare clearly makes much of kingly sanctity in a way foreign to Polanski’s resolutely secular modernity. (204)

He also emits that Polanski represents Macbeth’s coronation in ‘pagan’ terms and thus rejects the medieval practice of smearing and other sacramental rites. There is
not any church, altars, bishops/priests displayed anywhere. No one is shown even making the sign of cross (ibid). In the film, the nuances of violence and carnage, evident from the beginning to the end, are, as Forker finds, diverse from Shakespeare’s. Shakespeare’s treatment of bloodshed and violence comprises wide range of overtones both destructive and constructive, associated with ‘valor’, ‘procreation’, ‘legacy’, ‘Golgotha’ and ‘the Eucharist’ (ibid).

While annotating upon the 20th century’s adaptations of Shakespearean films (like Roman Polanski’s) Harbage’s opines:

> The twentieth [and we might add the twenty-first] century has witnessed a revolution in sentiment, and to an undetermined degree in private morality, so that an estrangement from Shakespeare exists in some areas not unlike that which existed among the literati of the Restoration. There is more than a little hostility in the air toward Shakespeare’s moral and political assumptions on the one hand and to his generous view of human nature on the other – a reaction against both his kind of conservatism and his kind of liberalism. (1970: 66)

In this context, Polanski’s skillful and inventive transmutation of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* on his own terms is proved successful in many aspects. Since the questions of fidelity or faithfulness are of course cannot be abundantly gratified, Polanski has tried to reproduce the dramatic epithet and core themes and meanings implanted by Shakespeare in the source text.

Berenice Kliman in her *Shakespeare in Performance: Macbeth*, remarks that in Polanski’s film “… both Jon Finch and Francesca Annis are directed to act in a flat, colorless style that destroys verse…. This diminution of poetry serves [Polanski’s] purpose of denying to Macbeth the status of poet” (2004: 200). She also articulates that this sort of filming seems to be done after an impregnable interpretation of the play which makes the audience the locus of the tragedy (ibid).
Defending the brutal murder scenes of Macduff and his family Polanski submits,

My treatment of another scene was based on a childhood experience. This is the moment in Act IV when the murderers dispatched by Macbeth burst in on Lady Macduff and her young son. I suddenly recalled how the SS officer had searched our room in the ghetto, swishing his riding crop to and fro, toying with my teddy bear, and nonchalantly emptying out the hatbox full of forbidden bread. The behavior of Macbeth’s henchmen was inspired by that recollection.\(^4\)

Polanski’s Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are young, attractive and sympathetic couple, surely in royal favour. Their physical attractiveness visually reinforces the ‘fair is foul, and foul is fair’ motif with which the witches open the film. There is no pressing reason for them to murder Duncan. However the Macbeths are childless and will remain so, as opposed to Banquo, Macduff, Duncan, Seward and, even the father and son murderers.

This childlessness becomes their driving fear, and Macbeth attempts to wipe out all sons, visualised by Polanski in scary detail: young Macduff, wrapped in a towel, is stabbed in the back after bathing, young Seward humiliated before Macbeth cuts this throat, and even the murderers are dumped down a cascade.

Polanski motivates Macbeth’s ambition by emphasizing the scene in which Duncan introduces primogeniture by naming his son Malcolm as his successor, a reading of the play closer to Holinshed than to Shakespeare. Polanski makes extensive use of close–ups and voice–overs (more than in any other Macbeth film) to allow the audience to be privy to the secret thoughts and desires of the young couple. From the outset the audiences are included in their conspiracy, warfare on their self–imposed psychological journey into emotional isolation and self–imprisonment.

Polanski’s film could be noted for several other innovations. It introduces a young central couple whose sexuality is an important dramatic element. It treats the Thane of Ross as a thoroughly self–serving figure, whose political behavior repeats,
emphasizes, and contrasts with that of others. Characteristically his symbol of entrapment is a very literal one, a chain. In Macbeth, the readers are constantly aware of the pressure of the language, with its images of blood and darkness; Polanski’s visual image, and his sound track, exert a similar, even more relentless pressure. In the last scene of the film Donaldbain turns back to the witches, in evident hope that they help him gain the throne (and therefore overthrow Malcolm), as they had earlier led Macbeth to the kingship. This is really a new experiment made by Polanski which does seem unreasonable in any sense.
Trevor Nunn’s *Macbeth*


The lead star cast was as:

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<td>Susan Dury</td>
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<td>Bob Peck</td>
<td>Macduff</td>
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<td>Roger Rees</td>
<td>Malcolm</td>
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<td>John Bown</td>
<td>Lennox</td>
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<td>Ian McDiarmid</td>
<td>The Porter/Ross</td>
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<td>Greg Hicks</td>
<td>Donalbain</td>
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Trevor Nunn’s 1976 production of *Macbeth* (directed by Phillip Casson), which begins in the Royal Shakespeare Company’s smallest theatre, *The Other Place* was not only one of the most successful twentieth–century productions of the play, but one of the most effective transfers of a stage production of Shakespeare to television. The intimacy of the original performances conditions suited the intimacy of the medium. Marion D. Perret’s account of the 1978 Thames Television versions (released on Videotape by HBO) stresses its close observation of social behavior. She also shows how the production, in line with some late twentieth–century criticism, makes it difficult to draw a pat moral contrast between Macbeth as evil and his adversaries as good. Macbeth’s capacity for love and the misgivings created about the final victory of Malcolm and Macduff, work against conventional distinctions (Leggatt 2006: 113).

In this theatrical version, Ian McKellen acted as Macbeth and Judi Dench as Lady Macbeth. For Nunn adapted his production from a successful stage production by Royal Shakespeare Company, his adaptation is very near to source text. There is effective use of light and darkness. The stage is dark whereas King Duncan and Malcolm are wearing shining white clothes. Lady Macbeth is dressed in black clothes and looks like a nun. Duncan is presented as a noble man full of kind virtues like a saint.

Mullin found that, “The conception of Nunn’s *Macbeth* is an enactment of a ritual, a performance that partook of exorcism and Satanism” (1987: 355). He further says that Nunn was, through the implications of an on–stage circle around, extremely eager to make an adjacent atmosphere where all the characters could be employed (ibid).

When Nunn’s production opens it is seen that the actors come foreground and the camera takes a close up of everyone. A sacred record is playing in the background.
The whole set is planned in such a way that the disparity of light and dark aids the performers come and go. The last close up among the actors is of the two witches. The witches are exposed one after the other. Though they do not communicate verbally but touch each other in order to display affinity. It seems that the youngest witch is awful and is in need of support for she looks disturbed. Then there takes place another shot where the third witch, who appears very serene and confident, comes to the center of the circle and sits with the others. All the three are shown in the center casting a spell. Then emanates Macbeth (Ian McKellen). He is welcomed by Duncan (Griffith Jones). Nunn here foreground the notion of the play for audience at this point witness a clash of conviction (religion) verses spell (witchcraft) because the witches can be heard creating weird clamors whereas Duncan is listened praying. The witches start crying as they are hurtled from the sacred prayer of Duncan. In another close up shot Duncan is praying loudly and the witches are also shouting more loudly. After that there heard thunder and the lightning highlights the faces of witches.

After sometime the witches are happy for they think their schemes has prospered. The eldest witch asks something of which the youngest one answers. The middle–aged witch adds Macbeth’s name on which the other two are shocked but they also reprise Macbeth’s name after which all leave. This entire scene goes for about four minutes. In the next scene the witches made their prophecies. Almost ignoring two others, the first witch holds a voodoo doll and puts needles into it and speaks resolutely “I’ll do, I’ll do” (1.1.10).

During that the second witch seems making something on her clothing carelessly. As there heard thunder, she informs Macbeth’s arrival. Macbeth and Banquo come foreground and astonished upon their presence. The witches made their prophecies and seen bowing and saying ‘hail’. Banquo is highlighted by the camera
when one witch repeats a prophecy for him. After that as the witches stand up to leave, Macbeth stops them showing his dagger. He threatens the witches one by one showing his dagger, but the witches disappear one by one. Nunn uses no special effect for this scene – the witches just left for off-screen. The use of voodoo doll is a significant adds on by Nunn.

In the scene when Macbeth goes to the witches again, the witches are sitting in a trio, of them the first and third are singing while the second one is making potion. The third witch notifies the arrival of Macbeth. Macbeth comes and asks them for help but they do not pay heed to him. When again Macbeth shows his desire for them, the first witch, who seems superior among the three, stand up and put Macbeth’s jacket off. She stoops him while the second one asks him to drink the potion muttering some lines. Macbeth is surrounded by them and seems controlled by them. He drinks the potion and falls on the floor in the arms of the first witch. Macbeth is scared as his eyes are covered by the witches. The witches leave Macbeth unaccompanied in darkness. This eight minutes long scene presents the internal situation of Macbeth’s mind. The audience are left to imagine what Macbeth is thinking at that time.

James C. Bulman opines that:

> These media have an advantage over theater because film and video allow us repeated viewings of a single performance; they encourage us to assimilate that performance to the condition of a literary text – a stable artifact rather than a contingent, ephemeral experience. (1996: 2)

In this context, Nunn’s use of light and camera is praiseworthy. The functioning of light and the camerawork, for example, when the witches appear and are ‘vanishing in the air’ is truly artistic for no special effect is used for this.

Nunn’s Macbeth is too cold to protest the pressure made upon him by his wife. His own imagination is not as frightening as the influences set upon him. In the dagger
scene, he wishes to catch the dagger; he wishes to kill Duncan, but all this seems not impending inside entirely but the enthralment from his wife. Since his relationship with his lady is taciturn, he takes it as a chance to prove his masculinity to murder Duncan. His lady is very sexy and is only half in age than him. During the whole film the way they hold their hands reveals the warmth of their relationship. At the end, when the tomorrow and tomorrow speech is delivered, this Macbeth seems sympathetic and full of affection – he collects sympathy from the audience.

Nunn presents him as a man who has no choice; a man who is doing everything knowingly, but could not stop himself; a man who wants to pay for his foul deeds. It seems he is waiting for the conclusion and his deliverance lies only in his death. Since he had murdered his sleep by murdering Duncan, he could sleep only after being murdered.

In Nunn’s adaptation very less things are visible on the stage. The actors seems supplying their words on a forbidding platform. When the three witches meet Macbeth for the first time, they welcome him respectfully makes their prophecies. But when they meet him second time, they seem to intoxicate him. They are seen holding candles and singing in order to invoke the spirits. They make Macbeth drinking the potion and cover his eyes with a black ribbon. Not only Macbeth but the audience too seem to be trapped by the three weird sisters and the dark stage make the atmosphere full of horrors.

In many scenes the physical presence and absence of characters affects the perception of audience. In this context the statement of Sarah Hatchuel is worth quoting:

This question of presence/absence is at the very heart of cinema aesthetics. In essence, the medium of the cinema stimulates perception through many pictorial and sound signifiers. It thus offers many signs that seem “present” to the eyes. However, although it shows a great deal, cinema immediately overturns perception because the objects represented are not actually there. Contrary to the theatre, all the
elements seen on the screen are not present in the same space as the spectators. This physical absence of the signifier makes the content of the film inaccessible and infinitely desirable at the same time. This absence creates a longing for what is not present here and now, thus including mechanics of lack and desire.¹

Nunn makes both the dagger and the ghost of Banquo are absent physically from the stage. The audience are left to imagine what Macbeth speaks. When Macbeth tries to catch the dagger delivering the ‘dagger’ soliloquy, he catches the air as he utters, “Come, let me clutch thee: / I have thee not” (2.1.34–5). Likewise when he sees the ghost of Banquo, he points outs with finger but nothing is visible. The presence of dagger and Banquo’s ghost therefore is only mentally observed. Thus Nunn’s adaptation, as Hatchuel finds, “clearly emphasizes virtually over physically, absence over presence”.² In her words,

Every end of fiction signals that the narrative ceases to be connected with the diegesis. The readers or spectators have to leave the world of the story and abandon the characters. A work of fiction can end stably by bringing a solution to a problem and conveying the feeling of something achieved, closed, complete, and fulfilled, as if it ended “naturally. But it can also end incomplete and uncertain, with suspense, and indecision.³

Nunn’s production presents the last scene very faithfully as it is given by Shakespeare. Nunn shows that when Macbeth comes to know that Macduff’s birth is uncommon, he starts accepting the fate. Though he does not surrender, but he is not so effective. The music is heard in background and the darkness increases on the stage. The two does not visible clearly – no one knows who is winning. The audience have to wait until Macduff is clearly visible having Macbeth’s head. Nunn thus tries to maintain the suspense and uncertainty and reveals the final outcome in pure Shakespearean style.

Some of the adaptors however do not ensure this uncertainty. Roman Polanski, for instance, shows everything and vanishes the suspense. He conceals the suspense maintained by Shakespeare and doesn’t let the audience imagine. Not only that, he
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gives his film an open ending as he shows Donalbain visiting witches cave after Malcolm is hailed as king.

In *Shakespeare on Screen*, Daniel Rosenthal comments:

> From its supernatural opening to its gruesome climax, *Macbeth* is the Shakespeare play that reads most like a film script. [...] Shakespeare in cinematic terms cross–cuts at speed between the blasted heath, Forres Castle, a nearby road, the English king’s palace, Macduff’s Castle, Dunsinane Castle and Birnam Wood. Bursts of supernatural or violent action occur at more frequent intervals than shoot–outs in Die–hard or Lethal Weapon. (2000: 71)

Besides other aspects of this production, the depiction of the character of Macbeth (acted by Ian McKellen) was highly appreciated. Nunn portrayed his Macbeth as a dualistic, susceptible and beleaguered personality. Nunn’s Macbeth is really “too full of the milk of human kindness, / to catch the nearest way” (1.5.17–8).

