

## Chapter – 3

### The Asian Shakespeare

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As Shakespeare's best-known and most adorned text, certainly one of the earth's most read texts, *Macbeth* has driven numerous artists and writers across the globe. The film adaptations worth studying in their own right both as transformations of Shakespeare's original text and as distinct literary works themselves. This chapter studies the films adaptations from the Asian continent which use *Macbeth* as their source text.

Adaptation has been an important part of the appreciation and study of Shakespeare's plays since their inception. Shakespeare adapted the majority of his writings from other literary and/or historical works; and in the centuries since, other writers have also used his texts as inspiration for their own. Analyzing film versions of literature in relation to their 'original' source texts, to their enactment/production account, to each other, and to the world(s) of authors and readers allows the scholars to explore the relationships of textual worlds to the actual worlds in which those texts are produced and interpreted, and the connections between the worlds of the original work and an adaptation of that work into a new text.

#### ***Macbeth* as a Successful "Tragedy"**

While taking on "tragedy" Stephen Booth says:

We use the word "tragedy" when we are confronted with a sudden invasion of our finite conscious by the fact of infinite possibility— when our minds are sites for a domestic collision of the understanding and the fact of infinity. "Tragedy" is the word by which the mind designated its helplessness before a concrete, particular, and thus undeniable demonstration of the limits of human understanding. (1983: 79)

A successful dramatic tragedy, as divergent to the play successful in fitting a critical formula, makes tragedy bearable; it lets the readers face the truth beyond categories by presenting that uncontrollable and undiminished truth inside the absurdity comforting framework of the unquestionably ‘man-made’, ‘man-suited’, and ‘man-limited’ ‘direction of the play – the play as opposed to the materials and actions it describes or the experience of thinking about those materials and actions (ibid). An audience may be able to face the existence of infinite possibility while the infinity of possibilities exercises itself within the humanly comprehensible confines of the play; but, what an audience thinks back on its experience of the events of the play, it feels the need to prove to itself that it could not have borne a demonstration of truth beyond the reason (ibid.). Therefore here enters criticism, often with the object of proving that “indeed the audience has not borne and could not bear truth beyond reason”, that there is no truth “beyond the reason, and the success of the work of art—comprehending the incomprehensible in its artistic fabric – is not the action of the work of art but inherent in the nature of the materials” (ibid. 86). This is in fact a precursor for the origin of a powerful tragedy – of which *Macbeth* is a great example.

*Macbeth* was written in 1606 when Shakespeare was at the height of his power as writer of tragedy. He had just written *Othello* and *King Lear*; *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* was in the way.

He might too have haggard on *Hamlet*; in its close examination of the mind of an assassin – the play expounds on the character of Claudius in the earlier tragedy. However there is nothing standardized about Shakespeare’s tragedies – each is a fresh experiment, with its own distinct methods and atmosphere. *Macbeth* strands out in a number of ways. Not even *Hamlet*, with its ghost, makes such pervasive use of supernatural. The evil of Iago in *Othello* is a function of his own nature; the evil that

*Macbeth* seems to be a force at work in the spiritual world raising the questions – Does Macbeth use that force or is it using him? Even if it is a topical work, *Macbeth* is the sort of topical work that can live outside its original context. The near universality of Shakespeare's appeal is unquestioned, though its cause can be debated.

*Macbeth* puts through an actual experience of the insufficiency of audience's finite minds to the infinite universe. What can be pitied and feared can be thought about, and, if after the play one can believe that he was pitying and fearing while it went on, then he has to convince himself that he is, was, and will remain in a limited universe. He undergoes his greatest tragedy in joining his mind to Macbeth's both in his sensitive awareness of evil and his practice of it. This is the obvious but inadequate reason why the readers' sympathy goes with Macbeth. They see things from Macbeth's point of view. The same, however, is true with Richard in *Richard III* and Iago in *Othello*; audience's relations with them are similarly adjacent but, they nowhere lose their characteristics. To be an audience to *Macbeth* is virtually to 'be' Macbeth for the duration of performance/film. The experience of *Macbeth* testifies to its audience's mental capacity to endure mental challenges as demanding as the ones that overwhelm Macbeth— and overwhelm Lady Macbeth and, slightly, Macduff and his lady, and their mentally self-confident little boy.

The play enables its audiences wholly to miss the glaring but invisible ludicrousness of the double standard by which Macbeth evaluates weird prophecies. He takes them as advantageous to his expectations, as revelations of unalterable fate; thus he announces his confidence that he is 'immune to dagger' from all persons 'born of women' and that he is safe until Birnam wood comes to Duns inane. At the same time, he admits that he has it within his power to prevent the seed of Banquo from becoming king. The readers' minds are similarly aware with intact irony, the fact that Macbeth,

who has reasonable cause to fear Macduff and Banquo's children, becomes successful in assassinating the children of Banquo and Macduff. Since *Macbeth* evokes conflicting responses that could but do not collide in the readers' consciousness, and because it both includes and omits to exploit logical inconsistencies in its character's conduct, the practice of studying *Macbeth* is an experience of an object that is under constant pressure from within— an object full of volatile elements always ready to encounter and burst. *Macbeth* empowers its viewers to sit down unruffled in the presence of mutually antipathetic facts of a sort that in ordinary experience put their minds in panic when they so much as suspect that as they coexist.

An echo of "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" occurs in scene 1, while the first line of *Macbeth* at the beginning of scene 3 is— "So foul and fair day I have not seen." The united reverberations in "fair" and "foul" make a surprisingly sustained, complex alternative pattern in "far", "fear", "free," "file," "fail," "fall," "fool," "false" ... a silently supporting pattern that is only literally full of sound and fury and that, however it denotes nonentity, aids a rational human mind experience tragedy— live with essentially unmediated truth— and persist. What *Macbeth* offers, what a successful dramatic tragedy offers — is like what the word "tragedy" does for real-life tragedies: it gives local habitation and a name to the most terrifying things, "a deed without a name" (4.1.49), isolated from renouncing its namelessness, its incomprehensibility, its definition (Booth 1983: 118).

Prof. R.S. White remarks:

If we know *Macbeth* and have understood some of critical problems that have been explored over centuries, then we can see the film as providing its own solutions, shedding light on the potential of the for 'new readings'... whether Macbeth was motivated by ambition alone, whether he is a strong agent who seizes his chances and creates his destiny or a passive man who 'has greatness thrust upon him' by the supernatural intervention of the three 'wired sisters'; whether these figures, the witches, create the future by putting ideas into Macbeth's mind, or

simply foresee it as something that will inevitably happen; whether Duncan simply a pawn of circumstances or whether his role can be more complex; whether Lady Macbeth is an active collaborator and perpetrator in the murder of Duncan or merely a handmaiden to her husband's ambitions; and so on.... (2012: 94)

He also says that while critics and readers may keep in a rich suspension all the options, maintaining that the text is open to nearly unbounded readings, directors and actors, whether on stage or in film, need to make decisions about such matters (ibid.).

*Macbeth* displays how the 'over-psychological' needs of a person drive him or her to act in the manner he does. Macbeth's relations with his Lady, the weird sisters, and Banquo divulge the changes in Macbeth's psychological mind as he strived increasingly and more recklessly to attain power. A scholarly analysis of the imagery and style that takes place within each of these relationships bears this out. As such, it stands as a starkly humanistic morality play as revealed in the translation of these plays to screen, the thoughts envisioned for transmittance by the director are usually vibrant, rousing an abundant amount of accord. It is deeply read both in playing conventions and in the textual debates of Shakespeare's work.

In *Macbeth*, the contradiction between the fixed and the moving aspects of time is some degree reconciled by the use of the word in the dictionary's first meaning and supplementary meanings that derive from it. The wordplay of *Macbeth*, less obvious than that of other plays, is some of the utmost delicate Shakespeare provides. In this play, the leitmotifs are organized into the imaginative unity of a great dramatic verse. It concurrently conserves the play's theatrical vigor by contributing to the interplay of characters as fully realized as any in the major group of Shakespeare's tragedies. The protracted series of *Macbeth's* filmic versions proves it.

## The Japanese Shakespeare: *Macbeth* as *Throne of Blood*

The Japanese film industry has been robust from the earliest days, leading the world in the number of films it produces. The first Japanese studio was stein 1904–1905. Afterwards the studios continued to expend until the overwhelming Tokyo earthquake in 1923 forced them to reform. Because of the popularity of the benshi<sup>1</sup> sound was slow up to mid–1930s. The Second World War brought about another hiatus, and the subsequent American control, from 1945–1952, passed a policy of censorship that confined the style of many major filmmakers (Ellis and Wexman 2002: 312).

