



A comparative study of Macbeth, adapted as Maqbool by Vishal Bhardwaj

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Abstract— William Shakespeare's theatrical works have long been a fertile ground for reinterpretation and transformation. Within his plays, he explored fundamental themes such as love, marriage, family dynamics, issues of race and class, humour, betrayal, malevolence, vengeance, murder, and mortality. Through his masterful storytelling, Shakespeare crafted enduring characters, spanning from common criminals to noble monarchs, who have transcended time to become enduring archetypes in modern drama, while still retaining their relatable human essence. These timeless themes and iconic characters provide filmmakers with a rich reservoir of raw material to create visually captivating cinematic experiences. Renowned director Vishal Bhardwaj garnered substantial critical acclaim for his trilogy, with "Maqbool" drawing inspiration from "Macbeth," "Omkaara" from "Othello," and "Haider" adapted from Shakespeare's "Hamlet." Nevertheless, Bhardwaj exercised creative liberties in moulding these narratives to suit his cinematic vision. This article embarks on an exploration of the comparative analysis between Vishal Bhardwaj's "Maqbool" and Shakespeare's "Macbeth." The discussion commences with a succinct overview of comparative literature, progressing to a detailed examination of the opening scenes, the art of characterization, the diverse dramatic techniques employed, the setting, and the denouement. Moreover, it delves into the points of convergence and divergence between the adaptation ("Maqbool") and the original source text ("Macbeth").



Keywords— Adaptation, Appropriation, Comparative Literature, Maqbool and Macbeth, Tragedy.

INTRODUCTION

Comparative Literature

Comparative Literature is a multifaceted discipline that delves into the examination of texts spanning various cultures. This interdisciplinary field is primarily concerned with identifying connections and recurring themes in literature, transcending both temporal and geographical boundaries (Bassnett 1). To elaborate, it encompasses a diverse range of studies where scholars explore literature that transcends national borders, time eras, languages, genres, and even extends into the realms of other artistic forms like music, painting, dance, and film. It also extends across different academic disciplines, interweaving literature with psychology, philosophy, science, history, architecture, sociology, politics, and more. In essence, Comparative Literature can be described as the exploration of "literature without confines." According to Bassnett,

individuals often do not initially embark on the path of comparative literature but find themselves naturally drawn to it. Typically, students commence their journey by reading various texts and eventually progress towards making comparisons. This analytical process involves scrutinizing the similarities and differences between the texts under examination.

A case in point is the comparative analysis of a literary work, such as William Shakespeare's Macbeth, with its cinematic adaptation, Vishal Bhardwaj's Maqbool. This article aims to critically assess the commonalities and deviations between these two works, focusing on key scenes, pivotal plot developments, character portrayals, and the employment of dramatic techniques within both the play and the film.

Examining the initial sequences.

The commencement or inception of any creative endeavour holds immense significance, whether it's the initial lecture given by a teacher, the commencement of a movie, the debut composition of a musician, the first draft of a script by a writer, an artist's inaugural painting, or even the introduction of any literary work, such as the opening line of a poem, the initial paragraph of a short story, the first chapter of a novel, or the initial scene of a play. The first impression often lingers as the lasting one, and for this reason, poets, novelists, and playwrights emphasize the significance of these "beginnings" and invest a considerable amount of effort in crafting the initial portions of their creative works.

In the realm of drama, the opening of a play carries exceptional weight as it sets the tone and ambiance, alerting the audience or readers about the forthcoming action and immediately grasping their attention. It serves as a pivotal theatrical tool to unveil the plot, theme, setting, environment, and key issues addressed in the play. Shakespeare employed various techniques to effectively inaugurate his plays. For instance, in "*Macbeth*," the play begins with thunder and lightning, accompanied by the entrance of three witches. Through the witches' conversation, the audience learns about a recent battle and their intentions to meet Macbeth in the near future. Furthermore, the ominous atmosphere created by the thunder and lightning in the opening scene of the play foreshadows impending menace and violence.

Both "*Macbeth*" and its cinematic adaptation "*Maqbool*" share a strikingly dark, gloomy, and foreboding commencement, characterized by heavy rain, thunder, and lightning. This eerie atmosphere, reminiscent of a Shakespearean tragedy, is masterfully conveyed by Vishal Bhardwaj in "*Maqbool*" right from the outset. However, in his role as a director and adapter of the play, Bhardwaj has taken certain creative liberties to tailor the film to suit cinematic requirements. Notably, he transposes the setting from the court of Scotland to the Mumbai underworld, and the characters of two corrupt policemen, Pandit and Purohit, assume the roles of the three weird sisters. Bhardwaj provides insight into his approach in the preface to the screenplay of "*Maqbool*."