This Macbeth struggles with his inner soul and the external world. His tormented soul could not maintain his loyalty towards the king and lead him on the path of regicide. This Macbeth feels pity with Malcolm when he tells Macbeth that he has lost his father. This is the dualism of Macbeth – one side he a brutal murderer of Duncan, while on the other side he feels sympathy with a boy whose father is no more now.

When Macbeth is enthroned with kingship, it seems he has left his tenderness behind. But after sometime, he is unable to ignore his soul that haunts him every moment. He could not sleep well and becomes isolated even from his wife. This Macbeth is more full of fear and grief–stricken than that of Shakespeare’s. His decision to murder Banquo is for him the only way to cope up with the fear – the only way to save himself personally as well as publically. Banquo could tell people regarding the prophecies and he was the only one who has shown his deviation with Macbeth’s kingship:
To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus:
Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear’d: ‘tis much he dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety.
There is none but he,
Whose being I do fear. (3.1.47–54)

The ghost of Banquo is not shared visibly with the audience. It is due to Macbeth’s expressions that they think Macbeth is frightened after watching the ghost. The dagger is also not visible to the audience. In both situations Macbeth’s expressions are so sentient that the audience start feeling the presence of what Macbeth sees – the audience are so amalgamated with Macbeth that they start watching from Macbeth eyes and imagining with Macbeth’s mind.

Macbeth confesses his lady to have ‘full of scorpion’ in his mind. McKellen is so effective that the audience are able to feel his imagination. He presents the image of Macbeth that Shakespeare has provided. McKellen thus helps Nunn to revive the poetry of Shakespearean language profoundly. When Lady Macbeth tries to convince Macbeth to murder the king, he shows unwillingness. On this she evades him and warns him not to touch her, notwithstanding his exertions. When lastly he shows his readiness, she herself touches him and starts fondling him. By the end of the scene they kiss each other. The spell casted by Lady Macbeth through his sexuality has shown its upshot. This was a clear warning that if Macbeth expects a wifely behavior from her, he will have to do – cheerfully or reluctantly – what she wants.

Lightning is one of the crucial apparatuses of stage setting. In Nunn’s Macbeth the stage is nearly shadowy. Only on few occasions lights foray the bare stage. Lightning is used mostly to highlight the actors who are dressed in black cloths with some white shreds on undershirt or handcuff. King Duncan is dressed in white to
signify his innocence. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are in black for they have sinful dark desires.

At the finale of the play, the dagger and the crown is displayed subsequent to each other. This kind of ending extends the play; the heights of meaningfulness – the dagger and the crown go hand in hand; these are what Macbeth killed for and, dies for.

This film full of powerful acting of the key scenes grips the audiences and will not let go. For example, in the sleepwalking scene, when Dench’s astonishing Lady Macbeth draws us into the anguish of the self–damned, shifting the audience’s gaze brings small relief: they see the Doctor visibly shaken by horror, pity, and helplessness. Nunn’s production both intensifies the viewers’ emotional involvement and challenges their understanding by persistent ambiguity. This Macbeth film makes the audiences to consider carefully what they see: the first shot forces them to interpret a pattern. They look down on a ring of dark blocks within a spot–lit circle, puzzling until the ceremonial entrance of the actors. A slow pan of the actors’ faces gives more information than meaning.

The repetitions of the simple act of kneeling to kiss the ruler’s hand can expand the gesture’s range of significances. As Macbeth, cheered by the thanes, enters to Duncan, the bloody sergeant impulsively falls on his knees and presses his lips to the hero’s hand; as quickly, he pulls himself stiffly erect, clicks his heels together in salute, and disappears. He may merely pay tribute to his brave captain, but Macbeth may find his obeisance another confirmation of the witches’ prophecy, and Duncan may find it a reason for proclaiming Malcolm forthwith. Macbeth’s kneeling to kiss Duncan’s hand shows warmth, love, and loyalty; to kiss Malcolm’s cold observance of protocol (114). This kind of representation reveals the contemporary social order. It also exhibits how
films can prove a significant medium for the portrayal of socio–political outlooks of masses at a specific point of time. As Patrick Fuery asserts,

Films, like other narrative processes, establishes social order which are constructed from a variety of sources, including the social order of the created world, the socio–political–historical contexts which the film draws on, the critical contexts of its reception, and the social contexts of spectator. These orders are all played out within what can be called the architectonics of social orders. Such architectonics operates within themselves to give relational points to events, people, histories, ethics, etc. within the film and outside of it. Part of this process is the construction of boundaries which delimit and establish the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ of narrative events and objects. (2000: 109)

For when the spectators watch a film they continually oscillate between the film’s social world order, the social order is derived from, and their own. Perhaps such boundaries are limitless, or form part of the un–representable, or are ephemeral and specific to a film. But some are more persistent and recurring than others, and overall structure of such boundaries is common to all films including the films adapted from a text (ibid).

Cinematographers with prior interest in Shakespeare – a significant but not dominant portion of a film’s anticipated public – tend to begin by assessing the degree of a screen version’s divergence from the published dramatic text. Russell Jackson’s comments in this context are worth mentioning:

In writing for the mainstream cinema it is axiomatic that dialogue should be kept to minimum. What happens is a scene – as director’s traditional command indicates – is ‘action’. A screenplay is a story told in pictures, and there will always be some kind of problem when you tell the story through words, and not pictures. The ‘real dynamic of good screenwriting’ offers an encapsulated definition of successful mainstream work: strong and active characters, combined with a unique, stylized visual narrative that constantly moves the story forward. (2000: 17)

The power of a Shakespeare play on stage stems from the fact, as Peter Brook says, that it happens nowhere. A Shakespeare playhas no setting. Each effort, whether
reinforced by aesthetic or political motives, to attempt to form a structure round a
Shakespeare play is an imposition which the risks of reducing the play: it can only sing, live and breathe in any empty space.\(^4\)

Moreover, like Macbeth, it may be itched to resolve what “cannot be ill, cannot be good” into one or the other; like him, the audiences may also be tricked. The intercutting in 1.1 invites to expect a contest between forces of supernatural good and evil, like that in Orson Welles’ film. Although there are many visual references to religion, is shown, in fact, little of such a struggle in Scotland or in Macbeth. His faltering in determination comes not from depth of moral scruples but fear that his “vaulting ambition” will overleap itself and fall (115).

This Macbeth is very much warrior. Hair slicked back, leather–coated, at the witches’ hail the whirls, whipping his dagger out as a street punk pulls a switch–blade. Before killing Duncan, he rolls–up his sleeve, workmanlike. In the banquet scene, he is both ‘a soldier and a feared man’: despite the fit of terror that has him literally foaming at the mouth, he plunges his dagger again and again into that ‘horrid imagining’. Though temporarily so ‘unmanned in folly’ that he clings to his wife in public, when she collapses after their guests leave, he lifts her up and drags her off to face knowledge of other dark deeds (ibid.). Disturbingly, the audience are not allowed to forget the loving man when Macbeth becomes a monster.

McKellen makes the spectators feel in his Macbeth a genuine warmth gradually giving way to pretended cordiality. The blood the spectators see on Macbeth’s hands may strike them less than love those hands show after the murder: sustaining Macduff as he struggles to voice the unspeakable, confronting Donaldbain in his grief, protectively embracing Lady Macbeth. Her growing recognition that the man she so loves has murdered his ability to care for her is what kills the spirit of this Lady.
Intuiting that he plans the murder of his battle partner, she pulls back in horror from the man Macbeth has become, but she can never ‘be innocent of the knowledge’ or free of the deed.

Foul and fair are inextricable in what are at once a horror story and a love story. Lips explore lips, pausing only to plan murder. Both Macbeth and his wife express and seek union of mind through touch; when their thoughts match, their bodies mesh. The dying of their passion is as wrenching to watch as dying of their souls. Preoccupied with killing, he turns to irony and action. Shut out, unable to bear the change in him or between them, she has nowhere to turn for relief. Nor do the audience, if they seek to respond unequivocally. Though difficult to endure, but Nunn’s amazing version of Macbeth is impossible to ignore.
Jeremy Freeston’s Macbeth

Jeremy Freeston is a British film director and writer. His popular films are Gladiatrix (2001), The Boer War and Other Colonial Adventures (1999), etc. He presented his Macbeth version in 1997. The main actors of his films were:

<table>
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<th>Actor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jason Connery</td>
<td>Macbeth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helen Baxendale</td>
<td>Lady Macbeth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graham McTavish</td>
<td>Banquo</td>
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<td>Kenneth Bryans</td>
<td>Macduff</td>
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<td>Hildegard Neil</td>
<td>First Witch</td>
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<td>Jean Trend</td>
<td>Second Witch</td>
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<td>Phillipa Peak</td>
<td>Third Witch</td>
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<td>John Corvin</td>
<td>Duncan</td>
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<td>Ross Dunsmore</td>
<td>Malcolm</td>
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<td>Iain Stuart Robertson</td>
<td>Ross</td>
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<td>Rob Swinton</td>
<td>Seyward</td>
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<td>Phill Wallace</td>
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<td>Jock Ferguson</td>
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Macbeth was the Freeston’s first film as a director and co–writer. Earlier he has been a producer, co–director and editor. All he did mainly for TV productions. Freeston’s Macbeth was conceived as the definitive Scottish adaptation of Shakespeare’s Scottish play. In his film Freeston’s focus is on representation of the source text in interesting and realistic way. Since his film is a low–budget film, he has not glamorized any character and nowhere over–interpreted any scene. He has altered
the three witches as only two – both are surprisingly lame. Freeston’s *Macbeth* was observed from the “theoretical–filmic” perspective by the critics. There was ‘authentically set in 11th century Scotland’ written on the jacket of the DVD of *Macbeth* which shows that there is narrative realism in the film. This film tries to ‘record’ the history emphasizing on accuracy of facts.

Some critics comment that Freeston has taken care of everything so much that he has forget to inset new possibilities through the characters. Due to his tendency to be close to the source play, it seems some of his scenes are just to provide information towards the play.⁵ He portrays his Macbeth as an “individuated subject within a realist possible world”.⁶ This Macbeth is a character depicted as the straight object of cinematic chronicle. He is not offered as the “subject of verbal narrative performed by others the Captain, Ross, Duncan etc”.⁷ Freeston could not go beyond the faithfulness and therefore his dialogues lack creativity. He does not provide enough space where a character can leave his influence on the audience.

But Sahlins appreciates the film and says that this film is in a sense, Fresston’s cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, it is not therefore, Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* directed by Freeston. This is a work of appropriation and it “responds in a rather refreshing way to certain historiography that is quick to take the agents of imperialism as exclusive players of the only game in town” (2000: 477).

Freeston’s film is at some extent a historical document for it adapts the Elizabethan play is such way where no space reserved be dwarfed while reconstructing the narratives for screen. He has however not provided some initial information which could well justify the film on a historical level. He, for example, does not let the audience know that the revolt against Duncan comprises an attack by the Norwegian King and his army as it is provided by Shakespeare. These kinds of descriptions
however ensure the accuracy and authenticity at an objective level. If the audience start watching a film from a historical perspective, they may judge every minute description present in the source text. It does not seem appropriate completely.

Moreover, Freeston’s Macbeth seems very realistic in its visual appeal. Macbeth is acted by Jason Connery and Lady Macbeth is acted by Helen Baxendale. As the film starts there is a bloody battle in a medieval style that gives the film a ‘period’ touch. After winning the battle, Macbeth and Banquo are riding crossing the woods. The film presents a romantic sight of nature nurtured Scotland decked with green landscapes rolling narrow streams upon it. In the words of Arkai,

This film projects a reality – a parallel dimension created through color filters or an interior dimension created through subjective visions and voice– over. The act of showing seems to call for (or go together with) an absence of objective reality. There are shots of beautiful Scottish landscapes, of clear, unpolluted brooks and hills with peaceful fauna, perhaps to highlight what will be “lost and [not] won” henceforth, not so much as a result of the evil designs of powerful forces beyond comprehension, but as the consequence of human inability to break away from the cycles of blood – more specifically, of a flaw identified in the film as Scotch. (1999: 4–5)

This film forms a fully different vantage perspective, as Arkai further states, with reference to its driving forces, could be established politically within the ‘Scottish nationalists’ movement’ and on the other side, aesthetically as far as the British heritage film practices are concerned. This film hence can be placed under ‘period’ films (ibid).

In the murder scene of Duncan, Macbeth goes to the room where Duncan is sleeping. Macbeth looks down the unwary Duncan till he awakens. He is astonished when he identifies Macbeth – the Thane of Cawdor. He would have thought why only Thane of Cawdor(s) prove traitor for him – the earlier was just executed by Duncan, and this one is to execute Duncan. Macbeth stabs Duncan within no time once he wakes up. Here it is worth noting that unlike some of other films, Macbeth is not alone to stab
Duncan – Lady Macbeth is back in the murder scene. This Lady Macbeth is different from others who could not do so for Duncan resembled as father. These add on strengthen the fact that Freeston’s Macbeth is works under his lady’s stress. He is not a dominating husband but one who is persuaded mentally as well as sexually.

The dagger scene in Fresston’s Macbeth is located in sanctuary and Macbeth is bowed in praying. At once a window opens due to blow of air. A golden colored cross is seen on the floor. There is a shadow which takes shape of real dagger. Its handgrip is spun near the floor touching hand of Macbeth. Though the dagger is not present physically, Macbeth as well as the audience fell its presence. It is actually the shadow of the cross, but the mental situation of Macbeth is such that he takes it as a real dagger presented brought to him to murder Duncan. Freeston’s film discovers a trustworthy equivalent to describe convincingly what a supernatural practice in the source text occupies.