Nevertheless, Japanese cinema has remained prominent not only for the quantity of films produced but also for the high quality several achieved. Japanese films became globally noteworthy in 1951 when *Rashomon*, directed by Akira Kurosawa, won grand prize at the Venice Film Festival. After its victory at Venice, *Rashomon* was circulated worldwide. *Gate of Hell* (1953), the first Japanese film in the new Eastman Color, was directed by Teinosuke Kinugasa. Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954) reached the United States and highly appreciated (ibid.). Machiko Kyo, who appeared in the first three Japanese films to be imported, was much cherished aboard, and Toshino Mifune, whose finest work has been done with Kurosawa, established an international reputation with *Rashoman* and *Seven Samurai*.

While American filmmakers most frequently concerned themselves with action and, European with the psychology of character, the Japanese frequently appeared to be more concerned with overall mood and setting. Though the themes are common, they represent unfamiliar assumptions and artistic conventions. In treatment there often seem different sentimentality from Americans. A moralistic quality is also common in Japanese cinema, as is slower pacing. Shots and scenes are allowed to extend beyond the requirements of the narrative point being made to let audiences savor the feelings

just expressed. Other, more precise formal characteristics were equally noteworthy, especially in contrast to the immediately preceding western neorealism (ibid. 313).

Many of the Japanese films are beautifully and visually well-designed. If one of them were stopped at random during projection, any frame held on the screen would probably be perfect in terms of composition and lighting. Long passages without dialogue give emphasis to the image. Coming from a cultural tradition that places great importance on the visual arts, Japanese directors and cinematographers thought as painters. Their frame lines always serve as organizational milieus for graphic design as well as for enclosing chunks of content. Planes of action seem constantly to be considered and shots carefully composed in depth – foreground in relation to middle ground in relation to background.

The historical films usually were based on ancient legends well known to Japanese spectators. These period films divulge that the Japanese historical experience has had certain similarities of that of western nations, feudalism for instance, as well as certain differences, such as religion. It is the difference that captivates most (ibid. 314). Moreover, that initial cluster of films opening the world's screen to Japanese cinema introduced the greatest filmmaker – Akira Kurosawa. A number of his films are adaptations of European literary classics: Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot* (1951) and Gogol's *The Lower Depths* (1957) as well as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (*Throne of Blood*, 1957) and *King Lear* (*Ran*, 1985). He also filmed an adaptation of a novel by the popular American mystery writer Ed McBain (*High and Low*, 1963). Not only that Kurosawa adapted Western stories, but in turn, some of his films have inspired Hollywood remakes, notable *Roshomon* (as *The Outrage*, Martin Ritt, 1964) and *The Seven Samurai* (as *The Magnificent Seven*, John Struges, 1960).

Born on 23 March 1910, Akira Kurosawa was a veteran film director–producer, editor and screenwriter. Kurosawa was regarded as one of the most influential figure of world cinema as he directed more than 30 films in his 57 years long filmic career. He abandoned this mortal world on 6 September 1998. In initial years he worked as assistant director and in 1943, his came with *Sanshiro Sugata (Judo Saga)*, his first film as an independent director. In 1948, he directed another film *Drunken Angel* in which he casted a new actor Toshiro Mifune as main character, with whom he produced about 15 films in the due course. Some of his most admired films, as a director, are: *The Quite Duel* (1949), *Scandal* (1950), *The Idiot* (1951), *Ikuru* or *To Live* (1952), *Seven Samurai* (1954), *The Lower Depths* (1957), *The Hidden Fortress* (1958), *The Bad Sleep Well* (1960), *Bodyguard* (1961), *High and Low* (1963), *Red Beard* (1965), *Dodesukaden* (1970), *Dersu Uzala* (1975), *The Shadow Warrior* (1980), *Ran* (1985), *Dreams* (1990), *Madadayo* or *Not Yet* (1993), etc. The enthusiasm of Kurosawa’s style of storytelling through imageries has constantly gone hand in hand with a humanitarian handling of his themes. An appeal with societal complications and human nature constructs the accumulation of Kurosawa’s world, and offer the relationship between his intense medieval classics and contemporary dramas. Kurosawa shows a matchless directorial clout to make compact imaginary spheres. A concern with non–Japanese refrains is prevalent in his versions of western literary texts, comprising Dostoevsky, Gorky, and of course Shakespeare. Kurosawa’s films express national sentiments and beliefs, at least of the older Japan, which gave way more slowly and less fundamentally than appeared on the surface. In his films set in prevailing periods he tends to subdue this kind of direct sensory appeal. Instead he keeps the audience focused on the understated, multifaceted characters and on the genera of social problems that more clearly show his

dimension as a humanist. That is why even in his historical pieces he is always commenting on contemporary life, and the concerns are profoundly social and moral.

His film *Throne of Blood* (1957) is considered as the best *Macbeth* film along with Orson Welles's *Macbeth* (1971). The main star cast of *Throne of Blood* was:

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Character/Role</b>
Toshiru Mifune	Taketoki Washizu (equivalent to Macbeth)
Isuzu Yamada	Lady Asaji Washizu
Takashi Shimura	Noriyasu Odagura
Akira Kubo	Yoshiteru Miki
Hiroshi Tachikawa	Kunimaru Tsuzuki
Minoru Chiaki	Yoshiaki Miki
Takamaru Sasaki	Kunimaru Tsuzuki
Kokuten Kodo	Military Commander
Kichijiro Ueda	Washizu's workman
Eiko Miyoshi	Old Woman at castle
Chieko Naniwa	Old Ghost Woman
Nakajiro Tomita	Military Commander – 2
Yu Fujiki	Washizu Samurai
Sachio Sakai	Washizu Samurai

The film opens with an extreme long shot of a barren, misty, mountain landscape. The long shots preponderate: foggy crag landscapes, horse and rider marches, mediaeval decorum and ceremony on display. Kurosawa – like Welles – producer, director, scriptwriter and editor– warns the audiences against uncontrolled

ambition while the Castle of the Spider's Web slowly emerges from the swirl mists. In the course of the film it becomes an icon of a rigid social order as impassable and inescapable as the labyrinthine forest from the wood of whose tress it is made, and from which it takes its name. The castle is characterized by low ceilings, short pillars, varied vacant rooms conquered by horizontals: beams, floors and sliding doors in order to construct the effect of domination.

The Spider's Web Forest stands for an enigmatic natural order. It is a latticework maze of tangled branches and vines dominated by the vertical lines of great tree trunks, yet there are paths that lead through it if one does not deviate. From the beginning Kurosawa shows Washizu as entangled in a tight web from which there is no escape, even though it is Washizu's personal decision to pursue the Spirit.

Interior scenes show Washizu locked in by a rigid geometry of rectilinear interior design and low ceiling that leave him no alternative but to cower in the corner. Confined by his environment, under the pressure of his wife, Asaji, Washizu's only recourse is to enter the forbidden chamber, to descend into the dark and uncharted recesses of his mind, and murder of his master Tsuzuki. There is no other way to escape when Washizu is overwhelmed by Kunimaru's people.

In the concluding scene, Washizu is trapped and then pumped full of arrows shot by his own troops. Like a giant porcupine he lurches on the stairways, along the galleries and into the corners of the castle before an arrow out of nowhere impales his throat, stopping his voice and concluding his life. For Kurosawa, Washizu is as much a target of a constraining feudal order and social decorum as of his personal transgression (Guntner 2006: 131).

The film brilliantly reconceives the play's elaborate birdieimages that are initiated by what Lady Macbeth finds, "The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal

entrance of Duncan/ under my battlements. Dialogue references, sound effects, and photographic imageries are united to produce parallel metaphors that encompass the film drama (1.5.37–9). While Washizu's personnel make the forbidden chamber for their master and lady, a passing crow's cry is heard over visuals dominated by the room's walls, discolored by blood. The crow is a symbol of death within traditional Japanese culture, and Washizu's men react to the cry as an omen of evil.

While urging her husband toward the first murder, Asaji hears a similar cry and assures her husband that the crow has indicated that the throne was his only. Exactly when Washizu goes to commit the assignation, the camera cut away to a night sky. Prominent in the sky is a semicircular moon, which is the symbol of Tsuzuki's reign. Across this night sky a crow flies and sharply caws. Against all the logics, Washizu insists at his last war council that the sudden, unexplained flight of forest birds into the castle's chambers is a good signal. After making this statement he sits down in a show of defiance, but a bird then calmly perches on his shoulder. The terrified cries of a lady draw Washizu from the council chamber. In the corridor he encounters attendants in terrified flight from Lady Asaji. And when the forest at last comes to the castle, Washizu's warriors go against him. With an unrelenting volley of arrows, they entrap him within Forest Castle. The protracted death scene is an ironic manifestation of Washizu's tenacity and firm desire for throne, achieved, but putting his life on the stake. "The exaggerated continuation and overemphasis on this event is the culmination of the visual figure for forces – the spinner – prophet's exposure of his inner ambitions, Asaji's manipulations, a heritage of political intrigue – that ultimately ensnare him" (Leggatt 2006: 111).