Like every filmmaker I also wanted to explore the juiciest genre of cinema—the world of gangsters. I was looking for a story that could give me the scope to have the underworld as a backdrop but with a strong human story. During this period, whatever I read, any story or article I read it with only one agenda in mind—to find a story for my gangster film ... The first breakthrough in the screenplay was the discovery of witches in our story. What could have made the

best parallel to the witches in contemporary India? Of course, cops. (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala vi)

When Shakespeare penned *Macbeth* in 1606, he effectively employed the concept of witches to intensify the play's suspense and enigma. This inclusion of supernatural elements resonated with the Elizabethan audience, eliciting a sense of intrigue and fascination. However, when Vishal Bhardwaj decided to create *Maqbool* in 2003, the notion of witches making prophetic statements for the main character would have been met with scepticism and deemed unconvincing. It would have seemed far-fetched and lacking imagination. Consequently, these alterations made by the director lent a realistic perspective to the film.

Shakespeare's intent in weaving witches into the tragedy was to cultivate an atmosphere of dread, a role taken up by the two policemen in *Maqbool*, assigned with the task of maintaining fear throughout the narrative. *Maqbool* is replete with numerous instances of confrontations, orchestrated by characters such as Pandit and Purohit, as well as *Maqbool*'s gang. For instance, in Scene 2, inspector Purohit engages in a police encounter, fatally shooting local gangster Sadiq at close range, resulting in a gruesome scene with blood splattering all around. These encounters effectively contribute to the film's atmosphere of fear.

In addition to crafting an atmosphere of fear, the witches in Shakespeare's play also serve as fortune-tellers. In Act 1, Scene 3, the witches encounter Macbeth and Banquo on their return from the battlefield, making prophecies for Macbeth and subsequently for Banquo. They initially address Macbeth as Thane of Glamis, then as Thane of Cawdor, and finally as the king. Bhardwaj cleverly draws a parallel in *Maqbool* through the character of inspector Pandit, who, much like the witches in *Macbeth*, has the ability to make predictions by reading horoscopes.

Throughout both the play and the film, a recurring theme of mystery, darkness, abnormality, and hideousness prevails, generating an aura of fear. As Harold Knight noted, "we are confronted by mystery, darkness, abnormality, hideousness: and therefore by fear" (Knight 161–62). The film mirrors these patterns of fear, mystery, suspense, and darkness.

The reasons behind the crime

In Shakespearean literature, the motif of concealment and nefarious acts is consistently associated with the shroud of darkness and secrecy, as noted by Knight (177). Both *Macbeth* and *Maqbool* exploit the cover of night to veil their morally reprehensible deeds, using the obscurity of the late hours to fulfill their most hidden desires. A.C. Bradley, in his analysis, highlights the recurrence of pivotal scenes occurring under the veil of darkness or in dimly lit locations. Instances such as the vision of the dagger, the murder of Duncan, and the assassination of Banquo all transpire

within nocturnal settings (Bradley 287). However, it's essential to acknowledge that although the murder of Abba ji unfolds under the cover of night, akin to Duncan's murder in the play, the underlying motivations behind these crimes diverge. In the play, Macbeth's "ambition" to ascend to the throne serves as the primary impetus behind Duncan's murder, a man who held a fatherly role in his life. In contrast, Maqbool's murder of Abba ji stems from sexual jealousy, with his principal aim being to win Nimmi's affection, while the act of assuming Abbaji's position takes a secondary role. This shift is elucidated by Bhardwaj in the preface of the film's screenplay.

the major decision was to change the character of Lady Macbeth - from Macbeth's wife to Duncan's mistress who was having an affair with Macbeth. This changed the dynamics of the relationships completely. Suddenly the sexual conflict became the core of the screenplay. For Macbeth, the Lady Macbeth became the throne herself (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala vi).