The banquet scene, on the other hand, is presented with sunny reddish tenors. Macbeth is seen highly shocked after watching the ghost as the camera is focused on his face. Macbeth sees the murder scene of Banquo and then the ghost and his bloodied horrible face. He is threatened and feels alone. The guests are invisible and the sunny red tones turn cold blueed. Banquo’s ghost sees Macbeth raising his head slowly. The atmosphere becomes horrific and Macbeth tries to blame others by saying, “Which of you have done this” (3.4.49)?

At this the camera shows the guests are present again, everything is same. There are sunny reddish tones once again and what the camera displays disappeared is Banquo’s ghost. The guests are surprised on the sudden behavior of Macbeth. They watch each other and observe Macbeth face but don’t say anything to Macbeth. Lady Macbeth comes to Macbeth and asks him to leave the table. Freeston thus, with the use
of colors vividly presents Macbeth’s situation during the banquet scene. He creates equivalent dimensions – for Macbeth and for the audience in the same space. As Sarah Hatchuel remarks,

For the banquet scene, this screen version uses the device it had already employed to create parallel dimension during the witches’ sequence – filters or different colors…. Freeston creates separate worlds, with their specific lightings, colors, and physical details. This version insists on the gory side of Macbeth’s confrontation with the ghost. The character, sent as he is into his own mentally constructed world, is denied nothing visually. Nor are the spectators, on whom Macbeth’s macabre, all–too–real vision is imposed.\(^8\)

In the last scene of *Macbeth*, Macbeth is fighting with Macduff. Macbeth tries to discourage him saying that he cannot be harmed by anyone who is a woman born. Macduff does not bother why he is saying so (it can be believed that he is not aware about the role of witches behind what Macbeth have done), he at once replies that he is not born of woman (at least directly). One can imagine what would have been Macbeth thought – disappointment on the dismissal of his last hope and disappointment upon his belief on witches’ ambiguous prophecy.

To portray this kind of situation Freeston uses to highlight the primordial and biased aspects of combat most of the time from Macbeth’s perspective. The music is heard through the fight and the atmosphere is apocalyptic and misty. Macbeth seems powerful against Macduff until Macduff’s momentous disclosure. Macbeth hereafter psychologically accepts his doom, but he does not give up – he thrusts Macduff on the ground. But Macduff finally manages to drop him on the ground and sets his blade on Macbeth’s neck. Then there rises darkness and Macbeth and Macduff are not seen. Only the sound of blade cutting Macbeth’s neck is heard. The action is not visible to the audience. The film ends here only and the credit starts. The scene when Malcolm is enthroned is excluded from the film. What comes out here is that Macbeth’s murder is
the finale of the film. For Freeston, Macbeth is main hero of the film and he cannot forward the film without him. If Macbeth is died, the film must be stopped. The circle of the passing of throne remains incomplete without Malcolm is restored to power. Freeston, in his film makes an unexpected retreat thereby ending the film in his own way as he seems so much connected with Macbeth emotionally and he wishes the same from the audience.
Rupert Goold’s *Macbeth*


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<td>Patrick Stewart</td>
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<td>Kate Fleetwood</td>
<td>Lady Macbeth</td>
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<td>Paul Shelley</td>
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<td>Christopher Knott</td>
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<td>Christopher Nolan</td>
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The latest film adaptation taken for study in this thesis is Rupert Goold’s *Macbeth* (2010). Goold took Patrick Stewart as Macbeth and Kate Fleetwood as Lady Macbeth. Paul Shelley was casted as Duncan and Banquo was acted by Martin Turner. Goold is a modern film director who has esteems for Shakespeare. He therefore saw all the acclaimed earlier film adaptations of *Macbeth* and found a way to insert his own story. His film is full of great ideas from previous films. Though Goold uses modern camera and editing technology, his film seems close to original play.

Goold projects Macbeth as a 1940’s Stalin type dictator. His film is more dreadful in portrayal of supernatural elements and modern unscrupulous politics and psychological chaos among leaders. The film transports the tenet of blood for blood and violence for violence. Macbeth, for example, carries out the dagger after stabbing Duncan and Macduff in the same way, carries the two daggers out after killing Macbeth at the end. This gives a sense that history is repeating itself. Goold presents Macbeth as a merciless dictator. There are a lot of banners having Macbeth’s photo on them hanging everywhere where Banquo is murdered.

The setting of the film is strange. The sets look like a chain of tunnels beneath the earth or the cellars equipped with industrialized kitchen appliances. An elevator goes to Dunsinane located in tunnel-like basement. It seems like hell for the entire dwelling is dank and full of dust. The paint is peeling off from the walls. The atmosphere is apocalyptically horrific and ghastly. Everything seems unhuman – the bedrooms are also comfortless. It seems the dwellers of this place are not human at all. The audience can wonder how and why the king of Scotland lives here. Why he has chosen an underground gloomy tunnel as his residence. Goold perhaps interpreted Shakespeare’s foul and fair in this way. Macbeth is also shown always in tension and discomfort. He seems very terrible when he is preparing a sandwich for himself. After
the murder scene, there is the banquet scene when the soup is served. This red soup gives a sense of blood the people are drinking. In fact, the whole food seems disgusting throughout the film – it one of the most disturbing features of the film.

The film demonstrates that love is invisible into Macbeth and his Lady’s relationship. But Macbeth seems fixated with her. Lady Macbeth is much young than Macbeth and have influential sexual vigor. Macbeth feels incompetent before her. When Macbeth’s position is empowered politically, his relationship also becomes powerful. In the beginning, he was not courageous enough to murder Duncan without his wife’s support, but later he murders Lady Macduff and the murderers of Banquo alone. The feminist critics who criticize the depiction of Lady Macbeth’s much darker side will not criticize Goold in this respect because it is Macbeth himself who takes his decisions free from the pressure of his lady. But the scene when Lady Macbeth is arguing with Macbeth regarding the murder of Duncan situates Lady Macbeth in extensively blacker role. She mocks Macbeth upon his indecisive situation. This affects Macbeth a lot and after murdering Duncan, he is not in need of Lady Macbeth for further projects.

Shakespeare has presented Lady Macbeth as a lonely, childless and deprived of the love of her husband in order to make her fit for the human–companion of the evil powers. When she have no one to love, or who can make her feel like a woman, her desire to become unsexed stands reasonable. Her milk is of no use – her motherly feelings are lost. She is ready to mingle with unmotherly powers. Though she is not offered to meet the witches directly – she is represented as a human witch at home. When Shakespeare had described her in such a way, how the stage and film productions can present her with tenderness. If the film and theatre directors place her in less destructive (or constructive) role, they may be disparaged for not being faithful to the
source text. Those directors, therefore present her in a more negative role. Akira Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood*, for example, have only witch. Lady Asaji (Lady Macbeth) is directly substituted as two other witches. In Geoffrey Wright’s *Macbeth*, she is almost nude, except panty, in the whole sleepwalking scene. She is also naked when she is died in the bathtub after committing suicide. Macbeth comes to her, kisses her and rounds his hands on her bare breasts. He, it seems, wants to say she is bare entirely now – she has cut what she sown. She is shown as a woman only at the end – that is why she is retained for the final scene when Macbeth comes and dies aside her.

Rupert Goold finds different methods to present her fragmented physically and mentally as well. His portrayal of Lady Macbeth is different from many other adaptations of *Macbeth*. He presents her horrific at the beginning only as role is shared by the three witches. Since the witches are present all the time as nurses, Lady Macbeth has no need to become the human witch as offered in many other films.

Goold’s three witches are three nurses who distribute death to the wounded soldiers. It is quite ironical to present the witches as nurses. In the beginning, the audience wait for the arrival of witches until the nurses transformed as witches. Since the nurses are for assisting the doctors in saving people’s life, here they are the agents of death. Goold uses sound and special visual effects to make the presence of witches more horrific. The witches therefore are shown more terrifying than that of Shakespeare’s. Sometimes it gives a sense of a science fiction film. The witches are provided with an abstruse amalgam of paranormal and scientific powers. Are they move and communicate due to electrical instincts or they are driven by magic is purely ambiguous. The Porter’s role is extended in the film for he is projected as one of the murders of Banquo. When the camera focuses upon him, in the tunnel, he seems empowered with inhuman abilities like the witches and looks very horrific due to
Goold’s use of special effects to show him scarier. He was, “disgusting, demonic and uninhibited: the perfect porter to welcome you to Hell and equip Macbeth for his final fight. When he entered Lady Macduff’s room with saw in hand, my blood ran cold.”

The role of Ross is also extended. He is seen clearly at several important occasions from the beginning of the film for he is much older and is not dressed in the military uniform like others. He is also present when Lady Macduff and her children are murdered. It is but natural that he is horrified and earls around the corner. Since the actual murder is not shown, the audience can imagine from his reactions that how viciously the murder would have been done. He however proves very strong when “he defies expectations quite a bit with his unwavering refusal to voice support for Macbeth, and later goes on to ally himself quite clearly with Macduff and Malcolm”. Macduff and his lady are shown sharing sound understanding unlike the Macbeths. Lady Macduff is a sweet motherly figure. Though she is provided with a very small role she leaves good impression on the audience.

The murder scene of Lady Macduff and her children is narrated well on the screen. The two murderers – the Porter and Macbeth enter. The Porter is having a saw in his hand. Then the camera focuses upon Ross. Goold, here tries to be faithful with Shakespeare. Unlike Geoffrey Wright who made the audience shivered through screening the brutal murder, he leaves the scene unexposed for the audience to imagine. Goold shows Macbeth additionally pitiless figure for unlike Shakespeare’s Macbeth, he personally goes to kill Macduff and his family. After murdering Duncan he does not kill anyone but hires the murders. But his decision to accompany the porter in assassinating the Macduffs fortifies his affinity with vehemence.

In the final scene, when Macduff comes and discover Macbeth, Macbeth is sitting alone and drinking in the dining hall. The duel started between them. The
witches come to see Macbeth for the last time. As Macbeth sees them, he becomes angrier and says “Enough.” Meanwhile Macduff struck him down and slays him. He raises Macbeth’s expunged head up in the air. There raises darkness on the screen. The throne is detached from Macbeth for “Malcolm surely is little better than the man he just displaced.” The camera centers revolving to each “key location of the movie, empty and dead, before revisiting the image it had already shown once before: the Macbeths, soaked in Duncan’s blood, holding hands as they ride a lift down into the earth.”

Goold’s Macbeth is a warrior who seems to be cursed by something for he could not recognize the treachery of the witches. It is only at the last scene, that he realizes their trap. During his concluding fight with Macduff, when they appear for the last time, he hums, “Enough” which shows that he could not stop them earlier. His defeat and death seem due to his stubbornness. Before his fight with Macduff, he is in grief and drinking as he is alone after his wife’s death. Only Seyton is left to fight from his side. When it is revealed by Macduff that he was ‘untimely ripped’ – in a sense not born of women, Macbeth realizes the witches’ snare. Though Macduff cuts his head putting him down, it seems at some extent that Macbeth himself let him do so. His death appears a suicide by pessimism – this was the only way to pay for Duncan’s assassination, Banquo’s public slaughter, Lady Macbeth and her children’s massacre, etc. Patrick Stewart lives Macbeth on the screen in such a way that the spectators are both horrified and sympathetic. In the beginning, when he is preparing sandwich for himself and orders for Banquo’s murder, he is the most brutal man of world. And when he perishes in the end the audience are almost in tears upon his conclusion.

During the banquet, he is very joyful after becoming the new king. He has organized a grand party for his guests. The witches are serving for the guests. Soon he
turns bully as he pours champagne and breaks up a cigarette over one of his courtier’s head. He thinks himself the most powerful man there. Meanwhile a young murderer enters who was hired by him for Banquo’s murder. The murderer let him know about Banquo’s death and his son Fleance’s escape upon which Macbeth becomes angry. At once the doors open and the bloodied ghost of Banquo rises from elevator and reaches to stand near Macbeth. The walls become red and the Macbeth, who was the most powerful person few moments earlier, is abundantly terrified. Goold makes the atmosphere more horrifying by repeating the glances of the ghost’s walking scene again after the interval. In this way, “… the play was a visually brutal adaptation of a theatrical adaptation that combines the experience of stylized European director’s theatre with imagery of war, Stalinist totalitarianism, and dystopian landscapes.”

Goold utilizes lightning differently to create various effects. In the very beginning of the film, there is use of sporadic lights with the concoction of rotating camera angles highlighting bloodied spattered people. There are beds and monitors in a hospital setting where the three nurses are seen who in fact don’t look like nurses at all. There is tension and fear everywhere and the atmosphere is filled with fear when one of the nurses turn witch rips out one victim’s heart.

The camera zooms at the witches as they remove their masks. They talks about their plan to meet Macbeth and speak in unison – ‘there to meet Macbeth.’ Goold’s invention of showing witches as nurses seems reasonable at much extent because it increases the reliability of the existence of evil powers in transformed façades. They are distributing death among wounded soldiers instead of saving their life. They are human but inhuman all the time. When Macbeth meets them second time they are busy in poking and prodding the dead bodies. How ironical it is that Macbeth wants to assure his safety from those who are the agents of death. In the last scene when he is in the last
stage of his life on the earth, he accepts their wickedness. But it is too late to be undone what he has done. The space provided to witches in this film seems judicious because everything focuses around them. The witches’ space infuses Macbeth and is preferably fit to the cultural medium of film. It retells what Stephen Greenblatt had commented, “the witches are at once marginal and central to the play, they are only briefly and intermittently onstage, but they are still suggestively present when we cannot see them” (1997: 257).