*Kumonosu-Djo* locates the story during the *Sengoku Jidai*, 'The Age of the Country at War, a period of civil wars roughly equivalent to the English wars of Roses.

This is a period picture with masterful attention to reliable elements, and it conglomerates components from traditional Noh Drama, the American Western film and classical Japanese scroll painting. The film is known in English speaking countries as *Throne of Blood*, but the title as explained by Kurosawa himself, actually means *The Castle of the Spider's Web*. Castles were constructed ... of the wood which was grown as if it had been a maze. Therefore, the wood was named "the wood of spider's hair", meaning the wood that catches up the invaders as if in a spider's web. The title was finalized in this way (Guntner 2006: 130).

In his edited book *The New Cambridge Shakespeare: Macbeth* A. R. Baraunmuller comments on the filmic transposition of key scenes that Kurosawa's subtle, learned adaptation of *Macbeth*. To the dismay of many critics, *Throne of Blood* does not use Shakespeare's text, often replacing the most verbally complex moments with tiny, silent gestures and absences of moment. The film's visual imagery exploits the play's metaphors, but its narrative deletes entirely Shakespeare's Malcolm and related matters, including the 'English Scene' (Act 4, Scene 3) and the Porter. Washizu and Miki encounter a single androgynous witch, spinning thread like a Greco-Roman Fate, in the 'Cobweb Forest' near the 'Cobweb Castle'. Washizu much later returns to the witch and her environment to hear a prophecy – Washizu will reign until the Cobweb Forest moves – recalling the Third Apparition's prediction in *Macbeth* Act 4, Scene 1 (2012: 85).

In a creative revision of *Macbeth*, Kurosawa finds the stillborn child of Asaji a source of the couple's political collapse and part of her subsequent madness. Kurosawa's film echoes Shakespeare's ghostly banquet but places the murderer's announcement of Miki's death and Yoshiteru's survival after (not before, as in *Macbeth*) the gathered nobles have departed. Washizu then kills the murderer. Exactly

as Kurosawa's later *Ran* (1985) fuses Shakespeare's *King Lear* with *Macbeth*, *Throne of Blood* alludes momentarily to *Hamlet* when a Noh-like poet-dancer tells an interrupted tale that anticipates or recalls Washizu's treasonable acts. Throughout the film, Lady Asaji's stillness of face and body and her almost mechanical movements, all of which recall or duplicate Noh conventions, are terrifying. Approximately noiseless but collected till the very end, she prompts Washizu to ever more horrific acts (ibid. 86).

Washizu is forewarned about the futility of ambition. The initial movement of Washizu and Miki in their ride through Cobweb Forest is swift and determined, as accented through camera tracks and pans in a consistent direction from screen left to right. In subsequent shot, however, they enter from screen right. Realizing that after two hours in the forest their ride has taken them blocked round, Washizu and Miki are panic for they are confined by a spirit. In trying to break the spell, Washizu rides on with bow drawn, a deed evocative of a Buddhist ritual in which priest-archers shoot arrows to ward off evil spirits. They are led to a weird hut inhabiting a mysterious old woman at a spinning wheel.

As the spinning works at her device, an image that suggests, the thread of fate and a tragic wheel of fortune, her indulgent song alarms Washizu and Miki. In her prediction of the rise in his political fortunes, the spinner dismisses Washizu's show of loyalty To Tsuzuki as a self-deception. The spinner scolds Washizu for denying his deeper ambition for power. Moreover in the subsequent reunion with her husband, Asaji expresses the same criticism of him. When she gives voice to his inner desires, the spinner accelerates her movements and speech. Several visual analogies between this spirit and Asaji are emerged, but one striking dissimilarity among them is the spinner's

cautions on the narcissism of desire. In live woodland, Washizu and Miki pass mounds of unburied human skeletons still dressed in battle gear. Later, on his subsequent visit to the forest spirit, Washizu will vow to leave a mountain of slain enemies, yet the only death that follows is his own. Kurosawa's camerawork here is superb for during this scene the audience feel that it is not Washizu and Miki but they themselves are living that horrifying moment.

While commenting on such camerawork Anthony Davis states:

Most precisely, the reasons for the film's nonexistence of conventional cinematic composure centre on dominance of camera movement and transitional flow. In the first place, the presentation of the play as primarily a drama of faces brings it closer to television than to cinema, as does the relation of dialogue to visualization. The spoken lines consistently dominate in total impact of word and picture, so that the visual increasingly take on the function of illustrative rather than expressive development. Secondly when faces are not held in close-up frame composition is consistently limited to the medium close-up shot, holding characters – in either sitting or standing positions – from head and shoulders waist. Sometimes only one character is held thus in centre for a sustained shot. (1988: 144)

Cobweb Forest is paradoxical environment that contains utter contrasts in physical conditions. In the midst of sunlight there is rainstorm, and though it is daytime there is immense darkness. The ride of Washizu and Miki is rapid and unimpeded, but in the foreground of each successive shot appears a tangle of tree trunks, branches, and undergrowth. They drive their horses furiously through a tempest but they find absolute calm around the mysterious hut. The forest offers the greatest strategic defense for Tsuzuki's forces, yet his two leading commanders got missing in it. Even after leaving the forest, Washizu and Miki remains lost. Though in completely open terrain, a dense fog protects the labyrinthine confusion of their ride towards Forest Castle. Sparse, repetitive chords of music measure the futility of their ride in the smog. When the clarity is reinstated, they find themselves in front of the castle at a distance of only

several hundred yards. It broke away from cinematic tradition – and from a substantial Shakespearean tradition – by opposing against its idealism. The film makes Shakespeare's play an exposé of the grotesque rather than a tragedy. The film thereby explores complicated aspects of the relation of theatre to cinema. In some respects the film has a clearly theatrical potential, though there are amounts of its longitudinal strategy which removes it from the kind of theatrically which the films of Olivier and Welles recognize. There is a duality in handling in the film whereby the camera tends to treat the actors and the environmental spatial detail separately. Manvell notes:

The major concern about the visuals appeared to be the danger of their relocation of the dialogue by intruding 'between the audience and the power of the worlds'. Most ironically, the challenge became one of almost eliminating visuals, of trying to find a way of producing blankness on the screen without suggesting a total technical collapse of medium, and this is a major explanation for the reductiveness of the film's spatial strategy. (1971: 138)

Right from the opening, the film establishes a relationship of human with environment, as the four archers are seen riding over rich grassland on mountain slopes in pursuit of the wild boar. Because this film dispenses with all but the most essential dialogue to carry forward the narrative, the spectators are placed in the position of having to rely wholly on the handling of spatial detail within the screen's frame – upon movement, gesture, facial expression, décor and the underpinning given to these by non-verbal sound – for all subtitles which go beyond the information of the story.

It is therefore natural to assume that the expressions on the faces of Washizu and Miki when they receive their swords of promotion from their 'war lord' articulate the very feelings and emotional complexities of Banquo and Macbeth when, after hearing the prophecy of the witches, Macbeth is greeted with the title of Thane of Cawdor by King Duncan.

