

SHAKESPEARE BEING GLOCAL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE'S 'HAMLET' AS BHARDWAJ'S 'HAIDER'



Literature

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Abstract

The present article compares and contrasts Shakespeare's Hamlet with the 2014 film Haider, directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, which sheds light on the unseen aspects of the 1989 insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. The movie not only focuses on Jammu and Kashmir but also presents an ingenious point of view that connects us with the real drawbacks of human society. Hamlet is not only about revenge; it is about the theme of the disappearance of King Hamlet, where Prince Hamlet is pretending to be insane to trap his uncle. It is also about the corruption that prevailed in Denmark and the sufferings that the women had to go through. The plot of Denmark is replaced in Haider by the plot of the Kashmir conflict in 1995 and enforced civil disappearances. The characters are given new shades according to contemporary Kashmir.

Introduction

Shakespeare's works have been translated into more than 50 languages and have been performed for audiences of all ages all over the world, solidifying his place as one of the greatest poets and playwrights in existence. He is also recognized as "The Bard" or "The Bard of Avon," who founded the Globe Theatre, a famous theatre that attracts almost ten thousand tourists each year. Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark, also known as *Hamlet*, was written between 1599 and 1601 and is regarded as one of the finest tragedies ever written. It is regarded as Shakespeare's longest play, containing almost 29,551 words. It revolves around the concepts of deep vengeance and psychological issues like insanity and also describe the political and moral tension of the time. It also portrays the human duality, which Freud compares to bipolar disorder and to the plight of getting on the right track by refuting the erroneous one.

Numerous situations occur in *Hamlet* that highlight the discrepancy between appearances and truth. It's unavoidable in a drama full of murder plans and conspiracies, some of which are hatched by seemingly good-natured characters like Claudius (who, beneath his charming grin, is a terrible monster). Hamlet greets him as a "...villain, smiling, damned villain!" (Shakespeare, 63). Hamlet pretends to be mad to get around Claudius's suspicions that King Hamlet was slain. *Hamlet's* story and characters are steeped in the environment and culture of the Danish court. The Danish court establishes a pattern of sexism as a patriarchal culture, which is expanded upon afterwards. We also need to remember that Shakespeare's depiction of gender roles in *Hamlet* is not wildly different from those of Elizabethan England, from whence the play originates.

Haider (2014) an Indian adaptation of Hamlet, is the last in the trilogy of Vishal Bhardwaj. The script of Haider is written by Basharat Peer, who belongs to Kashmir and his memoir "Curfewed Night" has a significant contribution to the actual background of the characters. His excellent writing makes it look real and relatable, unravels the untold stories of Kashmir and makes our hair stand while going through them. Haider takes place in India's Kashmir during the

insurgency war (IC) of 1995. Our hero, Haider, brilliantly portrays the part of a young Kashmiri kid named Haider Meer, who returns to his home region of Kashmir after attending Aligarh Muslim University in India in search of his missing father Hilal Meer, a medical doctor. A militant called Ikhtlaq Latif was treated in Hilal Meer's residence, leading to his detention under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). Ghazala Meer (Gertrude) weds Khurram Meer (Claudius), the brother of her husband after Hilal Meer goes missing. In this episode involving Hilal Meer's arrest, Khurram is the primary perpetrator. Dr Hilal Meer is tortured in jail and then taken to MAMA-2 detention centre for not chanting 'Jay Hind' (India is Great) where he is shot dead and thrown in the Jhelum river with his soul companion Roohdar (Ghost). Before dying he asks Roohdar to convey his revenge message to Haider.

Haider's revelation of his father's murder launches him into a sense of madness, as his famous speech "Hum Hain ki Hum Nahin" (Do we exist, do we not) reveals this unsteady mindset. Though he keeps procrastinating the revenge under the pressure of his grandfather's sentence "*Inteqam se Inteqam paida hota hai, jab tak hum inteqam se azad nai ho jaate koi bhi azadi hame azad nai kara sakti*". (Haider, 2014) (Revenge breeds more revenge, until we free ourselves from the process of revenge no independence can make us Independent.). To confirm his suspicions Haider conducts the famous 'Bismil' (Mousetrap) song with the secret tale of Hilal Meer's murder through a Dumb charade play in front of his uncle Khurram, for which he is arrested later by Khurram for hatching the plot with Roohdar, which eventually confirms the guilt of Khurram. *Haider* ends with Ghazala Meer blowing herself away in a suicide bombing attempt to protect Haider from becoming a militant in a fury of 'Revenge'. The white snow of Kashmir turns red with the blood of innocent lives.

Glocalizing Shakespeare: De Facto Borders of Kashmir

To help the inhabitants acquire the English language and carry out the tasks assigned to them by colonial authorities, Thomas Babington Macaulay introduced Shakespeare's plays to India. However, Independent India ushered in a period of cultural fusion. After being performed in their original environments, further plays by Shakespeare were adapted for the Parsi theatre. It was the Parsi Theatres that laid the groundwork for what would later become the Indian cinema industry. Into a fully-fledged Bollywood production in due course.

In 1923, director Nanubhai B. Desai and screenwriter Vaghji Ashram Oza made the first Shakespearean adaptation in Indian cinema with their *Champraj Hado*, based on Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. *Blood for Blood*, a version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* directed by Sohrab Modi, Nassem Bano, and Shamshadbai, was the first feature-length film to use sound and effects based on Shakespeare's works. 'There have been eighteen adaptations of Shakespeare's plays in Indian film between the years 1923 and 2016. (Trivedi & Chakraverti, 2019, p.02).

