

Introduction

Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus writes:

Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend. (qtd in Demakis 137)

This quote envisions in itself the innate luminous marvel that literature bears, its sense of communion and companionship, a literary possibility which very easily paves way for multi-possibilities. Factually, in the world of literature each and every work unknowingly weaves in another text, inspire another text, relate another text or even transform another text. This creation of multi-possibilities arises simply when the analyst alters, or the place or conditions vary, or even when the time or the era revolutionize. This leads to the arrival of new literary inceptions with different thoughts and inspirations. Nevertheless, in this procedure, the first-hand creation that becomes suitable for a new imagination hardly remains the same that suffice the imagination of its subsequent readers-viewers. This endless process of rooting, uprooting and re-rooting continues to be the part of literary text formation. The standard fact underlying this incessant activity remains that each and every instance of these eventual recreations along with sustaining amounts of innovation ingrained in the originals also helps in forwarding plentiful of instinctual ingenuity. These advances sufficiently incarnate as prototypes of creative endeavour justifying the universal law of creativity which directs that a work of art is without doubt a work of art.

Such generalisations regarding the incessant inspired creations and in-depth multiplicity of a work of art thus confirms the long persisting presence of the adaptation criteria within the entirety of the literary gamut. Moreover, the much popular comment by renowned writer and poet Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), "Talent Borrows, Genius Steals" (qtd in Fletcher 82) in eighteenth century further explains the adaptation field relishing its antique yet innate distinguished space in the literary arena. Down the memory lane, the course of adaptation also received approval from many distinguished celebrities like Pablo Picasso, Igor Stravinsky, T.S Eliot, William Burroughs, and even Morrissey, a singer with British indie band *The Smiths* which supplements to unravel the ever-lasting significance of the process of adaptation. However, in spite of having

such a long list of strong supporters, unfortunately, the record of critics suspecting and distrusting the worth of adaptations have also been not less. A host of renowned critics; George Bluestone, Virginia Woolf, Robert Stam and many more discarded adapted texts as unworthy and contemptible. While ignoring its much potential element, charges of easy and quick money-making motivations had been leveled against adapted works. Along with this, many other controversial issues were also raised in context of adapted works. No doubt, with time generations have started to understand the unique significance of adaptation activities but still all the clarifications could not prevent the critics from leveling intimidating accusations against the trend of adaptation. Apparently, in context of this apprehensive situation of adaptation academics, the process has been deployed in this research thesis to comparatively analyse different adaptation literary mediums: text, theatre and cinema to finally generalise and ascertain their individual and collaborative significance.

It is the unappreciative instinct towards the inbuilt creativity within adaptation academics which inspired this dire need to establish a clarity regarding the significant dynamics of adaptation field. This lack of understanding the creative skill rooted in this field can be correlated with a situational visualizing. Imagine sitting in a room with your back towards a candle light, perceiving in front only dark shadows. Turning around towards the light of the candle not only blinds the eyes but leaves the mind frustrated in search of forms projecting the shadows on the wall. The condition is one of helpless suspension, betwixt and between the obscurity of the shadows and the brilliance of the light. This had been the situation while analysing adaptations, when the reviewers directed their gaze from an adapted text (shadow) towards its source text (lighted candle), they met with an astounding, intertextual flurry and maze of possibilities.

The crucial understanding inherent in the above situation centres that for both the lighted candle and the shadows on the wall; the centre spirit holds the credit of being the sole creator. Similarly in the process of adaptation instead of the source text or the adapted text, it is the centre spirit of creativity (inherent in a creator) that holds importance and becomes responsible for keeping the artists on toes to acquire inspirations and always create afresh. So fundamentally, the spirit of creativity in its

different versions finds its recourse both in source works and adapted texts. The inscription by T. S Eliot in his much famous essay “Tradition and Individual Talent”, “art never improves, but... the material of art is never quite the same” (16) rightly summarises the situation.

With time, generations started to understand this unique significance of creativity ingrained within adaptations. This led to adaptation receiving its due acknowledgement both as a vital metaphor for the progress of human civilization and also for the current flourishing stage in culture, literature, history, social sources and media studies making it “a hybrid space of cultural recycling.” (Cutchins, Raw and Welsh 148). This research attempt is also an effort to prolong this thought by deploying a systematic comparative study of textual narrative of Girish Karnad’s *Naga-Mandala* with its adapted works in theatrical medium directed by Neelam Mansingh (*Naga-Chayya*) and cinematic medium by Deepa Mehta (*Videsh-Heaven on Earth*).

1. The Concept of Adaptation

The adaptation academics mostly face the crisis of fidelity discourse augmenting on issues regarding its no clear point of origin. This discourse of fidelity has been maintained by implied value judgments concerning around whether the adaptation remains faithful to the “original” work. These kinds of value judgments rest upon the much conventional and tricky theories of originality and literary value. Such understatement often conclude with the authors simply ridiculing the adaptations as — “sycophantic, derivative, and therefore inferior to their literary counter-parts” (Cartmell and Whelehan 1).

Sadly, these fidelity debates have never left the adaptation subjects to maintain peace. Moreover, for the conservative critics it always have been remained the much favourite issue for discussions about adaptation activity. In fact, this huge fuss regarding the authenticity about a narrative indicates the massive sensitivity of literature lovers on this whole issue. For these die-hard sensitive literature lovers when compared to the original creation, the adaptations always fail to hold any significance as a credible and legitimate form of narrative. This ongoing battle between those who love to read book

and those who prefer any other form of adaptation reflects the differing views with which creators, critics, reviewers and media consumers generally approach adaptations.

Fortunately, over the last decade pioneering work in adaptation studies (Stam, 2000; Sanders, 2005; Hutcheon, 2006; Cartmell and Whelehan, 2007; Geraghty, 2007; Leitch, 2007) and its younger sibling remake studies (Mazdon, 2000; Verevis, 2006, Bozelka, 2008) has refreshed the field of study away from reductive value judgments and conservative conceptions of textual fidelity towards a deserving focus on adaptations. This shift has also birthed two new academic journals -- *Adaptation: The Journal of Literature on Screen Studies*, launched in 2008, and the *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance*, launched in 2007. In the words of Thomas Leitch, one can fortunately comment that, "After years of being stuck in the backwaters of the academy, adaptation studies are on the move" (Leitch 63-72).