Before delving into Maqbool's transformation from Abbaji's loyal confidant to his eventual murderer, it's crucial to note that in the play, the murder of Duncan isn't the central focus. As Bradley (286) asserts, "the action... swiftly progresses through seven brief scenes of intensifying suspense towards a climactic crisis, which occurs with the murder of Duncan, right at the outset of the second act." In essence, Macbeth's murder takes place early in the second act, while in Maqbool, the killing of Abbaji occurs much later, precisely in SC. 41, marking the pinnacle of the film's narrative. This shift underscores Vishal Bhardwaj's altered perspective, as he aimed to craft a crime thriller centred around the theme of sexual jealousy, with Nimmi as the coveted prize for Maqbool, and murdering Abbaji as the path to claiming that prize. Consequently, more than half of the film revolves around the murder of Abba ji.

In the play, the witches entice Macbeth towards the heinous act, but in the film, Nimmi persistently provokes Maqbool to commit the murder of Abbaji. Despite being Abbaji's mistress, she despises his "repulsively fat body" and appears entirely disengaged and distant when they are together in bed, often wearing a blank expression (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 54). However, secretly, she yearns to be with Maqbool all the time. Yet, she cannot realize her desires while Abbaji is alive, which compels her to push Maqbool towards committing this brutal act. The first notable instance of this manipulation occurs during their private walk in SC. 18. The ensuing dialogue between them effectively illustrates the scene:

Nimmi

- "That astrologer inspector Pandit of yours ... he's a goddamn liar ... you'll never take Abba ji's place ... "

Maqbool

- "Why?"

Nimmi

- "You're a wimp ... that's why"

Maqbool

- "I see ... "

Nimmi

- "Then what ... you'd burn in my love but you'd never have the guts to touch me ... Guddu is the real successor to Abba ji ... "

Maqbool

- "Guddu?"

Nimmi

- "If you don't have a son, the son-in law becomes the next in line." (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 38-39)

From the preceding conversation, it's evident that Nimmi has initiated a scheme to manipulate Maqbool against Abbaji.

Up until this point, Maqbool had been avoiding Nimmi's advances, but he now succumbs to her seductive allure. Scene 29 of the film portrays their intimate encounter. Through this, Nimmi has achieved a significant victory in her scheme. Her long-standing desire to be in Maqbool's embrace has finally been fulfilled. It's worth noting that the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare's original play was a sacred union, bound by holy vows. They were a lawful husband and wife. However, in this film, an illicit romance is depicted between Maqbool and Nimmi, devoid of holy vows and genuine love, characterized by sexual desire and jealousy.

In Shakespeare's plays, rain, storms, thunder, and lightning often serve as symbolic representations of chaos, almost as if Nature itself is issuing a foreboding message to humanity. Scene 39 of the movie commences with a comparable depiction of tumultuous and fierce weather.

Nanny

- "Such strange weather ... in my seventy years, I've never seen it rain in this month ... lord have mercy ... "

The hour has come, Maqbool and Nimmi finally decide to murder Abba ji:

Nimmi

- "Have you decided?"

Maqbool

- "Hmm ... " (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 83)

While Maqbool is enroute to assassinate Abbaji, he envisions a scene on a terrace where a sacred ritual once

took place, marked by a splotch of blood. Gazing at the bloodstain, he frantically calls for a servant to clean the floor, only to discover it has already been tidied up. Maqbool's eyes return to the floor, only to find no trace of blood this time. His grip on reality begins to slip. Bhardwaj masterfully draws a parallel here with the iconic dagger scene from *Macbeth*. Following the gruesome murder, Maqbool assumes Abbaji's role, and Nimmi becomes his paramour. Like *Macbeth*, *Maqbool* is propelled forward with an unwavering commitment to maintain his newfound power, resorting to any means necessary. Consequently, he continues to perpetrate heinous acts. Day by day, *Maqbool* becomes increasingly steeped in crime, transforming into a more villainous, brutal, and inhumane figure, while Nimmi, in stark contrast, spirals into a state of profound human despair (Knight 173).

The craft of depicting characters

Shakespeare's mastery of character depiction is renowned, and his characters possess a timeless quality that transcends specific settings and eras. This enduring universality enables modern filmmakers to adapt his plays and characters for the screen. Shakespeare's characters are firmly rooted in reality and avoid excessive exaggeration. He stands as one of the few dramatists, post-Chaucer, who has crafted such a diverse array of character portraits. From the complex tragic heroes like *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello* to the spirited heroines of his famous comedies such as *Hermia*, *Rosalind*, and *Viola*, and even the witty fools and clowns, his character sketches remain etched in our collective memory long after his passing.