Though different adaptations deal with the exploration of supernatural elements internally and externally, the space given to witches in these films proves them influential naturally, incidentally, psychologically. Victoria Bladen’s point here is that:

The depiction of the weird sisters poses an intriguing challenge for directors because they must consider the potential reception of the sisters for a skeptical modern audience, in whom there will generally be a lack of belief in supernatural magic and prophecy… If a Macbeth version is to be effective, directors have to reinvigorate the witches’ uncanniness and re-energize them as a disruptive and unsettling force, finding postmodern equivalents for what transfixed Macbeth audiences in the past. Every Macbeth director has to find anew what will disturb the audience of her or his particular cultural context. (2013: 82–3)

Since this film is the latest film (2010) taken for the study, there can be seen a lot of experiments made by Goold to revive the Shakespearean play according to modern audience. As the witches are shown living in the ultramodern society, due to the use of lightning and other special effects, the presence of supernatural elements gives a sense of eerie, asphyxiating menacing life of its own. Rupert Goold’s have successfully tried to capture the spirit of the source text. He therefore makes it easier for contemporary spectators to cognize Shakespeare’s original work with creative changes.
**Shakespeare in the USA**

In this section two films are discussed produced in the United States of America. These are Orson Welles’s *Macbeth* (1948) and Billy Morissette’s *Scotland PA* (2001).

**Orson Welles’s *Macbeth***


Due to the reputation of Orson Welles as an inventive and original auteur his *Macbeth* was not much criticized. However, the discourse and the European expressionism artistically constructed around Macbeth shows Welles’ genius. Welles designed his main character as a monster which was inspired by James Whale’s 1935 horror film *Bride of Frankenstein*. Samuel Crowl in his film guidebook, *Shakespeare and Film: A Norton Guide* sets Welles as a role model for ‘filmic’ director and *Macbeth* as an example of ‘filmic’ mode. He is of the views that Welles is a director “who found the true expression of his artistic genius in film” and *Macbeth* as a “stunning example of translating Shakespeare into film: language, action, camera, landscape, and acting all combine to create a new synthesis that produces the unique power of Shakespeare realized not just on but through film” (2008: 31).
The way how Crowl describes Welles’ film style, therefore, seems to be an archetypal of the critical institution within Shakespeare film criticism where there is penchant to study Welles as an ingenious high above from popular filmmakers. Crowl puts Welles’ films in the ‘hybrid’ genre which, according to him, “consists of films that find their inspiration as much from other, conventional Hollywood films and film genres as they do from their Shakespearean source material” (xx).

Through citing only the “Branagh group of filmmakers” as specialists of this genre, Crowl overlooks Welles’s Shakespearean films from being latent contenders for this aesthetic grouping, affirming that, “Earlier Shakespeare filmmakers were reluctant to embrace popular Hollywood codes and conventions for fear of soiling their elite Shakespeare material with film’s populism” (ibid.). In spite of focusing at traditional Hollywood films for motivation, Crowl states that early filmmakers “were more comfortable looking to European art film(s) for models […]” (ibid.).

Amanda J. Smith in his paper contributed to Literature–Film Quarterly titled “Defining Welles’s Macbeth: Hollywood Horror and the Hybrid Mode”, says,

…early on in his career Welles seems to have believed that “Shakespeare for the movies” was only viable if the Shakespearean text had real potential for interacting with the conventions of popular Hollywood melodrama. Welles himself saw Shakespeare not only as a great writer of melodrama, but as someone incapable of writing a “pure tragedy,” asserting that, “[Shakespeare] couldn’t do it. He wrote melodrama that had tragic stature, but which were nonetheless all melodramatic stories.” (2011: 151)

Welles, in his Macbeth film, marks the weird sisters in a pagan world where Macduff and Malcolm fight against Macbeth in the name of Christianity, however they are compelled equally. All the three are condensed to counters in the mêlée of righteous beliefs. Those who have criticized this Macbeth film including some other reasons, blame that Welles was extremely enthused from contemporary political context. E.
Pearlman, for example, states that this *Macbeth* was persuaded by the dreary events of 1930’s and 1940’s. It was also commented that Welles’s film can be read as a metaphorical remark on the handling of the American perception throughout the Anticommunist period.\(^{14}\)

The reason behind these remarks was the managing of a theatre by Welles and John Houseman, funded by Federal Theatre Project (FTP). For FTP productions were leftist, the traditionalist political leaders doubted that FTP has been used to publicize the fundamental societal and financial designs of the Roosevelt ruling. That period was, in fact, the initial phase of the backlash against ‘The New Deal’ introduced by the then President, Franklin D. Roosevelt (ibid). It could not, however, be proved that at what amount Welles reports contemporary political activities through his film due to what his film brought him into ‘clash’ with the anti-Communists.

The main star cast of Welles’s *Macbeth* (1948) is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Role/Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orson Welles</td>
<td>Macbeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanette Nolan</td>
<td>Lady Macbeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erskine Sanford</td>
<td>Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan O’Herlihy</td>
<td>Macduff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy Webber</td>
<td>Lady Macduff/First Witch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lurene Tuttle</td>
<td>Gentlewoman/Second Witch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainerd duffield</td>
<td>First Murderer/Third Witch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Barrier</td>
<td>Banquo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roddy McDowall</td>
<td>Malcolm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keene Curtis</td>
<td>Lennox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lionel Braham</td>
<td>Young Siward</td>
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This black and white film is full of distorting style, presenting volatility and ambiguity. As the film opens there is an extensive shot in which the three witches are seen encircled by whirling cloud and mist over. An echo of “Hover through the fog and filthy air (1.1.12)” is heard. The faces of the witches are not visible but they are seen pouring ingredients in the cauldron. The witches are filled of devious and monitoring power. When the title of the film appears on the screen, the witches are seen in background. The strong entry of the witches demonstrates that they are going to control the whole film.

When Macbeth meets the witches for the first time, his face is not fully visible to the audience. The witches having long hair and forked twigs look very horrible. They are holding a voodoo doll wearing a crown on its head perhaps indicating the fate of the thane of Cawdor.

In his second meeting with the witches he is very restless and disturbed and the witches are ready to intensify his uneasiness. Welles shows Macbeth’s smallness by uncovering him from a high angle. He is alone in barren space looks susceptible and insubstantial fully dependent upon the witches’ words. Welles here presents him in a changed role contradictory from the beginning. As Sarah Hatchuel points out,

This sudden breaking of film realism not only interpellates the audience, but also places each spectator in the position of the Weird Sisters, looking at this defenseless character with a distanced, detached point of view. Identification with the main character is thus discouraged by the very aesthetic of the scene.
Like Macbeth, the role of witches is also differs. In the first meeting the witches are seen in dark and misty atmosphere and horrifies through their getup, but in the second meeting, thought they are heard speaking, they are physically invisible. Welles here hides more instead of showing and thereby arises the curiosity of audience to watch more. Welles’s film, as Hatchuel notes, “by denying identifiable faces to the witches and by blurring the spectators’ sight through numerous out–of–focus shots, fading in/out and dissolves, creates a world in which certainty is lost and the instability of form and meaning reigns.”

In this context, it is worth notable that this close connection between Shakespeare and Melodrama for Welles and his avowal that Shakespeare plays could prove successful film material if they could projected as mainstream Hollywood films, seems contrary to any opinion that contemplates Welles as a director who displayed scariness to use Shakespeare’s fame for the commercialization of films. What comes out here is that Welles, in his films, connected Shakespeare and popular culture in general and applied this connection inserting a lot of close–ups, particularly while making Macbeth. The horror elements of his Macbeth are evidently inspired form the conventions of popular Hollywood films.

In the beginning scene where the three witches are making Macbeth’s effigy with clay demonstrates that this is not only a traditional voodoo ritual to cast a spell, that is to see, but the advent of Macbeth – the hero. Some critics take this as sign of the feebleness of Macbeth against the fate–controlling spell of the witches. In this regard, their avowal is that this kind of portrayal of Macbeth’s character in Welles’s film is quite “un–Shakespearean” in nature. Charles Higham writes,

Welles ignores the tragedy of a great man fallen that Shakespeare clearly intended: an imaginative, conscience–stricken figure whose wife is the destructive force which drives him to murder and death [...] Macbeth is here from the beginning a doomed, driven being, and his wife is as
trapped as he is in the web of fate. No free will here, no virtue brought low by ambition, but rather obedience to compulsion, to the doom which is sealed at the very outset of the film by the fashioning of Macbeth’s face by the witches, dark symbol of his end even at this stage. (1970: 133)

Higham also says that there is very less dramatic tension in Welles’s film. For Macbeth has no free will, it seems the film is like a puppet show (ibid.). Here Anthony Davis’ analysis of the films’ dramatic tension is worth citing that they lie not in the drama of the torn conscience, but in the “evolution and formation of the conscience” (1988: 97). That is why while watching Welles’ Macbeth one can feel that this treatment is less (or no) Shakespearean but Whalesian, where a monster is provided supernatural powers and the drama of that monster is afresh developing conscience. The conscience of Macbeth is not provoked so far – there is not ‘appropriate’ troublesomeness in his appearance after listening to the witches’ prophecies. He appears, what Joseph McBride finds, “to be sleepwalking from the beginning” (1972: 114). But his interior skirmish, howsoever, is visually revealed through the implications of close ups. Macbeth’s face shown half in darkness and half in light demonstrate the clash of evil and goodness – fair and foul to say.

It seems that Macbeth’s morality is just aroused and wedged amid. When Macbeth and Lady Macbeth drug the attendants’ drink, there is a close–up shot where his face is again shown half in light and half in darkness while the face of Lady Macbeth is displayed in utter darkness. Welles has used many other half–dark and half–light close–ups during the prayer scene, the dagger soliloquy scene, the banquet scene subsequent to the murder scene of Banquo, etc. Another important scene, after the banquet scene, when Macbeth invokes the witches and is dragged underground is also portrayed through close–up shots. It can be seen that when the witches start their predictions, the camera gradually descends on Macbeth overhead and is fixed finally at
his face. Macbeth, hereafter, is fully wrapped in darkness but his face is in light, free from the struggle between evil and goodness. Further he stabs young Macduff and gives an unnerving smile. His inner monster is now unrestrained completely.

Shakespeare’s Duncan utters, “There’s no art / to find the mind’s construction in the face” (1.4.11–2). Macbeth is reproached over by Lady Macbeth as his “rugged looks” (3.2.27) might reveal the secrets of his heart, for Lady Macbeth says, “his face is a book where men/may read strange matters” (1.5.62–3), and he must work to “look like the innocent flower / but be the serpent under it” (1.5.65–6). Thus Welles utilizes the art of close-ups to voice the tale of the development and ensuing conquest of Macbeth’s scruples in rejoinder to Duncan’s conviction that “there is no art / to find the mind’s construction in the face” (1.4.11–2).

There are many aural and visual examples which evidence Welles’ use of Early Hollywood horror-film conventions in his film _Macbeth_. For instance, there is a soundtrack containing the continuous rampant of hurricanes; dissonant music, the expressionistic shades and figures dangling from the scaffolds; the craniums on stakes; Lady Macbeth’s vivid descent off the fortifications into the rugged gorge.

The whirling fogs and elusive outlines of three squatting figures trap an audience into a disturbing world where supernatural powers seem to be monitoring entities. The bleak, frightening world they conjure is expressed in a wild, barren landscape and a dark inhospitable castle. Cold stonework, hollow cellars, exposed platforms and rugged outcrops dominate and intimidate figures clothed in armor or thick rough fabric. It is a primitive world and its society seems to be at the edge of civilization. The execution of the Thane of Cawdor is witnessed by an impassive crowd.

The gamut lines of the scaffolds against the skyline confirm a habitual brutality. However any assumption that this is to be story of demonic possession is challenged by
Welles’s interpretation of the protagonist’s role. The film chooses that he shares with Banquo the encounter with witches. The meeting is discussed within a group and Macbeth dictates his letter to his wife with no sense or secrecy or conspiracy. The early emphasis upon Macbeth’s openness, sociability and amity establishes what will be a rich interplay in the film between its iconography and expressionist symbolism and its careful attention to human relationships.

The witches entered Macbeth’s consciousness in a sinister way which he and the cinema audience only slowly recognize. His vision is at times distorted, such as when his wife’s face is dissolved by the return of the twirling mists. These are horrible imaginings that isolate him from those with whom he was once at ease. He is unable to maintain the balance displayed by Banquo, whose own moral ambivalence the film also addresses. Developing the shared experience of their meeting with the witches, it is Banquo rather than Lennox who protects Macbeth by confirming the guilt of grooms before he confronts him directly with his suspicions:

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Thou hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised, and I fear
Thou played’st most fouly for it. (3.1.1–3)
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In Shakespeare’s text, the soliloquy provides a moment of reflection for a Banquo who generally avoids condemnation for his inaction. Welles, however, creates anxieties about Banquo’s integrity as he offers Macbeth the possibility of support yet prompts ‘Our fears in Banquo.’

From the bleakness of the woods the audience move to the claustrophobia of the tunneled recesses of the castle to share Macbeth’s sense of being cabined, cribbed, and confirmed with the emphasis upon his obsession with Banquo. Although Macbeth has retreated into the bowels of the castle, he cannot escape hearing the reception of
Banquo’s suspicions that Macbeth ‘played falsely for it.’ Macbeth hears himself tell Banquo ‘Fail not our feast’.

The echoic use of words here serves as memory and prophecy. Banquo seems to be mocking at Macbeth’s earlier anxiety least ‘we fail.’ At the banquet which follows Macbeth’s fear is understood and shared. We know the demons that are haunting him and how difficult he finds it to say ‘I drink to our good friend Banquo – whom we miss – would he were here.’ His careful invitation to his chief guest now seems to be serving as his own invocation for Banquo to haunt him.