Kurosawa has not created dramatic equivalents in the film's descriptions. *Macbeth* is a play around influence of choice, among other things, and the exercise of that power. *Throne of Blood*, on the other hand, is a drama about unavoidable farsighted truth, and the film is more precisely titled *The Castle of The Spider's Web*. Though *Macbeth* has a choice, Washizu has only destiny, and this division between Shakespeare's play and Kurosawa's drama is compulsorily announced at the beginning and the end of the film, by the chanting chorus which rings out the inevitable fate of ambitious men and proclaims it to be a truth which transcends particular situations of history. This principal dissimilarity amid Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* is concisely offered by John Gerlach as:

Most of Kurosawa's changes are gauged to increase our sympathy for *Macbeth* so as to involve the viewer in an experience more psychologically acceptable. Although we are not likely to admit we would do what *Macbeth* has done, we can conceive ourselves being trapped, as was Washizu, by a deceiving set of circumstances. What Shakespeare has done is all the more difficult – he has made us find something of ourselves in a character whose avarice estranges us. In the words of Alfred Harbage we 'attach' ourselves to *Macbeth* because he is as 'humane in his reflection as he is inhumane in his acts'. Kurosawa eliminates the contrast between act and reflection and gives only acts performed in mitigating circumstances.(1973:357)

If Washizu, Asaji and Miki (the representative character figures for *Macbeth*, Lady *Macbeth* and Banquo) are not explicitly invested with psychological intricacy of the Shakespearean characters, that is undoubtedly not to suggest that the film does project its own artistic complexities in a tightly structured and interestingly cohesive manner. It does this through its spatial approach, which might be pronounced as 'symphonic' in that it selects four obviously traditional autonomous elements and then, through a process of amalgamation, enlargement and intonation, achieves an artistically satisfying form in its completed composition (ibid. 359). The four essential elements are the mist, the forest, the horses and the castle; elements which also establish the dramatic

realm of *Ran*. The anthropological component that a play (or any literary text) bears is also derived in its film version as Lucien Taylor states,

Film presents a kind of overload to writing's constraints of professional meaning, even though many kinds of writing engage the reader in forms of 'implicature' of their own. This could explain why many anthropologists are attracted to film, but also their caution towards it. They are attracted to its evocation – of a person, a society, e set of meanings – that exceeds its formal denotation. The ambiguities it presents require a creative response, which is to say that like much of social practice it operates through purposeful omissions and invitations. (1998: 269)

The level on which the castle and the forest are linked is on their accommodation of paradoxes within themselves. While the forest imagery is conquered by the density and rooted strength of tree trunk verticals, there are paths and trails between the trees, and it is along these Washizu and Miki ride with rising terror in the early minutes of the film, as they try to find their characters. The conquering army which finally moves in to capture the scale is only assured of success when they obey their commander's instruction to move directly through the forest and intentionally to ignore the pathways.

Similarly, while there is a resolute emphasis of Washizu's preparation of the blockade, his sharp observation on the jungle, his influences to his men and his derision of the endeavors of the invading enemy are all filmed to suggest a tense and perilous vertical elevation of Washizu. The arrows that pin him alongside the fortification and which lodge in his armor are all loosed underneath. As the arrows round him entirely helpless, he comes down from the upper floor to the palace patio. The concluding minutes of his fading display him stirring towards his men along the same horizontal level as that on which they back away, and collapsing forward away from the camera.

There is a suggestion in both of these developments that struggle between the world of nature and the world of man results finally in the devastation of both worlds.

In both the castle and the forest, their horizontal defeats the vertical. Together man and the trees are carried low: condensed to a level with all things and steadily concealed from vision by the fog. There is a very subtle expansion of the opposition between stillness and movement in the characterizations of Washizu and his wife, Asaji. The conventions of movement through which each of these characters is exposed are drawn from distinct creative traditions. Marsha Kinder, writing specifically of characterization in the film, marks the persistent emotionlessness of Asaji. She rarely moves in the edging, and when she moves, there is very pliancy in her movement and control so that she “glides across the screen as a unified presence, totally committed to ambition” (1977: 340). Her movement, gesture and expression are highly conventionalized and shaped within the choreographic discipline of the *Noh* drama. She moves, as Davis maintains, ‘heel to toe’ as does the *Noh* actor, and the shape of the actress’s face is ‘used to suggest the *Noh* mask’. Both the frame composition in the scenes when Washizu and Asaji are together and Asaji’s ‘hand-washing scene’ are wholly stylized within *Noh* conventions (1988: 160). The movements of Washizu, in contrast, lie definitely outside the stylization of *Noh*. Washizu moves like an animal. He steps up and down; he breaths heavily; he flexes his facial muscles rhythmically and uncovers his teeth. He gives the impression of ability ‘to move simultaneously in several directions as he considers various courses of action’. The disturbance of the banquet, for instance, is expressed through the combination of Washizu’s violent movements with symmetry of reposed composition which reflects both architectural and social order. The stillness and mathematically precise sitting of the guests within the room and within the frame is devastated by Washizu’s hysterical response on seeing Miki’s ghost (ibid.).

The clear difference between the style of movement of Asaji and that of Washizu has a further significant dramatic function. There are moments of intensity when the effect and power of the central character exposes itself in the 'infection' of the posture, movement and gesture of the submissive partner. As Marsha Kinder notes, there is a flow and recoil of influence between Asaji and Washizu during the anxious stillness which precede and accompany the murder of Tsuzuki (the Duncan figure). Washizu sits static, in the position which has come to relate with Asaji. Washizu's unacquainted physical immobility suggests that Asaji has occupied his character, 'temporarily suspending his identity'. Asaji comes back to the room, carrying a lance which she places in Washizu's hands. Washizu then rises and leaves the lighted area on his way to murder Tsuzuki. Unexpectedly, to the accessory of harsh, dissonant music, Asaji rises and begins to dance with hyperactive and euphoric movements, 'as if acting out the violence' (1977: 340). Her own agitated dance movements suggest the reciprocal foray of Asaji's character by Washizu. The poised relocation of the prevailing role from Asaji to Washizu in this central scene is stable with the change in each character from observer to agent; from one waiting to one coercing. It is also constant with the broader transferal of dramatic dominance from Lady Macbeth to Macbeth, in developing action of Shakespeare's play (ibid.).

Finally, the purely technical properties of fast- and slow-motion are used to reinforce the discrepancy between the approaches of the forest, filmed in slow-motion as it progresses through the mist and fall of Washizu as he is hastily tumbled with sudden speed down the stairs, in the last moments of the film. The genteel amalgamation of his discrepancy between movement and stability and between controlled movement and frenzy justifies itself thematically in the concluding takeover of both man-devised and natural logic: the fulfillment of the prophecy that something

as fixed as a forest will move. The movement stasis polarity can be seen to have an inherent relevance to the medium in which Kurosawa works, for making a forest move is no more astonishing than creating the appearance of motion out of still photographs – the delusion that lies at the centre of cinema.

A final instance of the appealing collision of shape with design appears at the end of the film when Washizu – all too clearly a human shape is stuck and concerned within the lines of the castle's internal design. After the floods of arrows are shot into and around him, the camera moves crosswise, vertical and horizontal sunbeams to peer at Washizu, forming an association between the camera and the archers in their shared requisite for straight lines of access to their prey. The final shots of Washizu, pierced with arrows, are the climax in sarcastic communication amid line of design and shape of natural entity. For it differentiates with such decisiveness that the cinematic image from the darkness which surrounds it, the oblong frame is highly appropriate for the expression of dramatic resistance through linear emphasis. The conflict expressed through the vertical and the horizontal has been clarified at length. In many shots of the film, the diagonal introduces a negative force which cuts across the dialectic of parallel and creates (1988: 162). One more definite use of the diagonal is the prolonged structure during which Washizu is shot with arrows. The volleys of arrows which pin Washizu to the wall of the castle fly along a diagonal line.

The shooting by several archers is frequently from one particular direction, so that the arrows come from below and somewhat across the plane of the depiction. The connection of films to reality, as Fuery suggests, have produced a long tradition of ideas on what this relationship might be, how it differs from another literal forms, how it forms the very practices of the cinematic apparatus, etc. part of this issue is, of course, to do with 'realism', but the implications of it resonate throughout the very idea of

cinema itself. By considering this “relational context of reality and realism we shall be able to speculate further on some of the connections between film and its social orders” (2000: 123).

The assimilation of the *Noh* conventions within the film is very complex, and the levels of its aesthetic actions are multiple. *Throne of Blood* is a film of very dense stylization. The whole character movement is stylized in terms of arty treaty. And the only movement which can be considered natural is the movement of a rider-less horse, and in this exist the importance of the shots of the unruly horse in the fence, and of the return of Miki's horse without its rider after his assignation. Moreover the *Noh* stylization in the film makes particular statements about the character of Asaji. In its conventional borders, the *Noh* is proficient of offering flawlessly finished expression. Asaji's portrayal, what Richie Donald submits, within *Noh's* rigid conventions is an echo of her own limitations. The similarity of her face to the static expression of the *Noh* mask is a symptom of her denial to become anything more than she is. Just as the world of the *Noh* is ‘both closed and artificial’, so too is Asaji ‘the most limited, the most confined, the most driven’ of the film's characters. Within the gamut of this film, *Noh* suggests the futility of perfection and the renunciation of nature in the distillation of personal potential down to the more accomplishment of desire (1965: 118).