However, it's crucial to acknowledge that characters often undergo transformation when transitioning from one literary medium, such as text, to another, like film. This transformation is primarily due to the distinct power of visual media, which differs significantly from print media. For instance, a writer might require a thousand words to describe a particular scene, while a film can effortlessly convey its essence in a single shot. Additionally, characters may need adjustments to align with different temporal and spatial settings. Take, for example, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, who differs significantly from Vishal's *Maqbool* in appearance. *Maqbool* wields guns instead of shields and armour, wears no crown, and speaks the language of a local gangster.

Nevertheless, Bhardwaj's portrayal of *Maqbool*'s character mirrors the transformative journey observed in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. At the outset of the play, *Macbeth* is introduced as an extraordinarily skilled general, regarded as "honest," "honourable," and possessing an abundance of kindness. King Duncan and fellow generals heap praises upon him upon his return from battle. However, by the

play's conclusion, he evolves into a cruel and inhumane tyrant. He sheds his initial virtue and becomes domineering, brutal, or even a cold-hearted hypocrite. His ambition leads him down a path of destruction, driven by the relentless urging of his wife and the prophecies of the witches, ultimately compelling him to murder the noble King Duncan. Lady *Macbeth*'s taunts and passionate courage push him to commit heinous acts, leading to his descent into a nightmarish realm of unreality and chaos.

Maqbool's character also undergoes a similar transformation. At the beginning of the film, he is depicted as Abbaji's most loyal and trusted member, beloved like a son. Their relationship is filled with affection and respect. However, this love and respect soon dissipate as *Maqbool* ultimately shoots Abba ji. He becomes entangled in the prophecies of the Pandit and Purohit, as well as Nimmi's ominous warnings. Much like Lady *Macbeth*, Nimmi provokes *Maqbool* with taunts that challenge his masculinity, a criticism no man can easily bear. She tauntingly labels him "a wimp" (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 38).

Through Nimmi, Bhardwaj attempts to rekindle the essence of Lady *Macbeth*, a character characterized not only by strong will but also by a malevolent passion (Knight 173). As the wife of *Macbeth*, she shares a similar ambition and a desire for power. Upon *Macbeth*'s return from a victorious battle, a man who has faced countless dangers and earned immense praise, she remains devoid of affection and single-mindedly pursues her ambition, relentlessly urging him to carry out the sinister deed she envisions as heroic, referring to it as "this night's great business" or "our great quell," while ignoring its cruelty and faithlessness. She is oblivious to the consequences and fixated on the crown, determined to achieve her goal at any cost. In contrast to *Macbeth*'s initial doubts and confusion, she is unwavering, courageous, and self-assured. However, her courage, will, and confidence gradually erode, and she becomes a shattered soul, haunted by visions of bloodstains on the walls and the lingering smell of blood on her hands. Her most poetic words are: "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand ... will these hands ne'er be clean?" (Bradley 317–23).

Nimmi's character also evolves through different stages of growth and decline. Initially, she persistently encourages *Maqbool*, who resists her wicked plans and avoids her advances. But a turning point arrives when he succumbs to her malevolent schemes, and their happiness is short-lived. With each passing day, *Maqbool* becomes increasingly ruthless and wicked, while Nimmi descends into a state of despair akin to Lady *Macbeth*. Her peace of mind shatters, she loses the ability to sleep, and she envisions bloodstains

throughout her surroundings, crying like a deranged woman.

Bhardwaj has made certain creative liberties by substituting or adding characters to suit the film's requirements. In place of Malcolm and Donalbain, Abbaji has only one child, a daughter named Sameera. The three witches are replaced by two policemen, Pandit and Purohit. The character of Usman takes on the role of Duncan's drugged chamberlains, and various rustic characters, such as Bhosle, Tawde, Chinna, Palekar, Mohini, and others, further advance the narrative.

A significant character introduced by Bhardwaj in the film is Nimmi's child. Unlike the original play, where Lady Macbeth has no mention of children, Nimmi gives birth to a child before her demise. The father of this child remains ambiguous, leaving the possibility that the child may belong to Abbaji or Maqbool. This unresolved mystery adds depth to the story. After Nimmi's death and Maqbool's demise at the hands of Boti (resembling Macduff), Guddu and Sameera care for Nimmi's child. Bhardwaj concludes his story on a humane note, where the disruptions caused by the corrupt actions of Maqbool and Nimmi are rectified by Guddu and Sameera's compassionate act of kindness, restoring order.