The attention given to the bond between Macbeth and Banquo also serves to highlight what is the most important dimension in the film’s humanizing of Macbeth – his childlessness. He is haunted by his awareness of his ‘fruitless crown’ and ‘barren scepter.’ He knows ‘no son of mine succeeding.’ The film makes the audience aware that Macbeth is continually striving to define himself within the context provided by Banquo and Fleance, by Duncan and his sons and by the Macduff family. It is not surprising that Macbeth sees them as opponents. He is a man driven both by a hunger for power and by a fear of impotence.

Macbeth’s relationship with Lady Macbeth, in the film, is dominated by the barrenness of their marriage. When the spectators see her for the first time, she is lying on a bed, but any easy assumptions about sexuality are challenged by the visual tension between the viciousness of the fur bed–covering and the forties’ style, front laced, high necked dress with its zip–fastener and shoulder pads (Davis 1972: 189).

Macbeth’s letter makes her fearful. Her voice has a persuasive strength believed by her physical uncertainty. She seems aware of her own adequacy and moves to the window to seek to invoke the ‘spirits that tend on moral thoughts’, but the swirling mists which had revealed the Witches to Macbeth do not respond to her. She does offer
an embrace of welcome on her husband’s return and gives efficient assistance by drugging the wine and putting the daggers ready, but she lacks confidence. The film makes it clear that Macbeth’s experience on the heath has entered his consciousness in a way that Lady Macbeth will never be able either to share or to understand. It is Macbeth and not his wife who says ‘Leave all the rest to me.’

Their lack of family serves as an irritating ache to both of them. When Lady Macbeth speaks about having given suck and utters her challenge ‘if you were a man’ she seems to be responding to familiar cues for support (ibid. 190). Their relationship is always under pressure. Macbeth’s plea to her ‘Bring forth men children only’ is immediately followed by Banquo’s question to his son ‘How goes the night, boy?’ When Lady Macbeth urges Macbeth ‘to bed, to bed’ she cannot counter his vivid thoughts about ‘the seed of Banquo’ becoming kings. Her physical stiffness is an emblem of her awareness of inadequacy.

Whilst Macbeth surveys his hangman’s hands, she stands alone in the middle distance, a thin, frail, gaunt figure. The Macduffs’ marriage provides a touchstone of normality which accentuates the dysfunction of the Macbeths’ relationship. By reshaping the text Welles also gives a brief scene of leave-taking between them which not only reinforces the domestic truthfulness underpinning their partnership but also provides the motive for Lady Macduff’s later frustration and her anxiety about her husband’s absence.

That the film is concerned with psychology of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is expressed vividly when Macbeth is seen asking the Doctor, How is your patient?’ while looking at down at Lady Macbeth in bed. When the Doctor tells that ‘therein the patient, must minister to himself’ makes it clear that neither partner can offer the only support. On this, Macbeth moves to the window, and in that moment past and present
are recollected. The spectators are with him but then the perspective shifts and they move outside and view the moment more accurately.

Macbeth makes a desperate attempt to help Lady Macbeth through a passionate embrace which wakes her from her sleepwalking. Terrified, she escapes to the raised platform. The setting of sharp thorns and stylized trees that remind of the projections of the castle windows provides a nightmare correlative for her inner suffering as she topless over the edge of the cliff. Her body bounces from the rocks in an anticipation of the way Macduff will later treat Macbeth’s severed head. Standing on the platform which she fell, Macbeth reflects on ‘Tomorrow, and tomorrow and tomorrow’ and as the screen whirls with cloud and mist the audience are prompted to remember the supernatural soliciting, but also, more importantly, they are forced to engage with the implication of the woods.

Here it is worth mentioning that when this film was restored to its full length and reproduced in 1980, the opening was cut. Unbound from the rigidity of the inserted text it is more clearly evident that the film’s exploration of the struggle between good and evil is indecisive. Most importance was given to Welles’ self-created figure – the ‘Holy Father’ whose lines comes numerously from Ross, Angus and the old man. An agent of goodness, he has some divine power and the Witches leave at his gesture of dismissal.

Eventually, the impassiveness of the ‘Holy Father’ gives way to action as he warns Lady Macduff and flees Scotland. His fearful anxiety makes clear the delicacy and insufficiency of his spiritual influence. In the England scene Macduff directs his violent accusation ‘Did heaven look on, and would not take their part?’ directly at him. In this context, Macduff’s words offer a powerful challenge to divine leadership and his anger is the repeatedly voiced despair at the impossibility of sustaining faith in an
apparently godless world. By fusing the spiritual, the domestic and the political in the role of the ‘Holy Father’, the film safeguards that the intricate layers of meanings inherited in Shakespeare’s play are not condensed to the simple dimensions of the morality tradition (Mason 2000: 193). Welles provides both conclusion and a commencement as the Witches proclaim in the last scene – ‘Peace, the charm’s wound up.’

Nevertheless Shakespeare’s Macbeth may celebrate James I: this film certainly celebrates Orson Welles, who is at once the producer, director, adaptor and star actor, omnipresent before and behind the camera. The kings – Duncan and Malcolm – are reduced to symbols, while the overreaching Macbeth is thrust into the foreground. The remaining characters – including Lady Macbeth and Macduff – are insipid in overbearing presence of the protagonist throughout the film. Ross has been cut, Seyton made into feeble servant, and the ‘Holy Father’, a creation of Welles, can do little to deter the forces of evil. The film contains some five hundred shots, and, the majority focuses directly on Welles as Macbeth. In other words it includes him the mise–en–scene. Frequently low angle low–angle or high–angle shots or deep focus close–ups distort him in comparison to the figures. It is Welles’s face and voice, directly and in voice–over, that dominate the film. The rest belong to the faceless masses.

The banquet scene in the film is complex mixture of presence and absence. The camera in this scene works from three point of views. When Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo, the camera first focuses on the guests. It displays the absence of ghost from guests’ perspective. The camera then moves to Macbeth and proves the presence of ghost from Macbeth’s perspective. It supports the presence of ghost for Macbeth mentally as Macbeth behaves. Then the camera shifts to Banquo’s ghost’s perspective. Banquo’s face is so horrible that Macbeth becomes furious. He starts throwing tables
and dishes here and there. Though Welles’s film is black and white but the perfect use of camera makes the togetherness of presence and absence of the ghost simultaneously.

On entering for the banquet scene, Macbeth is dwarfed by two enormous wine drums, and he has discarded his garish, outsized crown, the sign of monarchal authority. When he upsets the massive banquet table, he also upsets the last vestiges of decorum and the fellowship of the court. Hereafter he becomes the isolated murderous tyrant. The downfall of Macbeth is shaped not by Macduff, Malcolm, or their troops, but by the witches, those “plotters against the law and order … the agents of chaos, priests of hell and magic” (Gunther 2006: 129).

A massive bulwark in the midst of a bleak and sewage landscape, Macbeth’s castle becomes a metaphor for his ambitions as well as his psyche. As the film progresses, the protagonist and the viewers with him, descend into the concealed interior of the castle which resembles more a stone quarry than a domicile. Down damp and leaking tunnels the spectators descend into the dark caverns of Macbeth’s nightmare fantasies. In the banquet hall, the huge flat stone over the massive table heightens the enclosed confinement of Macbeth’s mind and situation.

The precise motivation for murdering Duncan, Banquo, or Lady Macduff remains vague, like the witches themselves: their voices are heard but never seen their faces, and Hecate has been cut altogether. They have been replaced by a Lady Macbeth in a light colored, tight–fitting gown, writhing on her skin–covered bed like an itchy lioness in a cage. The witches with their pronged staffs serve as a metaphor for evil.

There is a good example of transcreation injected by Welles in Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking scene. There is an interactive scene shot on Macbeth couple. In Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Macbeth is not present in Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking episode. But Welles made Macbeth walking into the frame when Lady Macbeth just
completes her soliloquy. Both hug ardently for some moments, but after that Lady Macbeth wakens. She looks into her companion’s face and become horrified and screamingly runs far away.

This scene was invented by Welles and therefore proves him creative and auteur who was inspired by James Whale’s film *Bride of Frankenstein* and the prevalent Hollywood film genera as well. Owing to the strategies used by Welles in his adaptation of *Macbeth*, his film suits to Jorgens’ account of a “good” Shakespeare film: one that “move[s] fluidly between modes and styles, merg[ing] several simultaneously, so that it is not possible to make simple judgments” (1977: 15).

Smith also, in this context, states that:

The critical gravitation toward primarily defining Macbeth as “filmic” may be the result of biases regarding Welles’s artistic originality, or perhaps the “filmic” mode is the only mode that seems to encapsulate the wild, passionate mess we see on the screen; if, however, we sort through the eccentricities of the film, we discover that Welles’s filming style was not above the influence of popular Hollywood melodrama. (2011: 163)

Shakespeare’s Macbeth derives much of its dramatic tension from the choices and decisions made by the individual character within the framework of a medieval Christian world. Welles’s filmic version of *Macbeth* inexorably decreases this dramatic intensity by limiting Macbeth’s choices. It provides the witches with a supervisory and dominance. Their influence over Macbeth is established since the beginning of the film when they are depicted with a small crowned effigy at their feet.

While all this is true, Welles’s *Macbeth* is, in significant respects, a turning point in the development of Shakespearean cinematic adaptation. Its major effect upon the critical response to filmed Shakespeare was to oppose critics with a new terrain of adaptive endeavor which had to be accommodated.

The cinema is only then, the shadow of a shadow, printed upon the wall of a cave, the ragged garments of a clown ludicrously agitated before the
light of a projector. Given this, Macbeth in the version of Orson Welles, must be considered one of the most beautiful films ever created, in that it illustrates, with maximum rigor and simplicity, this definition of our art. I would venture to say that, at least, we know of few films in the history of cinema which have come so close to what Shakespeare calls ‘life’s fitful fever’.17

The landscape in Welles’s film arouses a dramatic world of fierce contrasts between the pointed boniness of wind–stripped trees, the spatial blankness of the background and the formless, whirling cloud and mist which confuses clarity of outline. At some extent, the movement of the smoke/fog in the unoccupied sky proclaims its own sovereign symbolic structure, suggestive of ‘evolving nebulae at some primal phase of creation’. On this Davis comments,

The juxtaposition of the mist and cloud effects with the glimpse–shots of outlines and symbols, and the final forming of a figure from bubbling, viscous liquid, taken together with greater juxtaposition of the simple spoken prologue with the weird sequence of initial visuals, constitutes a clear suggestion that the essence of the film’s thematic conflict is to be that of ‘form’ against ‘formlessness.’ In his merging of the controlled cinematic dissolve with what appears to be the natural action of the mist, Welles gives added emphasis to this polarity. It is as though the formative control in the film is more at the whim of nature than at the hands of the artist. (1988: 87)

The shortness of the film’s duration is in part due to the significant cutting of the dialogue, but also, and more interestingly, to Welles’s use of montage which is responsible for the narrative energy and pace of the early part of the film’s dramatic progress. Montage here is effectively achieved through cinematic dissolves rather than hasty cuts, so that the fusion of camera technique with the action of the mist is continued in the shift from image to image. The movement of Macbeth from the encounter with the witches to his meeting with Lady Macbeth is given an obsessive energy through a mean only available to film.
The contents of Macbeth’s letter are initially dictated by Macbeth to a scribe, and during the reading of thus, the action’s gathering pace is carried through three dissolves: from the momentary, static place of dictation to Macbeth’s commanding and rapid horse-ride towards Dunsinane and finally to the shot of Lady Macbeth lying on her bed reading the letter. As Skoller suggests,

…the bracketing of the dynamic covering of geographical distance between two shots of static locality reflects ‘in graphic energy, the power between the [unexpressed] plan to murder Duncan, and its execution’. It is a means of visualizing a major theme in Shakespeare’s play, the closing of the distance between the idea and deed. (1986: 134)

The function of the montage is not only to give narrative continuity a dynamic pace, but, more importantly, to achieve a level of dramatic complexity through the shifting of perspective. In the later parts of the film, the relative softness of the dissolved changeovers is replaced by rapid cutting, especially cuts from long and medium–long shots to close–ups and the immediate changes of camera–tilt to give upright dimensions to observation. The combination of low–angle shooting and montage gives to the moment of Cawdor’s execution an unforgettable dramatic force.

Struck from a source right of center, the object of camera’s seclusion is a drummer bare to the waist, beating out a greeting for Duncan’s return. In one of the few instances of camera movement, the frame closes in on the ponding drum–sticks as they strike the vellum, until the beating abruptly stops, synchronizing the final beat with axe’s fall on the thane of Cawdor’s neck. It is possible to trace the stress which Welles gives to the low–angle character shot through his whole canon, and to apply the often–cited theory that Welles’s aim is to relate the impending force and upward thrust of the main character to the restricting restraint of the celling’s downward compression.

The only scene in *Macbeth* in which the downward pressure of a celling is vigorous is the banquet scene. The action here takes place under a long–slung celling of
animal skins, suggesting that only within the context of collective feast is there imposed upon action of coereces of custom and behavioral form. For the rest, the film pressures the openness of the vertical dimension by repeatedly giving emphasis to the condensed attention of tall, slight crosses carried by the Holly Father’s adherents, and later by Macduff’s army which moves in a long parade against the skyline in its march towards Dunsinane.

Likewise the battle is portrayed against darkness and wind–driven violence, with the massed positioning of torch–flames to give the impression of daunting size to the attacking force. Again Welles emphasizes the vertical length to give expense to the scene, and to impact supremacy to detail with angle–shots which glimpse the massed ranks of tall slaves. Macduff’s entry is shown in a most extraordinary framework which, notwithstanding the reality of Cowie’s avowal that ‘Welles’s greatest effects are those that come and go before their artifice can be detected’, cries out to be held longer to punctuate the hectic pace of the film’s climatic sequences. The penultimate sequence of the fight between Macduff and Macbeth is shot with a rapid sequence of high and low angle glimpses against a background of light and shadow, with close–ups and medium close–ups of the characters in action.