Eventually, after covering a long tedious journey, involving frequent encounters with many notorious charges and unworthy references, the concept of adaptation finally saw its much liberal and broader perspective. In its peaceful status, it has finally overpassed its literal connotations referring merely to adjust, to alter and make suitable, overpowered the much hindering fidelity issues and has eventually drawn greater attention to reflect the more inter-textual processes. Its current dominance has allowed it to challenge the time-honored notions of textual originality which maintains an unconditional hierarchy between source and adaptation. Instead it has allowed reallocating the concern onto the never-ending chains of intertextual borrowings and hybridity. Thus the field of adaption has widened its horizons of actuality in multiple directions. Linda Hutcheon explains the fresh interpretation of the terminology of adaptation in her book *Theory of Adaptation* as:

Seen as a *formal entity or product*, an adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works....*as a process of creation*, the act of adaptation always involves both (re-)interpretation and then (re-)creation.... Seen from the perspective of its *process of reception*, adaptation is a form of intertextuality. (7)

In addition, taking over the job of the conventional value of literature, it offers itself to the society as a primary means of conveying narratives and thus risking itself into many other beneficial tasks. Indeed, in an essay that has done much to reinforce the study of adaptations, “Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation”, Robert Stam has suggested,

Adaptations are... caught up in the ongoing whirl of inter-textual references and transformation, of texts generating other texts in an endless process of recycling, transformation and transmutation. (66)

2. The Purpose of research

As the adaptation of existing material for new work continues to evoke debate surrounding the legitimacy of older narratives in newer forms of media, the three medium investigated in this attempt (Textual, Theatrical and Cinematic depiction of Girish Karnad’s *Naga-Mandala*) confront this argument openly by plunging the dramatic text in environments constructed of new media and digital technologies. By adapting the dramatic text of *Naga-Mandala* in both form and content for the new environment, these three mediums inquire what sustains from the pages of the narrative after its very facet has been intensified and attenuated by processes of reconciliation and mediatisation.

Against the backdrop of various advantages and disadvantages of adapting books to movies and theatre and further differences or agreements between theatre and cinema, the current research has been triggered by the hypothesis that creativity has no suitable beginning and no finite end. It continues to flow like a stream of inspiration open for further gratification and indulgence. The process of adaptation is a befitting recourse of a similar accomplishment. Present research gears up this inference by a systematic touring down the road of three different mediums which stand as suggestive milestones throughout the entire research span. The analysis begins with textual discussion of Girish Karnad’s self translated English text of *Naga-Mandala* followed by its theatrical adaptation by Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry as *Naga Chayya* and finally the filmic adaptation by Deepa Mehta as *Videsh- Heaven on Earth*. Accordingly the

study has been systematically arranged in five sections, each dealing with different forms of adaptation work.

3. Outline of the chapter divisions

At the start of each of the five main chapters that pursue, in this introductory chapter, the selected concepts have been discussed in general followed by a comprehensive investigation of the author's selected work to exemplify their conceptualization accordingly. Wherever required, cross-references have been made to the works of other writers illustrating similarity in situations, events and characters. At the end of each chapter, a concise sum up of the arguments of the concerned chapter has been given. In the final and concluding chapter, the arguments of all the preceding chapters have been carefully tied up in a dovetail fashion and suggestions for further research are given.

3. a. Theorizing adaptation

The first section deals with the basics about adaptation study and the theory employed to study the adapted works. How and why, regarding the adaptation practise have been discussed in detail. Many significant issues like the cause for adaptations, the content of adaptations, the appeal of adaptations and the inter-related concepts have been examined thoroughly. The second part of the chapter deals with the suite of analytical tools deployed for the adaptation analysis which develops in two well-defined phases. These tools draw on Sarah Cardwell's "comparative analysis", which involves close literary consideration of generic context, authorial context and medium - specific context; and further technical analysis is based on Gerard Genette's "mechanics of narrative": order, duration, frequency, the narrator and the point of view.

Generic context includes the reference to the classification of the genre and authorial perspective taken in the personal criteria and structure narrative maintained by the concerned author. The medium-specific context, the last among the comparative analysis, takes an account of the requirements and changes specific to a particular medium. This systematic analysis of each of the comparative category is followed by similar explanation of the mechanics of the narrative by Gerard Genette. Order includes sequence of events in the narrative including sub-categories like analyses, prolepses and

so on. The second tenet of Duration, takes into account of the deviations of speed and rhythm in the narrative which is followed by Frequency, which details the repeating form in the narrative.

This section clears that for the purposes of this study, “adaptation” largely refers to the practice of relocating of a written source text from one literary genre to the other literary genre of a play text. This play text then offers to become the basic text which is regarded as an end - product that will be executed as a piece of theatre and then as a film adaptation.

3. b *Naga- Mandala* by Girish Karnad

The second chapter deals with the textual analysis of Girish Karnad’s drama *Naga-Mandala*. The analysis begins with a synoptic view of the history of the Indian drama in English. Drama, a composite art has a long ancient history and finds its relics rooted in the Indian culture. As a very integral part of Indian culture, the genre of drama underwent many ups and downs before reaching its contemporary successful standing. Particularly, Indian drama written in English and translated into English by Indian playwrights has recorded an amazing growth in recent decades. Contemporary Indian drama in English translation has brought fearless and gallant innovation and rewarding experiments in terms of both thematic concerns and technical virtuositities. Nevertheless, in spite of this fresh outburst of novelty, contemporary writers have been always turning to history, legend, myth and folklore to tap their vivacious energy and morality and depict these in a modern scenario. This trend of culture fusion has bagged splendid results for contemporary writers.

This trend of culture fusion is highly esteemed by Girish Karnad, a distinguished contemporary writer, who successfully illustrates this style in almost all his works. Moreover, he culturally collaborates with almost all the Indian languages especially as one of the most brilliant representative of the modern-day Indian dramatist in Hindi, Marathi, Bengali and Kannada. Even his personality resonates of high-degree of characteristic fusion as Karnad is successfully labeled as a writer, an actor, director, script writer, translator and also a critic. His contributions in the field of Indian literature have been immense through his valuable output in areas of art, drama and

theater. Apart from the long list of regional awards, he was been honored with the prestigious Padma awards, Padma Shri in 1974 and Padma Bhushan in 1992. He is also the recipient of the Jnanpith (1999) for the country's utmost literary appreciation, for his contributions to modern Indian drama. Currently he is the World Theatre Ambassador of the International Theatre Institute, Paris (ITI).