Dramatic Devices

Imagery

The vivid and intense imagery found in Macbeth contributes to the tragic ambience of the play, predominantly featuring themes of blood, death, cruelty, destruction, and disorder. This is evident in passages like the one depicting a smiling babe torn from the breast and dashed to death, the earth trembling in fear, and the mind filled with scorpions. Peace and beauty are scarcely given any attention throughout the play, as it is saturated with imagery of storms, rain, thunder, and lightning. The entry of the witches, accompanied by a thunderstorm, establishes an atmosphere of fear and mystery (Bradley, 289).

Additionally, the play abounds in blood imagery, with constant references to blood throughout. Macbeth and Banquo are described as bathing in reeking wounds on the battlefield, Macbeth's sword smokes with bloody execution, and both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have blood on their hands after she smears the sleeping grooms with it. The description of Duncan's body, the apparition of the bloody child, and Lady Macbeth's imagined blood stains are all powerful examples of blood imagery. Nevertheless, some critics, such as Wilson Knight, argue that the blood imagery lacks the brilliance present in the fire imagery, which includes images of thunder, lightning, the cauldron's fire, the spectral dagger's gleam, and the ghostly pageant of unborn kings.

Apart from fire and blood imagery, animal imagery is also prevalent in the play, featuring references to creatures like the "Hyrcan tiger," the "armed rhinoceros," the "rugged Russian bear," and more. This animal imagery reaches its climax in the supernatural scene where witches prepare a filthy cauldron (Knight, 166–168).

The violent and grandiose images of blood, fire, thunder, and storms, in combination with the appearances of the witches and ghostly apparitions, work together to create an atmosphere of horror, mystery, and supernatural dread (Bradley, 290).

In the film Maqbool, director Bhardwaj similarly employs imagery to convey an atmosphere of dread, mystery, terror, fear, and disorder, mirroring the approach used by Shakespeare in Macbeth. Bhardwaj utilizes thunder and lightning imagery to signify a disruption in the natural order, with the film commencing during heavy rain and thunder. The pivotal scene in which Purohit shoots Sadiq, splattering blood on Pandit's horoscope, foreshadows the film's unfolding events. A later scene in which Maqbool envisions blood on a terrace floor echoes Macbeth's famous dagger scene, serving as a warning of Maqbool's sinister intentions against Abbaji. Blood imagery persists throughout the film, as seen in Nimmi's fixation with imaginary bloodstains on walls, floors, and her hands.

Moreover, animal imagery is also present in the film, as exemplified in the scene where a servant prepares goats for a holy sacrifice, an act that ultimately leads Maqbool and Nimmi to plot Abbaji's murder (Reference to Shakespearean themes in the film).

Irony

Irony plays a significant role in the fabric of Macbeth's storyline, contributing to the development of suspense while also evoking an eerie sense of apprehension and enigma. This is exemplified when, just prior to his encounter with the witches, Macbeth speaks the following words:

so foul and fair a day I have not seen (I,iii)

His utterances surprise the audience or readers as they evoke the language used by the witches in the first scene of the play.

Fair is foul, and foul is fair

Another case of irony arises in Duncan's statement as he remarks on the disloyalty of the Thane of Cawdor in the following manner:

There's no art,

To find the mind's construction in the face,

He was a gentlemen on whom I built

An absolute trust (I,iv)

In the very instant that Macbeth starts discussing Cawdor's betrayal, he makes his entrance, introducing an ironic twist to the situation. Duncan, oblivious to Macbeth's dark intentions, warmly welcomes him, while readers are well aware that Macbeth, like Cawdor, is on the verge of betraying Duncan. Meanwhile, Lady Macbeth's seemingly innocuous words may appear differently to the discerning readers.

A little water clears us of this deed;

How easy is it then ...

Describe the sleepwalking scene in which she desperately attempts to cleanse her hands of phantom bloodstains, yet no quantity of water proves sufficient for her, as depicted on pages 291-292 in Bradley's work.

In the movie Maqbool, there are numerous instances that exhibit irony. In scene 22's conclusion, we observe Abbaji's attempt to pacify Maqbool, who is seething with anger after receiving a slap from ACP Devsare.