The fight ends with a swinging blow aimed to break Macbeth’s neck. The spinning of the blade is interrupted by a cut show the head of the voodoo doll rolling from its body, only identifying the figure which the witches ‘formed’ from their muddy cauldron with Macbeth (Cowie 1973: 113).

The ‘walking shadow’ soliloquy is well delivered by Macbeth as he seems that he has tempted by some other force. This scene is full of imageries and perfectly displays Macbeth’s internal feelings. There is thunder and lightning when he speaks the words ‘sound and fury’. Here, the imageries, inserted by Welles, reveal the internal
conflict of Macbeth – who is tainted by power but tormented by grief. Macbeth’s castle is more like a cave, the walls are full of holes and, the rooftops are low. Outside there is darkness due to dense fog – the atmosphere is barren. Malcolm’s speech is excluded from the ending of film. Macduff is holding Macbeth’s head high and declares Malcolm the king. All join to say ‘Hail King Malcolm’. Their holding the burning torch upward signifies that light of good kingdom has approached abolishing the darkened one.

The films of Orson Welles are nonetheless remarkable for the simultaneous use of both montage and continuous editing, which partially elucidates the rigidity amid the sense of radical disruption and a coherence that might be restored before the films reach their audience. A point of coincidence or collision between the spoken work and the shown image in Shakespeare image in Shakespeare film is the soliloquy. The filmic convention allowing access to a character’s private thoughts, depends on that actor’s/character’s ability to address the audience directly. Kurosawa’s Washizu is no less effective for being a Macbeth whose thoughts are given no words. Welles’s Macbeth, however holds more constant common empathies with the horror film and the film noir, partly because of the maturity of the Macbeth plot for such treatment. The tendency for the horror film to feature some kind of monster given form by unnatural forces in the world where time and place are bestowed the displacements of the dream further relates Welles’s spatial approach to that genre.
Billy Morrissette’s *Scotland PA*

Billy Morrissette’s is a renowned actor, writer and film director. He is well known for the films *Pump Up the Volume* (1990), *Vegas Vacation* (1997), and *The Westing Game* (1997). He has also made TV commercials like *Cubic Zirconia* (1996), *Talking Car* (1997), *Earplugs* (1997), etc. He adapted *Macbeth* as *Scotland PA* in 2001 of which he was the writer also. The lead actors of the film were as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Role/Character</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Le Gros</td>
<td>Joe McBeth equivalent to Macbeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura Tierney</td>
<td>Pat McBeth equivalent to Lady McBeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Walken</td>
<td>Lieutenant McDuff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Rebhorn</td>
<td>Norm Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Guiry</td>
<td>Malcolm Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Smart</td>
<td>Stacy equivalent to witch – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy Speed Levitch</td>
<td>Hector equivalent to witch – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Dick</td>
<td>Jesse equivalent to witch – 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Corrigan</td>
<td>Anthony ‘Banko’ Banconi</td>
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Billy Morrissette’s *Scotland PA* is a parodied version of *Macbeth* which represents the bourgeois desires. In his *Macbeth* film Billy Morrissette transforms one of the most bloodiest and gruesome works tragedy into a parody. A parody, as Linda Hutcheon submits, “does not have to make fun or be critical of the prior work or works it references; in fact, parody is not necessarily humorous, despite the commonplace definition and understanding of the term” (1985: 12). Sketching the neo–classical mode of ‘imitation’, Hutcheon defines parody basically as a work that reproduces, references,
and transforms a prior work: “Parody, therefore, is a form of imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the original text […] Parody is, in another formulation, repetition with critical distance, with marks of difference rather than similarity” (ibid).

In order to insert ‘parody’ in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Morrissette shifts the plot from medieval Scotland to Pennsylvania and thereby juxtaposes the two dissimilar set of cultural and chronological milieus. In *Macbeth*, Macbeth wanted to become the king of Scotland and murders the king Duncan. In *Scotland PA*, McBeth wants to become bourgeois king of his town and kills his boss Duncan.

A humorous treatment of a Shakespearean comedy of course seems uncommon. It may however happen that the audience can feel a sense of comic relief while watching a tragedy, but the whole tragedy is transformed into parody (if not a comedy), it may happen that the ‘message’ could be missing. Morrissette however seems somewhat faithful to the source text at many places. His filmic version of *Macbeth* is notably different from Glen’s *Star Wars: Macbeth* (2001) and Alison’s *Macbeth, the Comedy* (2001). But like Roman Polanski, Morrissette has inserted his personal touch in his film. Since he had worked with McDonalds in his schooling period, the idea of making a film upon fast food industry was his dream since then. This film is a visual representation of his adolescence memories of the 70s. It was a time of hippie era when he was studying Shakespeare in school and working with a McDonalds’ restaurant simultaneously. This is the reason why Morrissette sets his film in a semi–rural small town named as Scotland located in Pennsylvania. In the film Norm Duncan runs the fast food restaurant, the Macbeth couple dream to capture and thereby to become powerful. For it was the only idea to become powerful in the society.
When the film opens, there is seen the three witches who seem to be representatives of a homeless hippies’ group. In these three witches, two are men and one is a woman. This kind of portrayal of the witches was a distinct experiment made by Morrissette. Most of the adapters of Macbeth presented the witches as female – as provided by Shakespeare – though they could be three, two or even single (for example, in Kurosawa’s Throne of Blood). The witches were transformed as (two) male also, for example, in Vishal Bhardwaj’s Maqbool. But showing two male and one female seems to solve a special purpose. Of course the prophecies are to be made by the female, as she is shown telling future while roaming in a park. These witches made bad prophecies but give an idea to Joe Mac to introduce intercom system – the idea through which McDonald become famous 1960s onwards. Joe Macbeth is not confident enough to go with the idea – he shares this with his boss Duncan who rejects the idea and decides to make his elder son Malcolm the next owner of the restaurant. Malcolm is a young boy who is not serious at all and for what he is more concerned are his guitar and his music band.

Duncan’s decision annoys Joe McBeth and he shares his feeling with his wife Pat McBeth who plans to capture the restaurant. The McBeth couple kills Duncan throwing him into boiling oil showing it as an accident. Malcolm then is not capable enough to run the restaurant and requests Mcbeth to do that. The McBeth couple was then happy – that was after all what they wanted. But during the funeral of Duncan there comes Lieutenant Erine McDuff to investigate the murder case of Duncan. Who is most suspicious here is Malcolm as he was seen fighting with his father Duncan last night of murder. He enquires the McBeth couple too who considers it a robbery case and Duncan’s death an accident. They have successfully adapted the witches’ idea and made the restaurant very famous. Lt. McDuff, who advocates vegetarianism have
suspicion on the Mcbeths and Anthony ‘Banko’ Banconi proves a key for him. But all efforts of Mcduff and Banko are streamlined when the McBeths start behaving in strange manner as they start facing the consequences of their foul deed.

In Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth washes her hands again and again which she thinks are having blood stains of Duncan’s blood. But Morrissette shows her trying to hide a small burn mark on her hand which she believes gained when they throw Duncan in the boiling oil. Though McBeth is shown hurting Banko, the murder scene of McDuff’s family is not included in the film. The suffering of Pat McBeth comes to its peak and with a chopper she cuts her hand where the burn mark is spotted. She dies due to blood loss leaving McBeth alone. McBeth faces an encounter with Lt. McDuff and dies falling down from the roof of the restaurant. Now McDuff is the new owner. He turns the restaurant into a vegan fast food place.

Morrissette sets the film in a backward place where in a poor Inverness the poor McBeth couple lives. They are far away from the royal Macbeth couple of Glamis. Mcbeth is sitting in a nearby amusement park in which there is a big Gondola Wheel. The environment is quite dreamlike a basis on which McBeth can weave his dreams – a psychoanalytical treatment is given. This wheel is a symbol of movement – a change. The wheel, as found by Oana Celia, “represents the human self–transposed at a cosmic level [...] the wheel is inscribed in the general framework of symbols of emanation and return, expressing the evolution of the universe and that of the individual” (2011: 41).

When McBeth was sitting in the park, near that wheel, the witches meet him and reveal their prophecies. Though McBeth is not satisfied with his life and wants to excel in his life, the wheel induces him to take a chance. McBeth is a character who has less willpower, while his lady is strong–willed woman – who wants to become successful and rich. She takes decisions when her man in indecisiveness. She not only makes plans
to kill Duncan and rob his restaurant but also ensures McBeth that they could do so. Even after the murder she is more unruffled than her husband who is scared of McDuff. She also faces McDuff’s question smartly. Pat McBeth, according to Oana Celia, “does not need to be ‘unsexed’; her status of modern woman has already emasculated her, from the standpoint of traditional patriarchy: she is a working-class woman who smokes, drinks beer out of the can and uses the F-word every other sentence” (ibid. 42).

It was of course not an easy decision to murder Duncan in such as bizarre way, but she made for it. After the murder she adapts herself into a lavish lifestyle. She is seen floating on an air bed in a luxurious swimming pool. She is wearing expensive sunglasses and consuming alcohol. The whole incidences take place within no time – Duncan is murdered, his funeral is done, the investigation is going on, the Mcbeths own the café which has now flourished surprisingly – like McDonalds,’ and the lady is enjoying the life in swimming pool. Now the McBeths are more royal than that of Shakespeare’s. Even in her suffering stage, Morrissette shows her less suffered. It appears that Morrissette is spanning the gap between ‘high’ and ‘low’ and presenting a cinematic and an American Shakespeare simultaneously. The film, with xenophobic attitude, promotes American nationalism in a filmic display of warfare for freedom. For example, during the inaugural celebration for the McBeths’ restaurant, a model of the Statue of Liberty is packed away: ‘Put the bitch in the corner guys’, speaks one of the goers. In the concluding extract, it is seen that a naked streaker is holding a small American flag. The three witches – acted by three hippies – seem to epitomize a leftist political site. All these scenes propose this film, if not completely apolitical, is somewhere more concerned in showing the declining of politics than a vociferous rebellion (Brown 2006: 147). The shooting of film was mostly done at Canada, in spite of USA, which shows the redesigning of Scotland and England together. This is the
reason why, while watching the film, the audience could observe, what Brown submits, “watching unfold a secure sense of cultural and national self-confidence”, or observe simply “the theatrics of space” (ibid).

When Macbeth possesses Duncan’s restaurant after murdering him, the song “Beach Baby” is performed by a band named “First Class”. The ‘beach’ of the song is the swimming pool where Macbeth is lying to relax. The film, therefore, seems to transform the play’s catastrophic desires into concerns regarding class and social mobility, and concurrently self-consciously implicate itself in the category of low-class demonstrations of Shakespeare that relocate his individual common eminence as high culture. Morrissette goes beyond the tendency where most of the adaptors of Shakespeare use to show the play’s kings, dukes, and generals as big politicians holding high ranks or as great leaders. He goes a step ahead and recast them as common man – a middle class person who can become over-ambitious murdering his boss:

These “new Shakespeares” reflect both a felt need for social and cultural anchors and a willingness to reexamine or even to challenge the received wisdom as to just what “Shakespeare” is and means. [...] American productions also show evidence of a secure sense of cultural and national self-confidence (though some might call it arrogance) in their desire to throw off any trace of earlier English theatrical traditions and practices.¹⁸

In this film, Duncan is not murdered with daggers but by dipping in the sweltering oil of a fryolater thereby more brutally than done by Macbeth in Macbeth. The meat-cooking pan and the deep fryer used in the film link the individual mischief of McBeths with inhuman vices of merciless meat industry. Duncan is portrayed as a part of the chain of consumption who is served rapidly – condensed to an artifact used for the crowds.

Lawrence W. Levine in his book Highbrow/Lowbrow states, as mentioned by Anthoney D. Hoefer, that in the US, an important role has been played by Shakespeare
in the devising of class since late 19th century. At the end of 19th century, there upraised abundant apprehension towards the large scale immigration of Eastern Europeans to the urban centers of Northeast and Midwest for the Native American believed they have made a true national identity with the determination of civil war (2006: 154). The cities converted in vague mix of language, religion and ethnic identities. Among that chaotic environment a usual longing for some kind of social order was occurred. Amid this environment, Shakespeare’s plays became vital part and continued to be used for the entertainment of the masses. Considered as something sacred and prestigious, they become a marker of literacy, education, and class (ibid.).

In this context the transformation of Dusinaneinto a fast–food restaurant perhaps refers to the practice by which the McDonaldization is coming to dominate the food business. The opening of a big restaurant into a small town is a sign of the upcoming globalization where people will not bother if their food habits are changed. They will not even bother who owns the restaurant. In this case, the murder of Duncan can be executed with ease. The representation and perception of consumption and consumer culture are inseparable from the common notions of class. The social pattern and consumptive practices of the McBeths are in bad taste of waged segment and pointed specially in miserable manner.

The chronological setting of the film foregrounds the bite of the class inferences. The jokes used in the film seem distressing if, for example, a satire is made of the social patterns contemporary working class (both white and black). These jokes can be justified if someone simply makes fun of the period when the garish was in fashion. For the film specially refers to the time of lower and lower–middle classes, the class mobility, in this situation, appears depressed. The McBeths think they could raise their status solely through breaking the societal norms which can include murder of
Duncan – their boss. After murdering Duncan, however, there starts a series of problems when Lt. McDuff came across all this. He ends the ownership and class superiority of McBeths and takes over the restaurant. The movement of becoming Lt. McDuff a businessman from a police detective looks usual because it is a lateral one as far as the class hierarchy is concerned.