Generally, his works integrate the remnants of ancient Indian myths and legends with modern scenario. In most of his work, myths, fairy tales, fantasies, histories and folk tales merge with the modern day socio – cultural narrative. By indulging in uniting the inter-polarities of two cultures, he explores new horizons of the contemporary situations and unmask the absurdities of the life with its elemental passions and conflicts. Foregrounding this ornate magnetism of the past to M.K Naik in the article “Cinderella Still: Recent Indian English Drama”, Girish Karnad comments:

If Indian English drama plans to go ahead, it must go back to its roots first, only a purposeful return to its own origin in the rich tradition of ancient Indian drama, both in Sanskrit and folk drama in *Prakrits*, only these can help it shed its lean and pale look, increase its artistic haemoglobin count, and make it cease to be the ‘sick man’ of Indian English Literature. (43-44)

Girish Karnad has written eight plays in Kannada and translated four of those into English. The English plays are *Tughlaq*, *Hayavadana*, *Naga-Mandala* and *Tale-Danda*. He borrows his themes from history in *Tughlaq* and *Tale-Danda*, from myth in *Hayavadana* and from folklore in *Naga-Mandala*. He makes uses of *Yakshagana bayalata*, a Kannada folk-theatre, in *Hayavadana*. Thus in all his plays- be these be mythical, historical or legendary, Karnad's approach has been evidently modern and up-to date typifying his benchmark of cultural fusion merging the past and the present.

Naga-Mandala, suitably exemplifying this trend of culture fusion, is Karnad's one signature play which he wrote in Kannad in 1988 and later himself translated it in English. It is this English text of *Naga-Mandala* which becomes the basic text for comparative scrutinising of adapted works, following the tenets of Sarah Cardwell's comparative theory. Withholding a creative structure encompassing myth and folklore,

Naga-Mandala beholds the fact that even though society seems to sustain traditional values, it still commands the right of questioning these values. In the narrative, Girish Karnad very dexterously builds a synthesis between the ancient and the modern to help provide his intention of employing the past to elucidate the present. Literally, *Naga-Mandala* is a customary and elaborate ritual of serpent worship which is currently performed in Tamil Nadu, particularly in Mangalore and Udupi districts. The term *Naga-Mandala* is a combination of two terms: *Naga* and *Mandala*. While *Naga* certainly refers to a serpent, *Mandala* suggests decorative graphic drawings on the floor. This ceremony of *Naga-Mandala* basically suggests the union of the male and the female, the female in human form and the male in his serpent self. In Girish Karnad's version, *Naga-Mandala* revolves the union of a neglected young bride Queen-Rani with the *Naga* incarnated as her husband Appanna.

Abounding with myths and motifs, the play *Naga-Mandala* relates the tale of Rani, a beautiful girl who is dominated and subordinated by hard and unjust patriarchal constructs of the Indian society. Her choices and yearnings are relegated by both her father and husband leading her life into an ultimate misery. Rani longs for a complete life; she desires for an affectionate and devoted husband. On the contrary she is ill treated by her husband, Appanna, who cages her in the house and himself makes visits to his mistress. In such a depressing situation, an old woman Kurudavva helps her. Kurudavva provides Rani a magical potion to seduce her husband. However, the destiny had some other plans for her so *Naga*, the Cobra, accidentally drinks the magical potion and at once falls in love with Rani. He imitates the shape of Appanna, her husband, and starts visiting Rani during the nights when he is away. With passage of time, Rani becomes pregnant and so her real husband charges her of disloyalty. She is thus demanded to perform a snake ordeal by villager elders to prove her innocence. Finally Rani successfully passes her snake ordeal which gives her the status of a Goddess and thus lives happily with Appanna. It has to be clarified that Appanna and *Naga* are the two faces of a single man, one seen at day, the other at night which symbolize the hypocrisy and double standards professed by the male-clan. Rani is the symbol of a woman's undying endurance and survival in the face of this oppression. The scene of

Rani's trial is reminiscent of Sita's trial in the *Ramayana*, and it shows a glimpse of the shallowness and male-centrism prevalent within the traditional Indian values.

This narrative of *Naga-Mandala* has been textually analysed by applying Sarah Cardwell's comparative theory: following the generic, authorial and medium-specific contexts respectively. At the generic level, it has been discussed that this particular text follows the criteria of mythical genre. Accordingly, the mythical motifs implanted within the text have been discussed which includes the myth of the Naga, a myth regarding the chastity and the magical root. Further at the authorial level, Girish Karnad's aim to satisfy his feminist and cultural concerns through the medium of the story has been discussed. His personal intentions to depict the strength of women and detest the old conservative societal values become clear in this section. In the medium-specific section- the folk-tale elements, the Brechtian influence and the various narrative manoeuvres employed by Girish Karnad have been highlighted.

After the literary and thematic study of the text, the technicalities have been invigilated by deploying Gerard Genette's mechanics of narrative. Accordingly, the tenets of the order, duration and frequency of the narrative have been examined respectively. Four different stories add in to web together the tale of *Naga-Mandala*. The frame story of the Author consists within itself the story of the flames; it further contains the tale of the Story (a character) which further encloses the tale of Rani. The duration of the narrative is quick and fast pace which covers three and half month of Rani's portion of life transcript in fifty printed pages. The narrative contain in its structure both instances of singulative frequency instances(Author coming to the temple, Flames entering the temple) as well as the repetitive frequency examples set in Rani trying to seduce Appanna and meeting with the incarnate Naga.

3. c *Naga Chayya* by Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry

In the third chapter, the study moves to a new medium of adaptation, that is, theatre. To examine this medium, Neelam Mansingh's Punjabi theatrical version of *Naga-Mandala*, in the script form of *Naga-Chayya* has been put under the lens for consideration. The section begins with a quick briefing about the medium of theatre and then furthering with analysing the intricacies of the technique in the adapted work itself.