*Throne of Blood* presents a different fascinating case of visual transculturation. With the use of Japanese arty styles, Kurosawa recounts *Macbeth* in a way that has much to do with Western critical canons than native Japanese social customs. The acting style of Toshiro Mifune is purposefully fixed according to Japanese theatrical traditions. The disguised face of Mifune also underpins the perception that Washizu has an intense intention from the starting itself. Since Japanese viewers who are well familiar to the shades of *Noh* theatre, Akira's treatment of *Noh* treatise might appear to

depart from convention. If it is not incorrect, then it can be believed that Kurosawa's depiction of *Macbeth* in Japanese filmic positions sets out from its typical job of creating Shakespeare's play enthusiastically relevant to Japanese spectators. It seems, Kurosawa, working on the *Macbeth* narrative for his *Throne of Blood*, was allowed to separate the rationality of external action from the rigorous theatrical discipline of his interior scenes; because a Japanese audience would find acceptable a film comprising so compound a style.

## Shakespeare in Bollywood: *Macbeth* as *Maqbool*

Adaptation of literature in Indian films is a deep-rooted practice since the first Indian film *Raja Harischandra* (1913) was also an adaptation. Ensuing to the trend of adaptations, Indian Cinema has seen several norms and hits that continue in contemporary times. Shakespeare occupies a significant place in Bombay film city. The occurrence of Shakespeare in Bollywood films to be found is not only in direct adaptations or appropriations from the plays but in the use of several themes and motifs whose source can be traced back to Shakespeare. Shakespeare's plays entered the world of Bombay cinema through the *Parsi* theatre, which flourished during the period 1870–1940. Nearly all the initial films based on Shakespeare's plays were screen versions of *Parsi* theater adaptations. The films of the directors like Sohrab Modi, Kishore Sahu, Debu Sen, etc. were also affected by *Parsi* theatre traditions. 'Theatre to cinema' marks a new start for a form of entertainment which provides the audience with the taste of literature, but brings lots of challenges following by numerous changes for the directors and the screenplay writers to cope up with.

Prof. Poonam Trivedi comments,

The popular Indian film has in the recent past been subject to considerable critical attention and exegesis, particularly in its embodiment of a public domain which is expressive of a people's desires, quests, and achievements. From being dismissed as crass and commercial, the popular film has now acquired legitimacy, even an authority, as maker in the evolution of mass culture. To look for Shakespeare in Indian cinema may evoke suspicions of 'bardolatry' or even seem like a colonial throwback. Yet a long look into the history of the Indian, and particularly the Hindi, film reveals this correlation as neither whimsical nor contrived. Shakespeare was a leaven of the initial growth of Hindi cinema and has since nourished it in diverse forms, legitimate and illegitimate, as appropriations, recreations, relocations, and as 'afterlife' or presences. To trace this varying use of Shakespeare in Hindi film is not just to navigate the changing attitudes to the colonial bard, but more crucially, to chart the shifts in the politics of inter-culturalism which provides another inroad into the cultural imaginary of mainstream cinema. (2009: 229–30)

The contribution and stimulus of Shakespeare in supplying an incessant source of plots, scenes, characters, and dialogue is unexplored so far. Several productions of Parsi theatre and the early films, for instance, similarly were extensive adaptations, which plagiarized freely, reformed copiously, and interposed generally without acknowledgements. In the Indian response to Shakespeare there is a basic preponderance of philosophical criticism because of the Indian minds' natural inclination towards spiritual, philosophical, mystical, cosmic and metaphysical thought (Chopra 2011: 12). There are merely a few straight Hindi film adaptations of Shakespeare. He is, nevertheless, an important though often unseen or merely fleeting, presence in the Bombay cinema as a source of character, plot on scene or of some recurrent themes, motifs and conventions. Like the theatrical adaptations, the films were also an outcome of a strong professional interest in Shakespeare as a source to be exploited for plot, character or high sentiment and naturally took on all the characteristics of that popular and commercially successful drama, including songs and dances and a flamboyantly rhetorical language.

The initial Indian filmic indulgence with Shakespeare goes back to the silent era and is usually known as *Dil Frosh* (1927) which was grounded on a popular stage version of *The Merchant of Venice* with the eponymous name by Mehdi Hasan. Two more films of the silent era, *Khoon-e-Nahak* (1928, by Mehdi Hasan) centered on adaptations of *Hamlet* and, *Mitha Zehar* (1930, by Naraian Prasad Betab) based on adaptations of *Cymbeline* were both proponents of the Parsi theatre. By the approaching of 'talkies', in the 1930s and into the 1940s, the revolution and diffusion of Shakespearean discourse, formerly going on stage was dominated and many of the popular stage editions of Shakespeare, in Urdu, were readapted for the silver-screen. *Hathili Dulhan* (1932, inspired from *The Taming of the Shrew*), *Khudadad* (1935,

adapted from *Pericles*), *Khoon–Ka–Khoon* (1935, based on *Hamlet*), *Pak Daman* (1940, adapted from *Measure for Measure*) are some of them.

But Gulzar, through his *Angoor* (1981, inspired from *The Comedy of Errors*) started a new trend. From then to now there is a long list of films which are partly or fully inspired from the plays of Shakespeare. Presently Vishal Bhardwaj has been recognized himself as an adaptation specialist director. He is leading Bollywood film director, writer, screenwriter, producer and music composer. Born on 4 August 1965 he started his career as a music composer. But after meeting with the Polish film director Krzysztof Kieslowski during a film festival at Kerala he decided to direct a film. His debut film was *Makdee* (2002), a film especially made for children which was highly acclaimed by the audiences and critics as well. Bhardwaj wedded Rekha who is a playback singer and keen of reading English literature. Inspired from her he decided to make a film on Shakespeare's plays. He taken *Macbeth* and adapted it as *Maqbool* (2004). In 2006, he adapted Shakespeare's another play *Othello* as *Omkaara* (2006). As a director, some of his other films are: *Kaminey* (2009), *Ishqiya* (2010), *7 Khoon Maaf* (2011), *Matru Ki Bijlika Mandola* (2013), etc.<sup>3</sup>

Recently, he has come with his new film *Haider* (released on 2 October 2014), an adaptation of *Hamlet*. Like *Maqbool* and *Omkaara*, *Haider* also earned huge critical acclaim. Vishal thus completes his trio of Shakespearean adaptations.

The main actors of *Maqbool* are:

Actor	Character/Role
Irfan Khan	Maqbool (Macbeth)
Tabu	Nimmi (Keep/Mistress of Abbaji)
Pankaj Kapoor	Jahangir Khan (Abbaji)
Om Puri	Inspector Pandit

Naseeruddin Shah	Inspector Purohit
Piyush Mishra	Kaka (Banquo)
Ajay Gehi	Guddu (Kaka's son)
Masumi Makhija	Sameera (Abbaji's daughter)
AnkurVikal	RiyajBoti
PubaliSanyal	Boti's wife
Raj	Boti's son
Abbas Tyrewala	Sadik Chikna
ManavKaushik	Asif
Deepak Dobriyal	Thapa
Murli Sharma	DCP Devsare
Firdous Irani	Usman (bodyguard of Abbaji)
Shammi Narang	Bhosle
Mohini Mathur	Badi Bi
Shweta Menon	Mohini
Vinay Shukla	Professor

In *Maqbool*, the Shakespeare's plot and characters, much reshaped and reordered, are translated to the upper reaches of Mumbai/Bombay's criminal classes and given full Bollywood-style treatment, including a rich sequence showing the elaborate, sexy celebration of wedding uniting two criminal families and establishing the Malcolm-figure as heir-apparent (Baraunmuller 2012: 101). Amusingly, *Maqbool* is assigned the protection racket for Bollywood itself, and he is shown stared down by a beautiful female Nimmi. Nimmi, mistress to Abbaji, is being replaced by a younger woman and seeks a new benefactor, both threatening and seducing Abbaji's hitherto

loyal second-in command, Miyan Maqbool, and leading him to shoot Abbaji as he sleeps beside his waking, watching mistress, eventually splattered by blood and brains. Maqbool's reign deteriorates much as Macbeth's does, and the film comprises characters equivalent to Banquo, Fleance, Malcolm, and Donaldbain. Replying to the play's insistence upon birth and childhood, the film discloses Nimmi's pregnancy a short time after Abbaji's murder. Maqbool briefly contemplates the possibility that not he, but Abbaji, is the father. The audiences later see mother and infant (born prematurely) in the hospital, and still later, Maqbool later checked out Nimmi in order to keep her safe from retribution; once back in the very bedroom where Abbaji died, she begins obsessively cleaning the walls and dies finally. Maqbool escapes from police pursuit and slips into the hospital where his now-motherless child is under care. As he approaches the infant's room he sees Guddu, and his wife Sameera cuddling the baby and taking the future away with them. The performances of Tabu, Irfan Khan, and Pnakaj Kapoor are superb, but their primacy is under constant threat from Om Puri and Naseeruddin Shan. They are of course spectacular in the role of the male version of witches, and they are brilliantly comic – gibing, violent, craven, continuously watching out for themselves, conniving (ibid. 102).