That slap stung me much more than it did you ... Ramzan starts tomorrow ... nothing doing till the Eid ... (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 46)

The irony is unmistakably present in Abbaji's dialogue. He holds the position of the Mumbai underworld's kingpin, a status he has achieved through the ruthless murder of numerous individuals, including his own mentor, Lal Ji Bhai. Despite his notorious reputation as a cold-blooded killer, he maintains a deep reverence for the holy month of Ramzan. Islam is a religion known for its values of peace and prosperity, yet Abbaji and his gang members engage in brutal acts of violence while simultaneously demonstrating respect for the sanctity of Ramzan and Eid.

This duality is further evident in later scenes of the film. In Scene 30, Nimmi is seen offering a prayer, even though the night before, she engaged in an illicit relationship with Maqbool, a connection that goes against Islamic principles. In Scene 49, Maqbool is shown praying immediately after assassinating Abba ji and taking his place as the underworld leader. Following the prayer, Nimmi questions him:

You know all the prayers by heart? Never seen you in prayer before ... you look like a baby ... (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 94).

The phrase "you resemble a child" carries a layer of irony, as Nimmi recognizes the facade Maqbool is putting on. In truth, he is a killer portraying himself as an innocent, childlike figure.

Scene 50 is also rife with situational irony. It commences with a prayer for Abbaji's peace. Maqbool and Nimmi attentively listen to the priest and join in praying for

Abbaji's soul to find tranquility. This scene is steeped in irony, as the individuals responsible for the murder are seeking solace for the victim's soul.

Soliloquies and asides

In Act 1, Scene 7 of the play, we are introduced to Macbeth's initial soliloquy. During this lengthy monologue, the audience gains insight into his internal conflict. Although he is uncertain about whether to murder Duncan, his overwhelming ambition drives him toward the heinous act. Another pivotal soliloquy takes place in Act 2, Scene 1, during the dagger scene, which is a significant moment in the play. Macbeth's soliloquy vividly portrays his mental turmoil, with the dagger serving as a symbol of his conscience.

Besides soliloquies, there are also instances of asides within the play. One such occurrence can be found in Act 1, Scene 3, where Macbeth reacts with astonishment upon learning that King Duncan has bestowed upon him the title of Thane of Cawdor. His amazement stems from the realization that one of the prophecies has already come to fruition.

Conversely, in the adaptation "Maqbool," there are no instances of either soliloquies or asides. Instead, the inner thoughts and emotions of the characters are revealed solely through their dialogues, offering a distinct narrative approach.

Music

Macbeth lacks any soothing melodies, with its auditory landscape dominated by the harsh elements of rain, storms, thunder, and lightning, which serve to counterbalance the absence of musicality in the play. In stark contrast, the film "Maqbool" boasts a lavish musical score. Staying true to the typical Bollywood tradition, Vishal Bhardwaj has skillfully composed a collection of melodious tunes and incorporated numerous song and dance sequences, as pointed out by Stephen Alter.

Unlike many Hindi films, where the shift from action to song is abrupt and often awkward, in Vishal's films there is a seamless quality to the music and images he presents. The songs in Maqbool are woven into the narrative ... Maqbool contains three songs, all of which occur in the first half. (Alter 16-17).

The initial song featured in the film is "Tu mere ru baru hai," a Sufi composition commencing at a sacred shrine. While the singer offers praise to the Almighty, its impact subtly hints at Maqbool's affection for Nimmi and Guddu's sentiments for Sameera (as mentioned in Bhardwaj and Tyrewala on page 40). Following this, the second song, "Rone do jiya kre," serves as the backdrop during the intimate moment between Maqbool and Nimmi. Bhardwaj suggests that this song beautifully captures Nimmi's

feelings for Maqbool (as cited in Bhardwaj and Tyrewala on page 68). The final song, "Jhin min jhini," is a celebratory tune marking Guddu and Sameera's engagement.

Beyond these lyrical compositions, the film also incorporates an instrumental theme music that persists in the background, creating an anticipatory atmosphere, suggesting forthcoming ominous events.

Setting

The transformation from the royal court of Scotland to the gritty Mumbai underworld is a deliberate choice made by Vishal Bhardwaj to cater to Bollywood's audience. Instead of portraying kings and noble generals, the film now portrays characters from the criminal underworld, many of whom belong to the Muslim community. Despite these alterations in setting, language, and location, the film remains true to its core theme of a Shakespearean tragedy. In the words of Stephen Alter, "Foggy moors and dank castles give way to mildewed havelis and the stark cityscapes of Mumbai. Horses are replaced by Mercedes-Benzes, and swords with pistols. But the real enchantment of the film lies in Vishal's ability to reimagine a Scottish melodrama within the perilous and convoluted realm of Mumbai's criminal underworld. He not only relocates the story in a different time and place but, much like a familiar musical theme that undergoes a remix, Vishal transposes it to another key" (Alter 14).