The explanation begins with the metaphorical definition of the word ‘Theatre’ summarising it as a dramatic way of life which has always been a mirror for man, a reflection of the world, of the eternal conflicts and the emotions of human. After discussing the text-performance relationship in theatrical scenario, a rather quick summary has been provided tracing the origin and development of Indian theatre. This portion wraps up the many strenuous stages which Indian theatre witnessed from ancient to classical to times of the British Raj, before finally reaching the modern and post-modern success. The section ends with a note on the significance of the indelible impact of archaic and mythological themes being a part and parcel of the successful trends of the modern theatre.

Joining in this trend league along with Bertolt Brecht and Girish Karnad, Punjabi theatre director Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry walk down the treaded footsteps to carry forward this synthesis of the ancient with modern and rural with urban. The section moves ahead with a quick glance at the life history of Neelam Mansingh from her childhood days to her present stay in Chandigarh. Neelam Mansingh as one of the renowned titans of modern Punjabi theatre spent her early childhood in England and then migrated to Amritsar, where she studied in a convent school. Presently, rooted in Chandigarh, this Padma Shri awardee is the chairperson of the Indian theatre department in Punjab University where she has been teaching since 1990. She also heads a theatre group, The Company, which has toiled immensely to produce several impressive productions like *The Suit*, *Yerma*, *Kitchen Katha* and *Naga-Chayya*. The remarkably striking performances by this group have been witnessed all around the globe during many national and international festivals; from London to Singapore, Japan to Lahore. All the plays produced by The Company have been translated by the famous poet Surjit Patar, with music poised by B.V. Karanth.

The directions by Neelam Mansingh have been well known for being musically and visually rich excerpts which always received high regard in Punjab’s culture and heritage. In fact Punjabi and *Punjabiyyat* have always been a personal quest for her in which no doubt she won, hands down. In an interview with Rema Gehi entitled, “Nothing has changed since the time I started off” Neelam Mansingh while explaining the importance of her regional dialect Punjabi opines “There was a conscious effort to

learn the dialect because as an artiste, if you don't know your own history you cannot be truly contemporary” (n.pag).

Her closeness with the *Punjabiyaat* or Punjabi culture effectively demonstrates through her directorial of the script of *Naga Chayya*. Neelam Mansingh along with changing the language from English to Punjabi also transforms the entire milieu of the Kannad society in *Naga-Mandala* into a rural Punjabi village in *Naga-Chayya*. In addition to these drastic changes lime lighting the devotion of Neelam Mansingh for Punjabi culture, the further minutiae analysis of the script and performance follows the track of Sarah Cardwell’s comparative theory. The generic context explains the criterion of epic theatre employed by Neelam Mansingh to create alienation effect and restrict the emotions of any sympathy or regret on the part of the audience. Other characteristics of the epic theatre include ambiguous ending, loose narrative structure and inclusion of prologue, chorus and live music. The authorial context deals with the numerous images and metaphors employed by Neelam Mansingh to help explore the meaning of creativity to the fullest. Props like-fire, water, oil, smoke and food items add an Indian and earthy touch to the ambience of the performance. In addition, Neelam Mansingh goes to the extent of providing a live kitchen on the stage with *kadhais* and *chappatis*. Adding far more personal strokes to her performance Neelam Mansingh brings on stage a display of fusion theatre, mixing modern and the rural together. This includes a collaboration of both urban and rural actors and depiction of erotic love scenes in a rural set-up. The medium- specific demands of the theatre explain the strong performances by the cast of *Naga-Chayya*. Neelam Mansingh reacts to the indistinctness of creation difference and the notion of androgyny in which gender is not definite by deliberately assigning more than one role to a single artist. Accordingly, in the script she assigns Vansh Bhardwaj to perform the roles of the Author, *Kesho* and the Naga, her trick, which also resolves her other intention to portray the striking calibre of her performers. At other times, when she wants to unlace the metaphorical layering of an important character, she never hesitates in allocating more than one artist a single role. Likewise in the play script the two layers of the character of Rani are performed by two performers simultaneously. The gestures and appearances of the performers are separately explored to maintain their importance in the entire performance.

Further, the focus of the performance includes the music, cadences and lyricism of the story-telling, the subtle gradations of speech, and the expressive body language of the performers. These techniques in the direction process of *Naga-Chayya* helps in making it a strong sensory experience that uses rich music and an affluent visual vocabulary to transport the audience much beyond vocal communication. Adding on to appeal of the performance, Neelam Mansingh's demonstration of excess –costume, gesture, speech and temperament helps in breaking the boundaries of the ready-made monotonous interpretation directing it towards something inventive and interesting.

After a detailed literary examination, the technicalities of the staged performance of the script of *Naga Chayya* are dissected in regards of Gerard Genette's mechanics of the narrative. Under the structure of order, both order within character and dialogues are examined individually. Order within character is explained through the reference of A.J Greimas Actantial model and order within dialogues is scanned to maintain their importance in dramatic narratives in creating suitable character, action and space. The tenet of duration tries to judge the connectivity of one scene with another in the narrative and mentions the presence of descriptive pause and elliptic scenes in the text. Lastly, the frequency section helps to analyze the narrative patterns and the musical bearing of the script.

3. d *Videsh- Heaven on Earth* by Deepa Mehta

The attempt then moves to its fourth section of cinematic adaptation of *Naga-Mandala* by Deepa Mehta. When this section starts, following the pattern of the previous chapters, a literal connotation of the word cinema and then a short kaleidoscopic explanation about the growth of Indian cinema has been provided. Maxim Gorky entitles cinema as "Kingdom of Shadows" (10) and a long clarifying clarity about the subject has been given by Maria.T. Pramaggiore. The short illustrative definitions follow the historical genesis of cinema where the origins of this culture has been traced back in the practice of "mummy complex" of the Egyptians. This act to revoke and challenge the passage of time ingrains the explanation of the inherent psychological need in man for infinite survival. This utmost desire of humans has

passed on its affects even in the fields of art and sculpture and consequently has led to the uprising of the artistic genre of cinema.