Almost all the major relationships and events of *Macbeth* can be seen in *Maqbool* in a protracted form. Duncan's faith/trust in Macbeth is substituted with Abbaji's faith on Maqbool and the prophecies made by the three witches who embed the germs of treason in Macbeth's mind are replaced with the declarations made by two wicked policemen. However here it is Abbaji's mistress Nimmi, (instead of Macbeth's wife in *Macbeth*) who seduces Maqbool to murder Abbaji. All this is a common trend in present-day society. No one can believe his loyal ones – everyone is suffering from insecurity inside and outside. Moreover, the episodes among Macbeth and Banquo and

his sons followed by their slaughter by Macbeth and the escape of Fleance find an identical treatment in the film. Maqbool is killed by Kaka's son Guddu but very evenly as he displays no protest at all. Thus there are incessant and steady counterparts with Shakespeare's version except some 'directorial' transcreations. As Poonam Trivedi comments:

This reimagining is, however, not without its mandatory *masala* formula features like comic bumbling cops, family scenes of festivity and weddings, catchy music, dances and songs, religious and romantic, even an 'item number' with a vamp cum would-be moll in a backless *kurti*, hospital scenes, and the populist picture of communal harmony—of Muslims and Hindus working and marrying together. But the film unrolls not as what is defensively termed 'a loose adaptation', but rather as a close and acute appropriation. And, as a Shakespeare film, it bears the burden of the book with some finesse ... It is in the range and depth of its re-textualization, however, that *Maqbool* becomes a contemporary 'literary film', 'symptomatic of the cotemporary imagination' which needs to be read not from the centre, but from its spaces of discursive difference. It locates itself in the popular genre of the Bollywood gangster and the Muslim social film. (237)

Prof. White observes a range of projections established in particular Hollywood *film noirs*. He thus approves that *Maqbool* has the prestige of signifying one set of exclusive interpretations which may highlight the traits of Shakespeare's play which have not discussed so far (White 2012: 95). He discusses the motifs of *Maqbool* starting from the agency and motivation of Maqbool. Maqbool, according to him, seems to be at the less active end of spectrum of Macbeth's available, in the sense that he tends to let things happen to him, at least initially. In his words:

This is an odd thing to say about a man who shoots several others and is actively involved in the violent gangland affairs – mainly gold smuggling, contract killings, and mafia-like operations controlling the Bollywood film industry. He is, I suggest, more fatalistic than active, mainly because ambition is not the fore amongst Maqbool's motivations. He is, instead, gradually sucked in. Initially, as in *Macbeth*, his first promotion is prophesied at the beginning and then swiftly vindicated as the man delegated to control the gang's Bollywood investments is proved as a traitor and eliminated, to be succeeded by Maqbool, to his manifest surprise (ibid. 96).

The assassination of Abbaji by Maqbool takes longer to outcome and in meantime Maqbool's faithfulness is poignantly displayed in a kind of strong, father-son relationship. Alike *Macbeth* where Duncan names Malcolm as duke of Cumberland and consequently future king, Abbaji put forward his son-in-law, Guddu, as his successor. This stings Maqbool and he thinks the headship is not taken for granted for him and a solid action is to be taken for that. His loyalty to Abbaji however is still floating in his mind and thus he is calm, at least in action yet. All what he decides finally to do is after strong instigations of Nimmi. Nimmi, in that case is highly responsible, if not fully, behind the murder of Abbaji by the hands of Maqbool.

Abbaji is 'godfather' of Maqbool, he loves him very much. He has blind faith on Maqbool. During the marriage of Sameera and Guddu, Maqbool is preparing Biryani with other cooks. Abbaji came there and kisses Maqbool. There are many other instances which witness the kinship between the two. That is why, before the murder Maqbool is grief-stricken and his conscience does not allow him for that. But his over ambition fueled by Nimmi and two wicked policemen he commits the murder. Consequently, after murdering Abbaji, he is fallen in his own eyes and he sees the ghost of Abbaji. He feels the illusion that Abbaji is still alive. Moreover, selecting Irfan Khan, best known for his film *The Warrior*, Bhardwaj places unadorned his purpose of producing what is declared to as "serious cinema."

Distinct with selection of artists (not superstars), undoubted situations, wide-extending graphic viewpoints, compound portrayal, darkish gaze, "serious cinema" has created an extraordinary charm. By localizing *Macbeth's* story in the Mumbai netherworld, Bhardwaj has strained the promises of the common leitmotifs of supremacy, over-ambition and wickedness. The film flawlessly shows the transformation of a regal,

noble, tragic hero into a gangster. Such kind of an adaptation can change the viewer's viewpoint of the original text.

On interpretation and representation of the three witches of *Macbeth* in *Maqbool* Prof. White remarks that the two corrupt policemen 'owe more to Shakespeare's Dogberry' than the Witches. Their forecasts as somewhat self-accomplishing as they themselves are vigorously involved in maintaining strong links between the criminals and the police officers and are hence incriminated. They are not shown as eerily ethereal like the Witches, but crooked and purely superstitious. Though their predictions come true they do not collect audience's praise (ibid. 98). The (unluckily but factual) cause behind it, what White provides is,

Indian is a country where religion rubs shoulders with superstition and the latter in turn is ridiculed and undermined by the energetic Rationalist Society, and the film seems to express more skepticism than belief by making the two policemen into comic characters (ibid.).

The astrological practices of the policeman offer it a strangeness which is a precondition for a film like *Maqbool* that includes the genre of film noir. The greater questions of destiny and intentional choice are articulated in an inquiry of the witches' part for they act as chroniclers of the tragedy apart from building room for venturing. In forecasting the happenings of the relating drama, they forecast actions that would take place at a point in historic period and dramatic incantation. The spectators are provided with a hint of the forthcoming events of the play through the witches. Likewise, the cops described as an amusing duo execute the job of storytellers.

The way as the witches act as masterminds, the policemen's involvement and blatant backing for the gang leader make him working with ease. It is a dictum on the class cohesion that shapes division among the wardens of law on the one side and its rollers on the other. Throughout the film, the police officers are presented

as wretched characters wholly at the compassion of the gangsters. The Abbaji of *Maqbool* is portrayed far from Duncan of *Macbeth*. He is, as Prof White observes, “provided some really human and likeable qualities, exuding loyalty to his own ‘mob’, genuine attachment to his daughter, a convivial soul who likes eating drinking chai, and even dancing in relaxed enjoyment of his extended family’s company” (ibid. 98–9).

Besides his ‘humanly’ merits he is a gangster and murderer. He is merciless and inhuman to rivals and traitors, and he has ample supremacy over the Mumbai police. It is also supplied that he has been murdered his own way to the top, and early on he uses his intimidating contacts to have the new, anti–corruption police chief transferred far away though the honest officer comes back in a dominant role like Macduff at the end to clean up activities. Abbaji is ‘self–evidently a far more dangerous and complex’ figure than the ‘guard–less’ Duncan. Abbaji is so powerful that even after his murder Maqbool is haunted by the delusions of his existence.

Nimmi is the *femme fatale* of film noir convention, and she plays an equally ambivalent and complex role. The *femme fatale* figure is archetypal of the *film noir* genre which is about power relationships and sexual distinctiveness. The film noir protagonist permits the heroine to dictate due to his own timidities. Generally, the *femme fatale* wages at the conclusion for being smart and in charge of her sexuality. In Nimmi’s case, it is through demise following a severe insanity. However she is worth remembering due to her impudence and sensual articulacy not the charge she had to pay. Her devotion to Maqbool is thrilling and corporeal. She says to Maqbool that her passion would consume him and he could die for her and even assassinate somebody. She has the heart less impulses of Lady Macbeth but as the same time, like Maqbool, she can be seen as helpless and eventually a victim (ibid. 101). She is not wife of Abbaji but a keep and the members of the gang do not respect her. Not only that, after

sometime she is cast-off by Abbaji himself. Her obsession for Maqbool got fueled and she instigates Maqbool for murdering Abbaji. Needless to say the choice was of Maqbool and he has his own desires for power, but it was too difficult (but not impossible) to run away from the web of Nimmi. Nimmi is always mistress of the supremo: previously of Abbaji and afterwards of Maqbool. She is shown a cunning character. She does proper homework before the murder. She makes Abbaji forcing to Usman to drink whisky knowing well that he never drinks. It becomes a prestige matter for Abbaji that he can do whatever for Abbaji. Usman has to drink but he is disheartened. He is shown drinking nightlong. On the next morning Abbaji is found murdered. Everything was all set – everyone relates the murder of Abbaji with Usman. He is also shot dead by Nimmi.