Ending

In both Macbeth and Maqbool, we witness a recurring theme of disrupted order at the outset, which is eventually reestablished by the conclusion. In Macbeth, the restoration of order unfolds as Macduff slays Macbeth and Malcolm ascends to the throne, reclaiming the rightful rule as the legitimate heir of Duncan. Conversely, in the film Maqbool, the reestablishment of order takes a different path, with Guddu and Sameera demonstrating a profound act of compassion by lovingly accepting Nimmi's child. This compassionate gesture serves as a redemptive force, countering the violence and enmity that had plagued their world, ultimately restoring a sense of harmony and balance.

Points of Contact and Departure between the text and the film

When crafting "Maqbool," Bhardwaj skillfully incorporates the foundational material of Macbeth, aligning various elements and scenes, yet his departure from the source material carries more significant weight. It's essential to highlight that while diverging from the original play, Bhardwaj has forged a distinctive masterpiece that stays true to the essence of a Shakespearean tragedy.

Points of Contact

Just like in Shakespeare's "Macbeth," "Maqbool" begins with a dramatic opening featuring thunder and lightning. Furthermore, much like the witches' entrance in the play, the film introduces Inspector Pandit and Purohit right from the start. In a clever narrative parallel, Bhardwaj aligns the prophecies of the policemen with those of the witches in the play. In scene 8 of the film, Inspector Pandit confidently declares:

in six months' time, Abbaji's own throne will be Miyan's to claim ... Kings of Kings ... (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 15)

He continually issues predictions concerning Maqbool's fate throughout the story. In Section 61, Pandit once more foretells that Maqbool's safety is assured as long as the sea remains outside his home.

if the sea comes into your house, obviously you'll sink ... (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 118)

The intrusion of the sea into Maqbool's home is symbolically linked to Birnam wood, drawing a parallel. This prophecy manifests when customs officers conduct a raid on his residence with the intention of arresting him. However, Maqbool manages to elude capture, thanks to the assistance of two police officers.

In a manner akin to the Banquet scene in the play, there is a gathering of Maqbool's gang members in Room SC. 49. Notably absent from this gathering are Kaka and Guddu, reminiscent of Banquo and Fleance. During this scene, Maqbool envisions blood on the floor, a reinterpretation of the renowned dagger scene. Likewise, Nimmi becomes consumed by the imaginary bloodstains on her hands and walls, drawing a parallel to Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene.

Points of Departure

The film's backdrop shifts from the royal court of Scotland to the gritty Mumbai underworld. Instead of the three witches, two corrupt police officers deliver prophecies to Maqbool. Similar to Lady Macbeth, Nimmi is not Maqbool's lawfully wedded wife, but rather the mistress of Abbaji. In contrast to Duncan, Abbaji has no sons, only a daughter named Sameera. The film concludes with Nimmi giving birth to a child, a departure from Lady Macbeth's story in the play. Additionally, Bhardwaj alters the motive for the crime: in the play, Macbeth murders King Duncan out of his ambition to become king, whereas Maqbool kills Abbaji due to sexual jealousy, with Nimmi representing his desired throne.

CONCLUSION

To reconstruct or adapt a film, a director heavily relies on the source text, meticulously examining every word, scene, and character. However, the director is also compelled to diverge from the original text to suit the cinematic medium and accommodate contemporary sensibilities. When a filmmaker adheres too rigidly to these demands, the adaptation can lose its true essence and instead become an appropriation. This is precisely what happened with Vishal Bhardwaj's "Maqbool." Consequently, after a comprehensive analysis of both the literary and cinematic genres, it becomes evident that the film can be characterized as an appropriation of the source text, rather than a faithful adaptation. While there are numerous instances in the film where strong parallels can be drawn with the text, the disparities are more prominent.

Nonetheless, it's crucial to acknowledge that despite the changes in setting, location, language, and plot, the film remains true to Shakespeare in its core themes. The notions of crime, fear, and evil, as well as the portrayal of a disrupted natural order, mirror those found in the original text, preserving the Shakespearean spirit.

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