Though cinema made a vivacious entry on the global scene but its entry into Indian dramatics was marred by many rejections. It was derogated as a social and cultural threat and so consequently was obstructed by conservative censorship rules. With a radical protest by Lala Lajpat Rai to cease conservatism in the progressing path of cinema in 1915, it finally brought fortunate times for Indian cinema. During the anti-colonial period (1920-1947) in India many progressive steps were negotiated in an attempt to foreground Indian identity through the art of cinema. As the time passed Indian cinema shined as a global institution and Indian directors conveniently employed cinematic power dynamics to display binary style dimensions- local and the global. This style referred as transculturist trend saw its first instance in Indian cinema through *Purab aur Paschim* and after that there was no looking back. *Videsh- Heaven on Earth* is one such example of transculturist phenomena by Deepa Mehta. A required explanation has been provided regarding the earlier unworthy consideration of such remakes and to their final acceptance in the Bollywood industry.

Moving on from this discussion regarding cinematic cultural borrowing, the study shifts to describe life and works of Indo-Canadian director Deepa Mehta. After her early life in Amritsar and Delhi, Deepa Mehta moved to Canada with her husband in 1973. Coming from a well-off Indian family, Deepa Mehta could not digest herself being racially discriminated in the foreign land. This turmoil led her to foreground Indian identity through her much famous trilogy-*Fire, Water, Earth*. Each of these movies has raised controversies in its own way. Actually Deepa Mehta was highly frustrated with the typical Indian cinema which offered nothing but insignificant cheap stories termed as regular *masala* movies. So her repulsion made way through her serious efforts to portray the hard realities of life in her movies. Moreover, her biggest aversion included the unworthy treatment meted out to Indian women by the conservative patriarchal society and so accordingly, all her movies demonstrate instances of inner strength of women

Videsh-Heaven on Earth is no different in the sense that it is also a woman – centric movie. Here, Deepa Mehta offers to display sad miserable life of an Indian immigrant woman, her patience and her final rescue. The section moves with the synoptic summary of the movie, which starts with young Chand moving to Canada to marry the boy of her father's choice and her struggle to adjust in her new family. She encounters physical, physiological, financial and emotional distress. Finally she finds escape in the imaginative world where she meets her desiring lovable husband. The conflict between reality and fantasy creates issues in her actual life which leads her finally, to escape for good. This summary proceeds into foregoing pattern of Sarah Cardwell's comparative approach.

The breakdown begins from the generic context where the movie is standardized as an example of transnational genre. This genre has been proposed by Hamid Naficy who regards it suitable to cut across geographic boundaries and take on issues like national identity and sense of belonging. A thorough explanation in terms of references by Hamid Naficy and Asuman Sunar has been provided to explain firstly the transnational genre and secondly to situate Deepa Mehta as one of its proponent. Under this generic context, themes of migration, identity and isolation have been handled comprehensively.

At the authorial level, Deepa Mehta's display of grave feminism through this movie has been explained. The unjust and mean cultural institutions working against women have been exposed and relegated. Unfair institutions of arranged marriage, dowry, abusive husbands and unsympathetic families have been highlighted through the story of Chand. At home, the women in spite of helping Chand take Rocky's side in arguments – a depreciatory illustration of women being their own enemies. By this, Deepa Mehta centres a major thought that Indian women with their long continued bearing of the conservative societal taboos have ended up being spiritless and cowardly. Thus, die-hard feminist Deepa Mehta offers a taboo-challenging critique where she rebuffs notions of domestic discretion to disclose patterns of subservience and humiliation.

In addition to the authenticity of the story in unveiling many typical customs working at large against Indian women, Deepa Mehta continues to adopt the mythical idea of magical root from the original story of *Naga-Mandala* by Girish Karnad. This context explains how with each setback, women in general and in this case Chand escapes into a world of fantasy (echoed by lapses into black-and-white), bringing in the quaint fairy tales to her advantage. Things get puzzling to follow as Chand falls under the snake's magic charm, failing to distinguish between her arrogant husband and the gentle and caring lookalike Rocky. Towards the end, everyone goes against her and she had to pass harrowing snake-ordeal to prove her innocence. Through Chand's final escape, Deepa Mehta ascertains her portrayal of the inner strength of women which is capable enough to transform a grave situation favourably. Thus the story of Chand gives a strong way-out for Deepa Mehta's profoundly feminist thoughts.

The medium specific level centres the intricacies of the filmmaking process by Deepa Mehta. This section begins with discussing the cast members and their individual role and performance in the movie. Further, the organization of space in the direction process has been explained with reference to indoor and outdoor shooting. This segment eyes particularly upon the dynamics of the transnational genre highly influencing the spatial management. This follows by a detailed section upon other techniques like polarities, symbols and humour employed by Deepa Mehta in the discourse of the narrative.

After the segment of Sarah Cardwell's comparative approach finishes, it is followed by mechanics of the narrative which accordingly discuss the order, duration and frequency patterns in the script. While, the order of the narrative has been arranged swiftly in the first half of the movie, but the chronological bearing of the script becomes jumbled with random shifts between the myth and reality in the second-half. The two months duration of Chand's unhappy married life has been showcased within one and a half hour of cinematic script with moments of ellipses and descriptive pause. The tenet of frequency reveals the oft-repeated scenes of Chand remembering her parents and requesting to call them and the scenes of physical violence.

After this last discussion amongst the adaptation analysis, the study is followed by final section of dynamics of interchange which offers three-some genre comparison and their dwelling in togetherness.

3. e Dynamics of Transformation

In the fifth chapter all the three mediums come together to be analyzed in relationship with each other. Various changes and reasons behind those changes, while, adapting a work into a new medium has been discussed. Firstly, there have been simply the changes demanded by a new medium itself. Film, theatre and written text, each have their own tools for manipulating narrative structure. Further, filmmaker or a theatre director often makes changes to highlight new themes, emphasize different traits in a character, or even try to solve problems they perceive in the original work. At times this implies subtle changeovers or inserting in of dynamics of language, or props that are more identifiable to modern audience; at other times it means portraying events or characters in the narrative in a way that better fits a modern receptivity. Under these criterion heads this section try to analyze each adaptation in concern with the other thus highlighting along with their accurateness some inherent unthought-of shortcomings.