A time comes when Nimmi becomes almost mad and she accepts it. She tries to wash the bloodstains from the wall in a pitiful condition. Maqbool who is ready with passport and tickets to elope overseas feels deceived and falls on the ground, all his hopes are shattered. Nimmi asks Maqbool whether or not their love was chaste. She goes through a difficult delivery and finally dies leaving Maqbool alone with his forthcoming fate. It is fact that only after the death of Nimmi, Maqbool feels defeated like Macbeth of *Macbeth*.

The critical admiration as well as the box-office success of *Maqbool* evidences, as Sen suggests that Bhardwaj has coped possibly to unite two viewers' alliances that are supposedly separated in their benefaction of the art film and the popular Bollywood film (2010: 241). Bhardwaj's remarks about his films are rather opposing. On the one side, he says: "If you're even a little intelligent, you can't go wrong by adapting [Shakespeare's] work" (ibid.). On the other, he asserts his right to have a free hand with his material: [M]y intention is not just to adapt the play. My intention is to adapt it and

make it look like an original work. After a point, I forget that Shakespeare has written this. I start believing that I [can] change everything. That's how I do it" (ibid.). Provided Bhardwaj's edgy rapport with both the fidelity discourse related with conventional writers like Shakespeare, as well as the concords of Bollywood cinema, completely absconding from which is practically difficult for an Indian director directing for transnational spectatorship, Bhardwaj's declarations are together meddling and reasonable (ibid.).

Certainly, the more authentic the adaptation, the less "original" it would be judged by present Indian audiences, and Bhardwaj can spontaneously proclaim his right to localize the Bard. It is, thus most ironic that Bhardwaj can only indicate at the hegemony of Bollywood cinema, whose fortitudes he is uncomfortable with however not pretty able to overlook, for Bollywood has developed as tantamount with Indian cinema, to both the mainstream of the Indian diaspora and, by proficient extension globally (ibid. 242).

Moreover, Bhardwaj strikes a chord by making such movie in which he acclimatizes the tragic hero of Shakespeare to Indian circumstances and breezes the gap which exists between English Literature and the common man of India having Hindi as his lingua franca. In his book *Hindi Action Cinema: Industries, Narratives, Bodies*, Valentina Vitali stresses on the historical stances found in a film:

When films have been examined as primary sources, attention has tended to focus on two particular aspects of indexical dimension of films. The most widely practiced approach has been to examine what the films' stories have to say about events or periods already defined and labeled by historians. Plots dialogues, and their settings are scrutinized to identify historically pertinent information in what film scholars call the pro-filmic event. (2008: xiv)

An additional mode of dealing with cinema as history, what Vitali states, has been to analyze a film as a historic description marked by emphases and omissions that

are due to state–or self–censorship, dearth of money, or emotional downfall. This approach comprises determining the film retrospectively against other historiographical interpretations that, although not certainly taken to be ‘candid’, are nonetheless considered to be proposing an occupied and more objective depiction than the one offered by the examined film. The film’s emphases, omissions, or alterations are analyzed by resorting to definite psychosomatic practices (ibid. xv).

Here it is worth mentioning that the name of the music director/composer does not generally come to mind as a main adaptor, though he/she produces the music that strengthens feelings or incites responses in the spectators and leads their understanding of different characters. Nevertheless it is also the condition that, while the music is of apparent significance to the success of the adaptation, composites commonly work from the screenplay, not from the modified piece, for they have to transcribe music exactly to fit the film’s action, timing, and financial plan.

The songs of *Maqbool* are set accordingly and make the film forward. Since Bhardwaj himself has been a music–director his song selection well suits to the film. The song “Tu Mere Ru Baru Hai” is situated when Abbaji and his family goes to the *dargah* (a sacred place for Muslims). The song displays both the devotion and love of pilgrims for Allah and the love of Abbaji for Nimmi simultaneously. The song “Jhin Min Jhini” is put when there is engagement ceremony of Guddu and Smaeera. This song symbolizes the celebration before the quake of bloodshed and devastation.

In addition, to think upon the issue of whether actors can be deliberated as adaptors, the question is rather trying. Whereas, in theatre the performers are the ones who exemplify and offer sensible reality to the reworking. Even if following the script amply, several actors admit that they hunt for contextual stimulus from the reformed

text, particularly if the characters they are supposed to play are renowned literary ones.

Then does this make them cognizant adaptors? On this question Hutcheon states that

... indeed, in interviews, authors often remark with surprise when actors—through gesture, tone of voice, or facial expression—interpret through incarnating characters in ways the original author never imagined: actors can deliver as their specific sense and senses to the characters and give them those glances and gesticulations that come from their own imaginations ... On the other hand, in a more literal sense, what actors actually adapt in this sense is the screenplay. (2006: 82)

Hence it is director who hires a capable scriptwriter who can appropriate the characters of literary text in a way that the player of that character can express what the film needs. While talking about *Maqbool* Vishal stated in interviews: “My film is not meant for Shakespearean scholars. My interpretation is not text bookish ... I have tried to be true to the play’s spirit than to the original text.”<sup>4</sup> The most significant point in this condition is how much of the original text is reminisced, and affianced with, within the adaptation, in account of plot, character, imagery, and not just matter and situations. Therefore the only technique to linger truthful to Shakespeare, in a transcultural perspective is to transpose him completely. It was revealed in the subsequent phase in the negotiation of this colonial inheritance, which selected to modify the chief concerns of the plays into a universal locale. It is however contradictorily true that it headed to a transmuted and appropriated Shakespeare. The utterances in plot and character elucidate extents of anonymity or uncertainty in the original. To illustrate, giving Duncan/Abbaji a young daughter, Sameera (instead of two sons), who is in love with and is going to marry Guddu forms, as Trivedi says, further instant moral evenhandedness and organizational deftness than Shakespeare’s specific usage of Fleance as an elegant accolade of King James I, who was assumed to be an eight generation inheritor of Fleance (2009: 241). The Nimmi figure in the film advocates

that in Shakespeare's play Lady Macbeth uses her sexual knack over Macbeth to cowed his integrities and make him prepared to murder in order to accomplish her ambitions as well. Even an underworld don have to bow his head before a lady – Nimmi. People fear from underworld and he fears from Nimmi. The “under” in underworld indicates the concealed, underground, enigmatic, and outside the resistor of existing systems. Following its particular shades, the justice distribution structure in the underworld is administrated by a secretly established cipher approved upon and practiced by the dwellers of this world. The change from the regulated majestic world to the luminal world of the city mobster efficiently appropriates the film and so far plugs to an elementary resemblance between the two spheres. That is, even the underworld is matter of the buildings of power and supremacy that oversee the feudal world. The swing from Macbeth's moral ancestry to the underworld specifies Bhardwaj's purpose to openly make an adaptation of *Macbeth* and not mere filmed tragedy. This type of transference forces the spectators to localize the film in further generic quays, the gangster film in this situation. The gangster film, well recognized in Bollywood as the underworld film has developed in the midst of off–screen debates vis–à–vis funding of films.<sup>5</sup>

There are of course numerous films, other than *Maqbool*, in Bollywood like *Satya*, *Company*, *Ye Saali Zindagi*, *Gangs of Wasepur* (Part one and two), *Sahib Biwiar Gangsters* (part one and two), *Mumbai Mirror*, *Enemy* and many more which are tales of those persons who rest upon carnage and violence for their existence. They get protection from politician and in turn help them financially and in other means. The people in these films eradicate each other and expire lastly fighting with cops. These films finish with affirming the moral that violence does not pay. Another noteworthy fact what these films supply is that the police has never been loyal to gangsters for long

time. Instead they (cops) use them and in conclusion destroy them (gangsters) displaying an encounter.

The same thing occurs in *Maqbool*. In *Maqbool* Abbaji was backed by police and he has vast impact on top level authorities. He, for example, makes transferred the new DCP Devsare within no time when he (DCP) issues a warrant for Abbaji. When Abbaji and Devasre are taking tea a letter is delivered to Devsare confirming his transfer at a distant place, on which Abbaji satirically comments, '*Aap yaad bahut aayenge miyan ... Khuda hafij*' (You will be remembered by us ... God Protect you!). This scene exhibits the inside picture of our system. The film director however shows in the end that truth/justice finally wins as shown in *Maqbool* when Maqbool is running here and there to escape from Devsare only. Maqbool loses his crazy partner as well all the hopes to survive. He is executed by Boti for the *dariya* (river) enters into his premises. This scene transmutes the prophecy of *Macbeth* that Macbeth shall be exterminated if the Dunsinane forest approaches his castle.