Some critics, however, are of the opinion that this collocation is grounded upon the connection of the film to the source text rather upon a difference between the characters and the Shakespearean notion – its place within the cultural hierarchy (ibid. 155). The humor of the film can be voiced in two ways – either the jokes rise from the comic perception of the situations of Macbeth or the hyperbolic raise of McBeths’ plans to the striking situations of Shakespeare’s play (ibid.).

In this case, Scotland, PA shows a distinct discourse with Macbeth from that of other Shakespearean film–adaptations show with their source plays. The humor in the film grounds upon the collective sensitivity of social order. Concurrently, however, it disrupts this order. The witches’ 8–Magic Ball can be taken as example here where the joke depends upon the spectators to cognize both social milieus in combine – the spectators must cognize the role of the witches in Macbeth and know the fortune–telling boy. Macbeth and the Magic–8 Ball belong to joint experience and are part of a wider socio–cultural cognizance. A new spectator can understand the film well only if he is familiar with the original text.

Moreover the noteworthy alternations (if not adulterations) made by Morrissette demonstrate that he wanted to make Shakespeare’s royal characters like common man where one can seek for justice in democracy. Here there is not any king or kingdom; there are not warriors who want to become king. Here are small workers who want to become rich and there are men in administration, for example Lt. McDuff,
who are capable enough to provide justice to people later or sooner, though they could not save them from injustice. The themes like, greed, ambition, feminine power, brutality, etc. are reinvented in the film. Shakespeare’s characters reach to entertain the masses in their own style. Morrissette places Shakespeare’s characters in a globalized and commercialized world where even a tragedy can change into parody (or even into a comedy) in order to meet with economic influences. Though the genre is transformed, but what is served into the plates of the audience is carrying the essence of the original piece. This 21st century adaptation of a 400 years’ old play serves the same purpose what Shakespeare intended – yet it fails to capture all the essentials needed while rendering a celebrated tragedy into a universal film.
The Australian Shakespeare: Geoffrey Wright’s *Macbeth*

The Australian films have been raised on global arena since the 1960s. The critically hailed films like *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975, by Peter Weir) and *My Brilliant Career* (1979, by Gillian Armstrong) have been pursued by the worldwide success of *Mad Max* (1979, by George Miller), *Crocodile Dundee* (1986, by Peter Faiman), and *Strictly Ballroom* (1992, by Baz Luhrmann). Throughout the 1960s nearly fifteen films were produced in Australia. Amongst these, eight were entirely or partially funded by non–Australian interests. The resurgence of Australian films in the 1970s was led by a quarter–century of such negligible production. There was another, more vastly historic heritage against which the revived feature production had to struggle. Australian post–colonial history being dominion rather than post–revolutionary (like Canada but unlike India’s), the Australian traditional argument personified in the feature reawakening had to counter a long history of eager sub–service to other countries’ fiscal, political–strategic and cultural interests (Smith 1997: 722). The first film which attained the achievement of a screening in Cannes was the watershed *Sunday Too Far Away* (1975, directed by Ken Hannan). It was a period film which rediscovered the Australian bush mythological locale hardly seen in the films so far (ibid. 723). And thereafter Australian film director marked their presence on global arena through their remarkable films. Among such film director is Geoffrey Wright.

The kingdom is shown as a gang and the throne is headship (bossiness) of the gang. The warriors are gangsters and Duncan is replaced with a crime boss who heads the Drug business.

The lead actors of his film were:

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<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Character/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sam Worthington</td>
<td>Macbeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Hill</td>
<td>Lady Macbeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Bastoni</td>
<td>Banquo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Sweet</td>
<td>Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachy Hulme</td>
<td>Macduff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe Armstrong</td>
<td>First Witch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Bell</td>
<td>Second Witch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miranda Nation</td>
<td>Third Witch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Doran</td>
<td>Malcolm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damian Walshe–Howling</td>
<td>Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Gyngell</td>
<td>Doctor</td>
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The opening scene of the film is set in a graveyard. The three girls (witches) are trying to destroy the gravestone and statues. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are also present there. They have lost their loving son. Macbeth is standing nearby and Lady Macbeth is lamenting upon the headstone of her son’s grave where ‘beloved son’ is carved. The three witch girls leave the graveyard beaming complacently at Macbeth. They decide to meet again there only.

Macbeth is a leader of a sub–gang. His boss Duncan sends him to set a business deal with another gang named Macdonwald. He successfully fulfils the order and
captures the Cawdor club. Banquo is also with him. Both start enjoying the fulfillment of the target. They start drinking and take drug–pills. There Macbeth meets the three witches and they make prophecies for him. They say that Macbeth would take the place of Duncan and head the gang. They also forecast that Banquo’s son will become next boss of gangland in future. It leaves deep imprints on Macbeth’s mind and his ambition got fuelled. He tells all this to his drug–addicted wife when he reaches home. His wife Lady Macbeth is full of grief over her beloved son’s death. She is stoned and half asleep lying in bathtub. As she becomes normal she prepares a plan to murder Duncan. Since Duncan has declared Malcolm his successor, there was no other way to become the boss except murdering Duncan. Macbeth wants to become the boss but doesn’t want to kill Duncan because he was his loyal henchman and Duncan gives him adequate regard and reward. Wright in his film exhibits that it was due to his fanatical love for his wife that Macbeth murders Duncan.

Victoria Hill as Lady Macbeth seems less powerful in her advent than Shakespeare’s. That is why she is shown using her sexual command over Macbeth. Macbeth however is shown more indulged sexually with the three witches instead of his wife. He seems to be indifferent when his Lady commits suicides cutting her wrist lying in bathtub. Macbeth at that time is bothered how to save himself from the attacks of Lennox, Ross and others.

Wright makes enough use of modern technology in his film. As one can expect from a drug–dealer, Macbeth’s house is equipped with CCTV cameras and screens for tight security. The opening and closing of main doors are also controlled with the help of the cameras. Every outside activity is observed minutely. All this shows that a man who is indulged in such kind of business cannot enjoy a sound sleep and by murdering Duncan, Macbeth murders his sleep. He becomes much dependent upon technology
knowing well that one can use the technology to be alert but it cannot ensure his mental peace.

Wright maintains the Shakespearean lines as script but the characters (especially Sam Worthington as Macbeth) seem emotionless while delivering the soliloquies. Macbeth becomes the chief of whole gang, but he could not accept Banquo’s son as next leader, though he himself was childless. He sends two murders to murder Banquo and his son Fleance. Banquo was unfortunate enough to get murdered but his son escapes. Macbeth organizes a commemorative dinner for his gang members. He sees a glance of Banquo during the dinner and becomes uncomfortable. He thereafter becomes more insecure and his activities and behavior lead Lennox, Ross and others to suspect him for murdering Duncan as well as Banquo.

Now Macbeth is in trouble internally as well as externally. In this situation, the three witches enter Macbeth’s home. They encourage him to drink the potion and engage in sexual orgy with him. Meanwhile they suggest Macbeth to be aware of Macduff. They also ensure him that no one ‘born of woman’ could harm him. But they don’t tell him that Macduff is not born of woman directly. Macbeth takes their words seriously goes to Macduff’s house to kill him. Macduff is not at his house as he has gone to his uncle Siward.

Macbeth murders Lady Macduff and her son. This news is broadcasted on TV and Lennox and Ross let Macduff know it. Macduff, Malcolm, Lennox and Ross are too tempered to plan executing Macbeth. They ensnare Macbeth’s home and there takes place a large gunfight from both sides. Macbeth tries to escape but caught at cellar. He is stabbed in stomach by Macduff. He stagers upstairs to his bedroom. He falls down delivering the tomorrow and tomorrow speech and dies where his dead wife is lying.
Throughout the film the audience see the use of technology. Everything is modernized according to present day scene. The witches are also school girls wearing skirts instead of traditional old witches dressed in medieval clothing. But one can ask how the existence of witches could be supposed in an ultramodern society. Perhaps this is the reason why Wright weaves the plot round drug-business. If someone is intoxicated with drugs he could claim of watching witches. This is Wright’s idea of making a connection amid medieval Scotland and modern Australia. Another example of this linking is the delineation of furniture fit for a period style. The walls are red, the gates are heavy, but candles are used for lightning frequently. The dressing of characters is of course modern – they wear jeans and leather jackets – but they deliver Shakespearean soliloquies.

There takes place a gangsters’ war in which Duncan becomes victorious due to his henchman like Macbeth, Banquo, etc. He is very happy and announces his son Malcolm as his successor. For Macbeth was prophesized by the three witch girls as next chief of the gang, he is not happy with Duncan’s decision. Macbeth’s wife is very desirous to see his husband in the position of Duncan. When she comes to know that Duncan will come to their home for a night, she plans for his murder. She goads Macbeth to murder him. When Duncan is found killed next morning, Malcolm realizes the demand of the situation and flees. People suspect him as murderer of Duncan. Macbeth assumes Duncan’s position and starts taking his own decisions irrespective of his henchmen’s opinion. Macbeth tries to murder Banquo and his son because his son was prophesized as next leader.

Banquo is killed but his son Fleance flees. Macbeth goes to kill Macduff and his family for Macduff has refused to accept the leadership of Macbeth as he thinks that Macbeth has killed Duncan. Moreover the witches have also advocated him to beware
Macduff escapes but his family is brutally killed by Macbeth. Later Macbeth and his lady become alienated. Lady Macbeth commits suicide. Malcolm and Macduff come to kill Macbeth. There takes place multiple gunfights in which Macbeth dies.

Malcolm then becomes the new leader. Wright in this way maintains the main plot. He retains all characters that Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* retains. The role/position of characters however changed a little. Angus (acted by Rel Hunt) is, for example, is provided with much space in the film. In Shakespeare’s play Angus is a minor character, but Wright highlights him. He has long blond hair and shown many times in the film.

Macduff is shown as a loving husband as well as family man. In a scene, when he departs for Duncan’s services, he says good bye to his wife children. He also takes with him a painting made by his children. Wright presents Banquo as a good father. He loves his young son Fleance and spares time for him. He restrains him from drinking. He goes for the countryside driving motorbike with his son. This is the reason why Wright makes Fleance present in the end of the film (it was not in the original play). Fleance is mad with rage upon his father’s death who loved him so much. He is impatient to take revenge from Macbeth – he is the main destroyer of Macbeth’s estate.

Francesca Annis as Lady Macbeth in the sleepwalking scene is shown very realistic. This realistic portrayal is far from the treatment of this scene seen in several other *Macbeth* films. At both times, in sleepwalking and while lying in tub after death, Annis is very genuine as Lady Macbeth. It is also worth mentioning that Francesca Annis was also co–script writer of the film. It can be denied that besides writing and acting, she might have herself directed in this scene.

The daggers and swords are substituted with pistols and machine guns. There are luxurious cars like Audi and sporty bikes. The gang–members use these cars and
bikes for show–off and fighting purposes. Wright uses High Definition camera. There are special visual effects used to show the action and fight in the darkness of night. Macbeth’s empire is gated bearing a sign that denotes it as Dunsinane. The Birnam wood is displayed as a logging company. The most argued updating is the portrayal of three witches as beautiful school girls. They not only make prophecies for Macbeth but have sex with him. The whole film is full of sex, bloodshed and violence – most of the sets and frames are red. What is not changed is the name of all characters.

In Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Macbeth commits murder after murder. It becomes mandatory from him to keep away from every witness of his crime. Since Shakespeare does not provide any description of Banquo and his murderer’s murder, Wright displays the murder scenes so outrageously that the audience could even cover their noses to avoid the ‘smell’ of blood. He is after all a gangster Macbeth. On this kind of filming, Brian McFarlane remarks that, “The themes of the story are timeless, murder breeds murder, blood will have blood. Once you start killing it’s hard to stop, like a nuclear reaction, and that’s pretty much what we’ve seen at the height of the Melbourne gangland wars.”

Macbeth’s residence is luxurious and equipped with ultramodern technologies. It is located away from the clubs, bars and outskirts of other gangsters. Macduff’s residence is located in forested hills. It is an airy habitation seems full of peace. Both Macduff and Macbeth’s houses however are set in Melbourne only. The river is also present and seems as a spot of intrigues and thus helps in the transposition of play in an Australian setup. Though, the accents of the actors are pure Australian and sometimes perplexing for a non–native of Australia, Geoffrey Wright, unlike Ken Hughes’ 1955’s *Macbeth* adaptation as *Joe Macbeth*, has reserved the words as it is from the source text.
Ken Hughes who set his *Joe Macbeth* in contemporary American underworld, used modern idioms for the dialogues. He used typical underworld vocab which could satisfy the Native Americans. Wright reserves Shakespearean lines but transforms the clothing and setting. He cuts a lot and reduces some acts as well as scenes. He selects only few soliloquies to be spoken by the actors.

Wright has invented some new scenes that situate some characters far from Shakespeare. Shakespeare’s Malcolm is, for instance, “… yet unknown to women” (4.3.126–7), but Wright’s Malcolm has a girlfriend. He flees from Macbeth’s house with her only instead of his brother Donalbain. He is in bed with his girlfriend when the breaking news of the brutal murder of Macduff’s family comes on the TV. These kinds of additions could be considered reasonable from a director’s point of view for he has to show a literary piece differently for different populaces. This differentness provides him with separate existence among others. If he will follow the earlier films, since it is quite difficult to follow the source play as whole, his ingenuity may be challenged. But if he goes far away from the source text, then his fidelity could be challenged. Within this periphery, while maintaining the essence of the source text, he has to say what suits to his target audience.