After analysing the adaptations of *Naga-Mandala* in three different mediums in a bird view style this thesis explores the adaptation phenomenon by answering the following research questions in the last section

- I) How are the two adaptations, Neelam Mansingh Punjabi production *Naga Chayya* and Deepa Mehta's Hindi production of *Videsh- Heaven on Earth* inspired from *Naga-Mandala* individually different?
 - a. Has the gender role dynamic between the two leading characters (Rani and her husband) changed in the two mediums?
 - b. How is Indian myth portrayed in the two adaptations?
 - c. What are the major differences in form and content, story, 'production', 'graphic content', thematic meaning' in the two adaptations?
- II) How are the two adaptations received by audience members?

4. Review of the Relevant Literature

The three adaptations of the play *Naga-Mandala* discussed in this analysis forefront new perspectives to the story of Rani, thus providing an altogether fresh vision to the outlook of the story. Nevertheless, in spite of the differences in detailing of the story, there exist similarities between all the three discussed authors in regard of, them being die-hard feminist and highly modernist in their approach. Each has made efforts to give voice to woman's distress in the taboo-ridden Indian traditional society. Their aims may advocate a similar thought but each of the three mediums has received its specific individual treatment.

The most remarkable characteristic regarding Girish Karnad is his ability of portraying the intricacies and inner conflicts of his characters. In addition, he makes a strong effort through his writings to strike at the stereotypical instructions of Indian society like caste system, women subjugation, domestic violence and many more. Almost all of his endeavors have received commendable reviews worldwide but some critics dislike his ambiguous and unclear endings. For them, his writings fail to offer any suitable solutions to the problems tackled in the text. However, in spite of his sincere efforts he has been criticized for being ambiguous and unclear in some of his works. He in most of his writings fails to offer any suitable solution to the problem. He has received some negative reviews regarding his play *Hayavadana*. M.K. Nayak has criticized the play because, he considers, "It fails to offer solution to the problem" ("Cinderella Still: Recent Indian English Drama" 45). Pranav Joshipura has also expressed the similar view: "...instead of deliberating on how to abolish the Varna system, Karnad presents it in a startling manner without any solution...to treat an age-old problem without suggesting any solution raises serious doubts about the capacity of a writer" (69). Withholding these minor off-beat reviews, the entire collection of Karnad's writings have been eulogized for its sheer brilliance. To discuss about all the works of Karnad is not the focus of this research project so a deliberate attempt has been made to discuss only the most applicable and the most recent critical literature.

The most recent critical study books on the historicity and culture in the works of Girish Karnad are *Girish Karnad- History and Folklore* and *Girish Karnad-Poetics*

and *Aesthetics* (pub. 2011) by Om Parkash Budholia. He explains through his books Karnad's usage of the sources of history and folklore in his plays to reveal the socio-centric milieu and its wide-spread influence upon human relationships. Particularly, chapters focusing on the study of *Naga-Mandala*, brings into being the relationship between two oppositional forces: the human being and the Naga. *Thunder on Stage- A study of Girish Karnad's Plays* (pub. 2008) by C.L Khatri and Sudhir. K Arora contains twenty two scholarly articles upon an in-depth study of the plays of Girish Karnad. Focusing upon *Naga-Mandala*, the sections deliver narratives regarding emancipating women and the archetypal perspective employed by Karnad. P.D Nimsarkar publication *Women in Girish Karnad's Plays – A Critical Perspective* in 2009 provides a detailed explanation regarding the portrayal of women characters of Girish Karnad. According to him, in Karnad works, “ while performing their social roles in the family and society , Karnad's women take care of their desires and to achieve them find their own ways”(20).

In “*Redefining the Insurgent Female Psyche in an Andocentric Milieu*”, which came in 2003, Krishanamayi has presented the views regarding how Girish Karnad delve deep into the complex psyche of women to reflect at the intricacies of their existential predicament. She opines that Girish Karnad not only debunks the rigidity of the patriarchal Indian system where women are considered as non-persona but also questions the way women are socialized to internalize the dominating hegemonic creed. Accordingly they disgrace their own position and become responsible for the on-going subordination and subjugation.

Articles like “Mythical Elements in Indian Plays: A study of *Naga-Mandala* of Girish Karnad” by Tuta Aswar Rao, “Themes of Orality and Silence in Karnad's *Nagamandala*” by T.D.Purakasyastha and “A Re-reading of Girish Karnad's Plays with Reference to Myth and Folktale” by Veena Nobel Dass are great contributions to understand the usage of the element of myth and folklore in the play *Naga-Mandala*. Veena Noble Dass while explaining myth construction in *Naga-Mandala* opines:

Girish Karnad plays are based on Indian myth. *Naga- Mandala* tells a story embellished with the harsh truths of life and the incongruities of

our existence capsule in fantasy. It is simultaneously a story, a social satire and the psychological study of a woman. It is a comment on blind faith devoid of any reason. (122)

Girish Karnad's Plays – Archetypal and Aesthetical Presentation by Bhagabat Nayak in 2011 has been a highly important work to decipher how Karnad employs traditional issues from myths, history and folktale and sets them on stage for public argument to establish the identity of 'India' and 'Indian'. Besides these articles and books, many research works have been conducted on works of Girish Karnad in different universities also. *The Plays of Girish Karnad: A Study in Power Politics* is a pioneering endeavour conducted by Arjunsin. K Parmar from Saurashtra University in 2011. This study focuses highly on the man-women relationship in different plays and chiefly in *Naga-Mandala* in concern of this research project. In Bharathiar University, a research was conducted on "Treatment of Reality, Fantasy and Myth in the select plays of Girish Karnad" by K. Radhai. Another research has been conducted in Punjab University by Alpana Saini on "The Construction of Contemporary Indian Subjectivity in the Selected Plays of Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani". In Abu Dhabi University also research work has been accomplished on the topic "Understanding Politeness in the Indian way- A Study of Girish Karnad's *Nagamandala* and Vijay Tendulkar's *Silence! The Court is in Session*" by Ashwitha Antony in 2013.