There are some key scenes in *Maqbool* that establish equivalence between the king-making misbeliefs of the underworld/Bollywood and the monarchist desires in the drama of war in *Macbeth*. Duncan's surveillance on the conspirator Macdonwald self-reflexivity exposures Abbaji, and by parallelism, casts back a distrust on the Scottish king's operations. It is, nonetheless, in the filmic imaginings of the lyrical imageries of the play that the unified composite of the prevalent with the postmodern is to be grasped. Among the key properties of the film is its ability to astonishment. Uncommon settlements of Shakespeare's metaphors confront one at surprising turns in the storyline, compelling at times a revelatory addition of connotation. These cinematic representations are essential to the newfangled tale and therefore do not call attention of themselves, however they resound fully with the old. A loud wild prattle of crows and

other birds, for instance, portrays Lady Macbeth's declaration, 'the raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements', (1.5.38) frames the circumstantial 'music' to Maqbool and Nimmi's first extensive passage, by the roadside, where she plants the seed of deceit in his mind.

The celebration of the engagement festivity in the film takes place of the banquet in the honor of Duncan, in the background of which Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plan the murder. A huge hot cauldron, that in the play is full of 'Double, double, toil and trouble: Fire burn and cauldron bubble', (4.1.10–1) is glanced in the kebab makers' shop, where an opposing gang meets to plan further collusions of crime and vengeance. The environment of fear and terror released by Macbeth echoed in the line: 'Each new morn, /New widows howl' (4.3.4) is vividly visualized in Sameera's harsh shriek of agony and disgust when Maqbool pretends to sympathize with the break-up of her rendezvous after Kaka's demise and Guddu's combat.

The most inventive inversion is of the crucial image of the play, 'Pity like a new born babe...shall blow the horrid deed in every eye/that tears shall down the wind' (1.7.21, 24–5). This is evoked in Nimmi's new born son, seen affectionately embraced by Guddu and Sammera at the end, the very glimpse of which declines Maqbool's blood-lust, blowing his callous acts in his own eyes, making him dropping his pistol and walking out in a wave of capitulation. Here the camera spots a tear from Macbeth's eyes staining on the glass visor through which Maqbool was eyeing at the babe. Pity, as the naked babe, remains the unborn child in the play *Macbeth*, stressing the desolation of the Macbeth couple.

In *Maqbool* its rooted significance is unconfined to vigor an ultimate moment of guilt – a self-realization of the vainness of a life of carnage in *Maqbool*. Subsequently in the film the child is born through premature delivery, it also evokes that the baby was

‘untimely ripped’ ... ‘from his mother’s womb’ (5.8.15–8), the figure who was predicted as the one that will subjugate Macbeth. Hence it grows into the twice–fold apparatus of the insinuations of the moral. Lastly, in the play, Macbeth’s head is cut off and shown on stage, a sign of the revenge for the ‘butcher king’. In the film, on the other hand, Maqbool walks out of the hospital; having dropped his guns, and is shot dead by Boti who happens to see him outside. But no blood is displayed; in its place the camera cuts to a vision of sky overhead framing only Macbeth’s head as tumbled on the ground.

The purpose behind reading of Shakespearean adaptations as adaptations of Shakespeare is that Shakespeare through his plays offers the social and archaeological importance of previous descriptions for appraisal; needless to say, the link necessarily to be found by the reader yet. Both the reader’s own socio–cultural self and the recognition of the Shakespearean intertext are crucial by the means in which that reader resorts to the political implication of Shakespeare adaptations (Sen 2010: 33). It won’t be incorrect to say that a Non–Indian audience can identify *Maqbool* as an adaptation of *Macbeth*, and concentrate on Shakespeare’s impact on other, non–Western homelands. An Indian spectator, on the other hand, may or may not consider the Shakespearean text, contingent upon their cognizance with Shakespeare, and if they go for it, they can either take *Maqbool* as an artifact of Western cultural supremacy, or emphasize on the mode the film displays in what way the receiving culture can include exterior components into its own filmic customs, or focus on Shakespeare’s impact on Indian culture (ibid. 34).

What is indisputable is that the acknowledgement of adaptation that adaptation is a function of the readers’ understanding of other texts that he can resort and link to the text in hand. The credit of the prior texts differs individually. Even after a renowned

source like Shakespeare is accepted by a reader as a substantial intertext, the reader's analysis of the Shakespearean version and its association to the adaptation would differ, contingent upon his socio-political-cultural-historical locus.

In *Maqbool* it is shown that Nimmi needs to be saved from Abbaji, who must be of her father's age as she says to Maqbool. Nimmi does not leave any chance to show her gloom towards Abbaji. She even attempts to slur him publically sometimes. In *Maqbool*, unlike *Macbeth*, it seems that the chief stimulus to murder Abbaji is his love for Nimmi instead of his "vaulting ambition" (1.7.27). Maqbool is estranged amid his love for Nimmi and his devotion to Abbaji. Nimmi gives him a difficult choice that he has to kill one – either she or Abbaji. She also says that if he does not murder Abbaji, he will have to follow the hierarchy. As he has served Abbaji so far, he will have to serve the next boss – Guddu, as he is going to marry Abbaji's daughter – Sameera. In this situation he will be confined to follow all the orders of Guddu in order to fulfill his financial and other requirements.

Furthermore, Maqbool imagines Abbaji in an orgy with Nimmi without her inward consent. He consequently is driven to kill Abbaji at 'moral' base. In this case, Nimmi is in a diverse condition than Lady Macbeth. Nimmi is displayed as a victim of a gangster and only an equivalent gangster could protect her. Bhardwaj thus transforms Shakespearean plot according to a typical melodramatic Bollywood film in which there are two loves and one powerful villain. For the union of these lovers it is mandatory to execute the villain. Here the lover turns a hero of both – the heroine and the whole film as well.

Abbaji however himself starts exploiting his own family for his inconsiderate intents. Abbaji keeps Nimmi but does not wed her. He is therefore dejecting the union of wedding. He goes to his daughter's marriage with her new mistress with full proud.

All his henchmen also express no objection on all this. All the actions of Abbaji equate him with Vito Corleone of Francis Ford Coppola's *Godfather* (Part-One), another adaptation of *Macbeth* set in underworld. Abbaji is like Vito Corleone, who is an ambiguous character, a person occupied with self-contradictory ethics, one who requires to be forceful in order to be generous to his community. The demeanor, facial expressions, way of talking and working of Abbaji is analogous to Vito Corleone. And when Pandit and Purohit reveals to Maqbool that Abbaji has acquired the empire by murdering his elder brother Lalji, it becomes easier for Macbeth to murder Abbaji. For him this is the appropriate way to become the boss.

*Maqbool* deals essentially with the insistence that man becomes a conscious perceiver and order of his place and primacies in a universe which does not necessarily present him with free choice to act. Its drama exists in not so much in character as in the evolution and construction of the conscience. It presents the dilemma of man in an ambivalent universe, and it is at its best when it focuses upon its essential obsession with the evolution of ingenious form as the basis of order, and with the privacy of self-perception in the unstirred world of the unconscious mind.

*Maqbool* is considered as a 'cross-over' film because it demonstrates not only an Elizabethan Shakespearean play but also a self-assured postmodernist reworking of literary inheritance, strongly spinning the devastated Scotland of *Macbeth* into Mumbai's immoralities' lands. It establishes an archetype move in the Indian overhaul of Shakespeare on big screen thereby revealing a noteworthy advancement.

### **NOTES**

<sup>1</sup>Live performers whose spoken narration accompanied silent films.

<sup>2</sup>[www.imdb.com/Akira Kurosawa](http://www.imdb.com/Akira Kurosawa)

<sup>3</sup>[www.imdb.com/Vishal Bhardwaj](http://www.imdb.com/Vishal Bhardwaj)

<sup>4</sup>As quoted by Trivedi p236.

<sup>5</sup>[http://academia.edu/1845176/Macbeth\\_meets\\_Maqbool](http://academia.edu/1845176/Macbeth_meets_Maqbool)

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.criticine.com/feature\\_article.php?id=44](http://www.criticine.com/feature_article.php?id=44)

<sup>7</sup><http://asiancorrespondent.com/79666/thai>

<sup>8</sup><http://blogs.wallstreetjournal.com/scene/2012/04/04/thailand must-die/>

<sup>9</sup><http://www.folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=3299>