The soliloquies can be delivered easily when a play is enacted on the stage but when it comes to film, the representation of soliloquies can be made using other devices. Wright makes his Macbeth delivering Shakespearean key soliloquies at certain moments. But some of the soliloquies, “if it were done …”, for example, are heard on the sound track. During this soliloquy Macbeth is looking at his guests. Macbeth’s eyes stops at Banquo and Fleance. His thoughts at that time are full of uncertainty – he has murdered Duncan who cannot return back. Would he have to murder Banquo and
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Fleance? And who after that? If what is done could be undone, there would be no more murders. Macbeth is not happy even after achieving the top position among his men.

Sam Worthington enacts Macbeth well on screen; he always seems to express the interior convolution and moral vagueness of a man who has himself murdered his sleep. The reviewers however criticize him, along with Wright the film director, for emotionless delivery of soliloquies. Rosemary Gaby comments, “There is something exciting and engaging about this bunch of Aussies’ larrikin ‘can–do’ attitude to filming Shakespeare, but unfortunately the decision to stick with Shakespeare’s dialogue proved problematic for both the wider viewing public and for critics” (2012: 2).

Alike him many other reviews usually point out the actors’ delivery of their lines. Gaby quotes Peter Bradshaw, who says that, “the main actors sound callow and dull and very ill–at–ease with the language” (ibid.). Gaby also refers Margret Pomeranz’s remarks, “The beautiful language sits very uncomfortably in this version, what there is of it anyway. The Shakespearean dialogue just sounds awkward and even a bit embarrassing coming from the actors” (ibid.)

Deborah Mulhall also observes filming approach of Wright and speculates, “Wright perhaps became so engaged with his ‘dream project’ he forgot to direct his actors” (2006: 68). It seems that appropriate weight is retained on the filmic aspects and the dialogue delivery became secondary. Wright’s treatment of the source play shows, as Gaby states, “he has allows his lead actors to downplay Shakespeare’s poetry in order to position the Macbeths as relatively insignificant figures of deviance within an inherently violent and deviant world (2012: 10).

Along with those who criticize this film for several reasons, there are a lot who admires Wright’s effort. These critics put this film in the category of “New Wave Shakespeare” among the directors like Peter Greenaway, Baz Luhrmann, Julie Taymor, Kristian
Levring, etc. These directors were marked as those who don’t follow the Hollywood tradition while adapting a Shakespeare’s play for their films. These New Wave Shakespeare films are full of dialogues from popular culture. They are set in “hyper–modern society, follow fast–paced action–sequences and use pop–video aesthetics” (Gaby 2012: 4). Wright’s film also touches all these corners. Wright with his co–script writer Victoria Hill rearranges and edits Shakespearean dialogues fit for the people who live in an ultra–modern society.

Wright presents the dagger as the shadow of a Yucca plant and the knock at Macbeth’s gate is supplanted with doorbell blowing. The cauldron scene in the film is another example of Wright’s belief in showing everything. The cauldron scene set in Macbeth’s house only, the fully nude witches preparing the hallucinogenic brew. The contents of the potion are strange but Wright shows them. As Victoria Bladen comments:

> The witches assemble the array of disturbing, resonant parts (Liver of blaspheming Jew”, “Nose of Turk” and “Tartar’s lips” (4.1.26–9) that are attributed with weight, effect and power as ingredients supposedly capable of effecting particular results. Created by violence and severance, these abjections are then reassembled, accompanied by ritual, to create an effect, but what that is, is ambiguous and unspecified – a “deed without a name” (4.1.65). Their magic is ostensibly beyond the boundaries of language. (2013: 94)

Wright was perhaps stimulated by the underworld activities that affected the Australian people during late 1990s and continued for long time. There raised some criminal groups which struggled for supremacy and during their fight more than 35 people were killed (ibid).

John Sylvester and Andrew Rule authored a book which published in 2004 titled *Lead belly: Inside Australia’s Underworld Wars*. In this book they described about the underworld’s gangsters’ war. A TV series titled *Underbelly* was made inspired from
this book. This TV series proved very popular and was highly appreciated and critically admired. It is difficult to say whether or not Wright was inspired from it, he however could have been read Sylvester and Rule’s book. Another similarity between Underbelly and Wright’s Macbeth was that two actors of the film – Kat Stewart (acted as Lady Macduff) and Walsh–Howling (acted as Ross) have been worked in the first series of Underbelly and won AFI awards (ibid).

The presence of children in Wright’s Macbeth reminds of Melbourne underworld wars once again. In 2003, Jason Moran, who was a drug–dealer, was murdered with his guards. His children witnessed his murder and it made public terrified and shocked. The police made a special taskforce to find witness against these gangsters. In Wright’s film Macduff’s son is shot dead before his wife. His wife is strangled to death with a wire. At the last moment the camera focuses on a picture in which all three – Macduff, Lady Macduff and their son is standing. Thus Macbeth crosses the border of cruelty by butchering two members of a sweet family – Macduff had been just left before the murderers came. This news comes on TV and the happy–family photo is shown focusing on the child’s face. After watching this on TV Lady Macbeth looks at Macbeth as if she is questioning why they are murdered. She is very disturbed and some tears can be seen in her eyes. She would have been fainted if she came to know how they were butchered. This is the last scene of the film when she is seen normal. In her next seen she is in bed and tries to wash the blood from her hand as the doctor comes to see her.

Ross, Lennox and Angus watch the same news and feel dejected. Ross and Lennox left for Macduff to let him know about it. When Macduff comes to know about his wife and son’s slaughter he is almost mad and starts crying. Fleance sympathizes him. Both Fleance and Macduff are at the same platform now – Fleance had already lost
his father and Macduff has just lost his happy family. Now they are burning in the fire of revenge. It seems Macbeth’s bad time starts now. During the last meeting with the witches Macbeth sees Fleance hailed as the chief of gang. He also sees in his nightmare where a child is turning his gun towards him.

Fleance’s role is extended in the film. In the end of film when Macduff, Malcolm and others, come to kill Macbeth, he is also with them. During the duel between Macbeth and Macduff, Macbeth is badly wounded. He seems hopeless and contended at the same. He goes upstairs where his lady is lying died. He kisses her and dies putting his hand on her. Fleance who was following Macbeth enters the room where both are lying dead. He turns his gun pointing Macbeth and as Lady Macbeth’s maid enters the room, he shoots her unwillingly.

The physical setting of film nonetheless tries to maintain that of Shakespeare. Macbeth’s house is named as Dunsinane situated in woods. ‘The Cawdor’ is presented as a nightclub. When Duncan announces Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor, Macduff takes keys from Cawdor’s pocket tosses them to Macbeth. Duncan shoots Cawdor dead in his head and announces Malcolm the Thane of Cumberland. The life style of Macbeth, Duncan, Macduff and others however is posh. Macbeth owns an expensive sports car.

Macduff also has a costly SUV. The bikes are also sport bikes that Banquo and his son drive. Red wine is served in stylish glasses in parties. Along with the soliloquies, Wright, in his film, has maintained some other Shakespearean words like – ‘my lord’, ‘my worthy lord’, etc. Lady Macbeth uses these words for Macbeth several times. In Macbeth’s dining room Pieter Aertsen’s (1551) painting named “Butcher Stall” is situated conflicting the closet mirror. This however denotes Macbeth as a butcher, but gives an ethnic touch to his room. During the feast, Banquo’s gory ghost appears here only.
The dressing style of actors in Wright’s *Macbeth* is trendy. The male actors are shown wearing fashionable clothes and dark leather jackets (Sometimes they are in suits). In the early fight scenes, Macbeth is shown wearing shirt, trouser and heavy leather jacket – a regular dress of gang member as provided in *Macbeth*, “old robes sit easier than our new” (3.1.38). When he is in Duncan’s party, he is wearing embroidered olive shirt – looking cool. And when he is the host of the party after becoming the gang leader, he wears a colorful velvet flowery suit. He also wears a pendent round hid neck adjusting “like a giant’s robe / upon a dwarfish thief” (5.2.21–2).

Lady Macbeth wears fancy dresses during feasts. Since she (Victoria Hill) was co–producer and co–script writer, it may happen that she herself would have been ordered the designer to design such sexy dresses for her. Wright with Hill, like other 21st century adaptations of *Macbeth*, offers Lady Macbeth an obscure character, often used for enjoyment and held responsible for all [miss] consequences. Her role in the film reminds what Anna Jameson wrote long ago, about Lady Macbeth:

> Lady Macbeth is placed in a dark, ignorant, Iron Age; her powerful intellect is slightly tinged with its credulity and superstition, but she has no religious feeling to restrain the force of will. She is not connected to the Victorian concept of women at all. (1901: 374)

Amanda Rooks who is the costume designer for the film tries to make connection with the language of the film. She helps the director to show Lady Macbeth sensual both physically and at dressing. But her dressing sense becomes less erotic when she is shown topless and later fully naked. This reminds Banquo’s comment that wearing dresses will “hide the naked frailties” that “suffer in exposure” (2.3.128–9).

Wright has tried to invent “fog and filthy air” (1.1.12) and “dunnest smoke of Hell” (1.5.50) visually. In the film, Macbeth meets the witches for the first time after seizing over the Cawdor club. Both Macbeth and Banquo drink and take pills. It does
not suit Banquo as feels he vomits in the bathroom. Macbeth goes to the dance-floor of the nightclub. He switches on the smoke machine and the colored fog spreads on the floor. He sits on the floor and tries to catch the fog. An eerie music is playing in the background. Macbeth starts looking at the roof from where the red light is coming. At once the three witches appear. Macbeth hears them saying foul is fair, fair is foul…. Macbeth recalls that he has already seen them in cemetery. They come closer to Macbeth and he says so foul and fair day he has never seen.

The witches make their prophecies while Macbeth kisses them. They leave laughing as Macbeth tries to catch them. He is again left in fog. He then comes back to Banquo. This kind of treatment is distanced from Shakespeare’s portrayal of the witches, it but reminds what Terry Eagleton says:

To any unprejudiced reader – which would seem to exclude Shakespeare himself, his contemporary audiences and almost all literary critics – it is surely clear that positive value in Macbeth lies with the three witches. The witches are the heroines of the piece, however little the play itself recognizes the fact. (1986: 2)

It is here worth notable however that in Shakespeare’s Macbeth the witches meet both Macbeth and Banquo. But in Wright’s film they meet Macbeth only, they however make prophecies for Banquo too. This kind of portrayal of the witches’ meeting with Macbeth can lead the audience to think that these witches were the creations of Macbeth’s imagination for Banquo could not saw them.

One more evidence of the presence of fog in the film is when Banquo and his son drive bikes. The forest they pass through is misty. There only the murderers attack upon them. Banquo is killed but Fleance elopes. This misty forest is shown one more time when Angus tries to flee and is killed. There are many sky shots in Wright’s film which remind Akira Kurosawa’s Throne of Blood and Roman Polanski’s Macbeth. Giroux talks on how film adaptations work as social practices that power their routine
lives and posit them within prevailing social, cultural, and institutional apparatuses of control, how the historical and existing meanings that a film, inspired from a literary piece, creates align, replicate, and interpose wider arrays of concepts, discourses, and social formations at work in the larger society.

Wright shows everything that Shakespeare wanted the audience to imagine. He sometimes goes so much in detail in order to connect the audience emotionally. He shows, for example, Lady Macbeth crying on her son’s death. He shows Banquo vomiting after drinking and taking pills. When Macbeth returns at home, his wife is lying senseless in bathtub. Wright would have perhaps thought there was no scope for showing Macbeth writing a letter to his wife (or informing her on phone) what Shakespeare’s Macbeth does.

Lady Macbeth flirts with Duncan when he comes at their home for the party. In another scene she sniffs cocaine. Macduff and Malcolm capture and kill the murders of Banquo. All these are the examples of inclusion of such scenes might help Wright to fit an Elizabethan play in contemporary Australian society for most of the things among them are the part of day to day life in modern culture.

Besides sometimes it seems Wright has crossed the limit of inventing Shakespearean scenes on screen. For example, on the one side, it is observed that Macbeth’s house in highly secured, then how could the three girls enter in his house. It seems they were again the imagination of Macbeth’s mind. Moreover they are totally nude when they prepare the potion. They have had sex with Macbeth. In the beginning Lady Macbeth is shown so cruel to induce Macbeth to kill of whom he is a dearest and loyal man, but in another scene, she turns kind and is seen crying after watching the news of brutal murder of Lady Macduff and her son.
The architectural structuring of Wright’s film’s setting is used to externalize psychological complexities, and the borderline between the conscious and subconscious worlds of the heroes is the major preoccupation of cinematic exploration. Wright’s films exploit the stark contrasts of monochromatic film to present dramas of light and darkness.

Nonetheless, when Geoffrey Wright presented his *Macbeth* version in 2006, *Macbeth* has traversed splendid 400 years of adaptation and translation right from 1606 when Shakespeare wrote it. After 400 years the Shakespearean leitmotifs are pertinent and worth filmable – Wright’s film verifies it – some modifications however are desirable according to varying socio-cultural contexts.

**NOTES**


2ibid.

3ibid.


5http://ru.ffyl.unam.mx:8080/jspui/bitstream/10391/706/6/03_ALM.pdf.txt

6ibid.

7ibid.

8Sarah, Hatchuel. “‘Prithee, see there! Behold! Look!’ (3.4.69): The Gift or the Denial of Sight in
<http://www.borrowers.uga.edu/cocoon/borrowers/request?id=781443>


10 ibid.

11 ibid.

12 ibid.

13 www.imdb.com/Orson Welles

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15 ibid.

16 as quoted by Anthony Davis 1988. p84.


18 Sarah, Hatchuel. “‘Prithee, see there! Behold! Look!’ (3.4.69): The Gift or the Denial of Sight in Screen Adaptations of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. *Borrowers and lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*, 2005. Available at
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