Moving on to the theatrical adaptations of *Naga-Mandala*, it has been successfully directed on stage by many dignitaries and in many languages. As part of the annual festival of Ranga Shankara Samprati, Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* was staged in Bengali by Ballygunge Swapna Suchna Theatre Group, Kolkata, directed by Abanti Chakraborty. It was directed by J. Garland Wright, as part of the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis. It has been successfully staged by Abinash Sarma in Assamese language. In Rouge theatre it was successfully directed by Cynthia Meiers with variety of different shades. These stage performances are theatrical versions of the original script *Naga-Mandala* in Kannad by Girish Karnad and so because of linguistic impossibilities they do not fall under the canvass of this attempt on adaptation study. In this respect Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry's Punjabi direction of the play *Naga-Mandala*, script written by Surjit Patar, has been selected for

comparative analysis. The choice has been made with regard to the accessibility and easy contemplation of the Punjabi script of the play. First performed in 1989, this legendary play by Girish Karnad was revived, or rather revisited, as a new production by Neelam Mansingh in 2005. *Naga-Mandala* has been a theatrical delight even in Kannad and English language but the Punjabi rural flavour bestowed on it by Mansingh has been incredible.

Though the basic story remains the same however she has added new shades of meaning to the script. In Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry's direction, Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* exalts as an aesthetically spectacular performance. Neelam Mansingh has always been appreciated for providing contemporary images and idioms along with a firm portrayal of rich traditional culture. Whenever any critic came up with some suspicions regarding her creative calibre, she has always successfully hushed him/her with her inspiring directions. Interviews which appreciate the individuality of this Punjabi director includes "Punjabi is my Political Compulsion" by Jaspreet printed in *Times of India* on April 30, 2013, "Director's Cut: Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry" by Shonali Muthalaly in *The Hindu Metro Plus*, Hyderabad and "Restoring Lost Voices" by Gowri Ramanarayan in the Frontline. All the above mentioned interviews highlight the humble Indian personality of Neelam Mansingh. She designs her production with the thought to weave together modernity along with the pulsating idiom of the tradition. Her strength lies in her performing group The Company which enlivens all her directions. *Naga-Chayya* has been a power-packed performance by Neelam Mansingh receiving wide critical acclaim. The review of Chaman Ahuja in "Woman Directors: Theatrical *Phulkari*" about *Naga-Chayya* reads:

Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* was Neelam's first major work. For the first time, speech, narration, recitation, songs, dances, costumes, props, movements, stood unified. In a sense, she did not just direct the play; she recreated it- a recreation that earned full approval from the playwright. 'You are the only person, who has really understood my play. (41- 46)

Review of the performance given by Nirupama Dutt from the Chandigarh *Tribune* states:

Against a backdrop of shimmering dotted and striped fabric, so like snakeskin, sewn together, sits the beautiful Rani experiencing a strange marriage in which her husband is a tyrant by day and a lover by night. Trying to fathom this dichotomy, Rani tells her snake man: “All these days I was never sure I didn’t just dream up these nightly visits of yours. You don’t know how I have suffered. When I saw your scowling face in the mornings I would be certain everything was a fantasy and almost want to cry.(“Cobra love”)

Other important writings deciphering the performance of *Naga Chayya* in particular and the techniques of direction adopted by Neelam Mansingh includes, “Seen by Scene” by P. Anima and a biographical talk “Unpeeling the Layers within yourself” by Neelam Mansingh herself. There has been a research work conducted by Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry herself, topic “Situating Contemporary Punjabi Theatrical Practice in the Context of the Trends in Modern Indian Drama 1970-2007” by Punjab University in 2009. This research authentically benefits to understand the dramatic trends employed by Neelam Mansingh in her directorial activities.

Further the study moves to the cinematic adaptation by Deepa Mehta in terms of *Videsh-Heaven on Earth*. Generally, the issue of domestic abuse is not new to cinema, but it has been a rarity that film-makers take it beyond the realm of objectivity. Nevertheless, cinematic adaptation of the story of *Naga-Mandala* has been one such strong instance to demonstrate simple story of domestic violence on a new platform including myths and fantasies. *Naga-Mandala* saw its many cinematic adaptations before it was Deepa Mehta’s turn to take upon the story for her direction. Its first cinematic version has been a Kannad language film directed by T.S. Nagabharana. It was released in 1997 and won many prominent awards for its content and screen adaptation. Its cast included Prakash Raj and Vijayalakshmi in the lead roles and the soundtrack, consisting of 15 tracks, tuned by C. Ashwath were admired for the folk touch. The Shah Rukh Khan-Rani Mukherjee starrer Bollywood film *Paheli* finds resemblances to the screenplay of *Naga-Mandala*. The director of *Paheli*, Amol Palekar, was charged of stealing the screenplay and storyline from *Naga-Mandala*.

However, Amol dismissed the accusation saying that *Paheli* was adapted from a short story written by Vijayadan Detha.

This study analyse Deepa Mehta's *Videsh-Heaven on Earth* which is based on the story of Girish Karnad's *Naga-Mandala* and inspired from Neelam Mansingh's theatrical performance of *Naga-Chayya*. However, no particular book reviews have been available on the movie *Videsh- Heaven on Earth*, but some prominent books written about Deepa Mehta's trilogy helps substantially to comprehend the subject better. So, accordingly, these books have been mentioned in this review section. A critical analysis of Deepa Mehta's famous trilogy has been available in book *Film, Literature, and Culture: Deepa Mehta's Elements Trilogy* published in 2007 by Jasbir Jain. Jasbir Jain is director of the Institute for Research in Interdisciplinary Studies (IRIS), Jaipur. Formerly, she headed the department of English in University of Rajasthan, and has toiled in various faculties including the directorship of the Academic Staff College. Though the book centres upon the Deepa Mehta's three important movies-*Fire, Earth* and *Water* but it is very important to understand the theatrical dynamics employed by her in her every direction. The essays, particularly Theory of Gaze, Diasporic Location, Religion and Patriarchy are very relevant to decode and interpret the script of *Videsh-Heaven on Earth*, from the perspective of Deepa Mehta. A *Critical Study of Deepa Mehta's Trilogy Fire, Earth and Water* by Manju Jaidka published in 2011 has been another important critical book which answers many queries regarding the persona of Deepa Mehta. This book centres upon women issues dealt by Deepa Mehta. Further issues like the globalised appeal of her transnational films and efforts to make Indian appeal an international one have been discussed in this book. As there have been no reserved books available on the movie *Videsh-Heaven on Earth* till date, these books help to review *Videsh* suitably.

Critical article in terms of understanding the ideology of Deepa Mehta, "Fire, Water and The Goddess: The Films of Deepa Mehta and Satyajit Ray as Critiques of Hindu Patriarchy" was published by David F. Burton in 2013. David.F. Burton is Senior Lecturer in Religious faculty at Canterbury Christ, Church University, United Kingdom. His interests of research include religion, particularly Hindu and Buddhist and its depiction in cinema. This article centrally explains the influence of Satyajit Ray on the

works of Deepa Mehta. Further it relates her works as strong indictments of injustice against women in society which is mostly perpetuated by religion and patriarchy. With such strong portrayals of women suffering in her films, Deepa Mehta calls for a desired reform in the society. Her movies have always called for unreceptive response from Hindu conservatives who mostly discard them as “Orientalist misrepresentations”(3). Conversely, these negative responses highlight the restrictive ideology prevalent within Hindu culture. In spite of this, Deepa Mehta has never failed to depict this facade of religious conviction.

Another important article published in 2012 by Stefania Basset was entitled “The Dislocated women in Deepa Mehta and Meena Alexander’s works”. The article makes a comparative study of an internationally acclaimed author and a renowned film director in effort to substantiate their personal dislocations. Both of these prominent personalities encountered not only physical migration but also suffered severe dislocations in their life. So, accordingly they make their diasporic identities the pivotal guidelines in their works and thus confront the homogeneity in societal traditions. The dramatics prevalent in Deepa Mehta’s *Videsh-Heaven on Earth* have been psychologically investigated in this context.

In addition to these literary reviews a research work entitled “Postcolonial Feminisms speaking through an ‘Accented’ Cinema: The Construction of Indian Women in the Films of Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta” was completed by Subeshini Moodley from Durban University in the year 2004. This research provides a detailed understanding of the feminism; inherently rooted in the film scripts of both the female directors in the post-colonial era. Their distinctive sensitivity to subtle and hush-hush female-centred topics is handled thoroughly.

Coming strictly to the performance section of *Videsh -Heaven on Earth*, Deepa Mehta uses folklore to explore several socially relevant issues, from the sanctity of marriage to domestic violence and even exploring the meaning of true happiness. It is a simple yet complex film that compels you to be a part of its intense drama.

According to journalist Bhargav Saikia, on the surface level, *Videsh –Heaven on Earth* may look like an ordinary movie regarding domestic abuse but inherent deep in

the script is much more substantial. A very naïve genre of magical surrealism is exploited in this movie to voice out the intricacies and imperfections of human relationships. It is for the audiences with a very broad mid-set, which can sensibly analyse what the film wants to deliver.

Further Bhargav Saikia comments that Deepa Mehta has always been honest towards her film's demands. She could have made this film in Hindi or at least partially in Punjabi to achieve a wider audience but she uses unadulterated Punjabi throughout for a much more effective result. There is no room for unnecessary flamboyance in her films and in *Videsh*, she keeps the treatment simple and provides a realistic look at the lives of the first generation of immigrants wherein their loneliness, frustration, desires and struggles have been depicted very well. The supernatural element has been convincingly integrated into the narrative and the overall effect is surprisingly believable. Giles Nuttgen's photography also deserves brownie points for capturing the grim backdrop to the story with finesse.

Videsh has also received some notable negative critical comments. Anuj Kumar writes:

The storyline is not cogent as it moves between the mythical and the real. Deepa's strength, as we know, is economy of expression and her camera remains a neutral observer. But here her strengths conspire to make *Videsh* a convoluted art piece with very little mass appeal but something that deserves interpretation. ("Tale of a tormented wife -- *Videsh - Heaven On Earth*")

Namrata Joshi writer of *Outlook* magazine also declines the movie:

Videsh begins promisingly. Till interval it's quite an affecting and poignant film and then dips inexorably to downright mediocre... What undoes the film is the snake mythology that gets introduced in a bid to resolve the domestic violence theme. The alternate reality she builds the *nagpariksha* to prove her innocence and find a route out of the hell become laughable. Such surreal elements worked in a play like *Naga - Mandala*. Here it's a sloppily handled device. (n.pag)

A mixed review by Udit Jhunjhunwala reads:

Mehta succeeds in capturing the claustrophobia of a prison-like existence, but when Chand's pain and desperate loneliness lead to hallucinations about a cobra, and the story moves to fantasy, mythology and potions, she disconnects from the viewer. However, Mehta is unable to do justice to such a complex story which makes the final Sita like *agni-pariksha* appear absurd rather than thought-provoking. Not for the impatient. (n.pag)

So this movie, in contexts to its various loopholes fails to be an example of Deepa Mehta's best productions. However this endeavour studies the movie unaffected by these negative reviews in a comparative fashion along with its textual and theatrical versions.

Besides these articles and reviews, some research works have been conducted on the adaptation study in different universities. *The Practise of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction into Theatre* is a pioneering endeavour of research work conducted by Janis Balodis for partial fulfilment of the requirement for awarding the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the teaching of English from the Department of English and Modern European Languages, Queensland University of Technology. In this thesis Nick Earl's Novel *Perfect Skin* is analysed in comparison to its two theatrical adaptations by two different theatre companies. In University of Jyväskylä, a research was conducted on *Cinematic Dialouge, Literary dialogue, and the art of Adaptation* by Sara.I.Rauma. Many research works have been conducted on the works of Girish Karnad and Deepa Mehta but none of their works have been opted out at the level of adaptation comparative study which is selected for this analysis

5. Hypothesis of the proposed research problem

Finally there is the conclusion section where the hypothesis underlying this research project recommends that the intricate dramaturgical and aesthetical construction and the whole host of motives and text layers of *Naga-Mandala* consents to a unique film and distinct theatre adaptation. Further this investigation presumes that rather than being a poor or slavish copy of the source text, an adaptation, when

measured on its own terms has more in common with so called authentic works. In developing a suite of analytical tools and assessing their effectiveness in the practice of adaptation, this research project advocates a deeper examination of the interdependency of theory and practice in adaptation studies as they relate to theatre and cinema.

Furthermore, it seeks to create a methodology and template for adaptation that has been both compliant and supple enough to permit each adaptation to exist and succeed on its own terms, generating new theoretical and practical knowledge. On the above substantiation, the idea reigns that adaptation is in itself a challenging and benefitting cultural practice.