Vishal Bhardwaj is one of the prominent directors of Indian cinema to adapt Shakespearean plays. Famous for cultural localization in language, context, and ethnic tensions,

his trilogy; *Maqbool* 2003 (*Macbeth*), *Omkara* 2006 (*Othello*), and *Haider* 2014 (*Hamlet*) are some of the famous adaptations of the 21st century in Indian setting.

The events of *Haider* take place in 1995 in the strategically sensitive region of Kashmir, close to the Pakistani and Indian borders, during the height of the insurgency and the Indian army's violent reaction. The movie *Haider* begins with Hilal Meer (King Hamlet), father of Haider Meer (Prince Hamlet) bringing a sick man (wanted militant) home to avoid the search for an emergency appendectomy. This eventually sets the tone for further actions in the film. Khurram Meer (Caludius), taking advantage of this opportunity of his brother's mistake to treat a militant patient at home conspires to get him arrested and later murdered. The actual part of the film begins after the arrest of Hilal Meer which later leads to Hilal Meer's disappearance. The disappearance of Hilal Meer also surfaces the actual civil disappearance issue in Kashmir where like Hilal Meer many civilians have disappeared in the past, never to return. The women of these disappeared civilians are known as 'Half Widows' or 'Half Mothers'. This triggers the question of existential dilemma in civilians as Ghazala Meer says, "Disappeared logo ki biwiyan 'adhi bewa' kehlati hain" (*Haider*, 2014) (Disappeared people's wives are called 'half widows') to Haider.

One of the biggest dichotomies is the LOC (Line of Control), the de facto borders of Kashmir, which is discussed in the memoir of Basharat Peer's "Curfewed Night", as Line of Control. As of 1947, the United Kingdom had jurisdiction over around 500 princely kingdoms, the biggest of which was Kashmir. The majority of the population was Muslim, while the ruler, Hari Singh, was Hindu. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the popular leader, favoured India over Pakistan and an independent Kashmir above both of these options. Singh and Sheikh Abdullah both wanted more time to think on what to do with Kashmir after India was brutally divided in 1947. But in October 1947, when the Pakistani army and tribesmen from Pakistan's northwestern border state stormed Kashmir, compelling Singh to join India, Sheikh Abdullah—a friend of Nehru, the new prime minister of India—endorsed Singh's decision. Conflict ended in January 1949 as a result of UN intervention. In addition to establishing a ceasefire line, the United Nations supported a referendum allowing the people of Kashmir to choose which nation they identify with. Now referred to as the Line of Control (LOC), it continues to separate Kashmir into sections governed by Pakistan and India, respectively. (Basharat Peer, 13).

The only thing Kashmiris demand is 'Azadi' (Freedom) which is still a million-dollar question for a Kashmiri. As Haider talks about it in his famous mad speech,

"Law and order...
Na hai law na hai order...
India Pakistan ne milke khela humse border border..
Ab na hume chhode hindustan,
Ab na hume chhode Pakistan.
Areh koi to humse bhi puche ke hum kya chahte hain.. Azaadi..
Is paar bhi lenge... Aazadi
Us paar bhi lenge...Aazadi
Hum leke rahenge...Aazadi (Chorus)" (*Haider*, 2014)

Law and order
 Law and order
 Law and order
 Law and order
 Law and order
 Neither there is law nor order...

India and Pakistan played with us in the name of border, why doesn't someone ask us what we want ... we will take freedom from this side, we will take freedom from that side, we will take freedom anyhow) (Haider, 2014).

The people of Kashmir also thought that their demonstrations would lead to victory in their homeland, just as the people of Prague and Berlin had done. (Basharat Peer,140) when Haider Meer comes back to Anantnag, his home town in Kashmir and is interrogated by the Military personnel about his city, Haider unconsciously replies, Islamabad, Anantnag was also called Islamabad by local people because of its Muslim population. The IMF detains him from travelling upon his reciprocation because they do not want to hear the name of Islamabad in Kashmir, as one of them says later when he is released upon the request of Arshia (Ophelia), his beloved and famous journalist also daughter of the Local Indian Police officer (Polonius).

Khurram Meer, (Claudius) plays an integral part in shaping the narrative of the film from the Kashmir tragedy to Haider's tragedy. Hilal Meer is arrested upon Khurram's spying and informing the armed forces about Ikhlāq, who was operated the night before at Hilal's house. Khurram is a brother who has lecherous eyes upon Ghazala Meer (Gertrude). Normally a kind and quiet guy, Hilal Meer becomes obnoxious once his brother betrays him and begs Roohdar to deliver a message of vengeance: "*Haider se kehna mera inteqam le mere bhai se, uski dono ankhon me goliyan daage jin ankhon ne uski mauji pe fareb daale, jo ankhen use yateem bana gyin*" (Haider, 2014). (Ask Haider to take revenge from my brother, ask him to shoot bullets in Khurram's eyes by which he deceived his mother, the eyes which made him an orphan). He was ordered to kill Khurram in the eyes—the same eyes that rendered him an orphan—through which he had fooled his mother.

Haider goes mad after the revelation of Roohdar's 'Inteqam' (Revenge) message but gets confused when Khurram tries to manipulate him into believing Roohdar is his father's killer. The dilemma of "jaan lun ke jaan dun" (to kill or get killed) haunts his senses about whether to take revenge or not to take revenge. The character of Horatio is merged with Ophelia in Haider. Arshia is playing both his loyal friend and beloved. She goes around in search of his father in every nook and corner of Kashmir and later she is contacted by Roohdar (Ghost) to convey the message to Haider about his father. When Salman and Salman (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) try to ask him what he wants to do he replies feigning madness "Chutzpah ho gya mere sath" (Haider, 2014) (I have been made fool). The usage of the word 'Chutzpah' which is a Hebrew word meaning 'unbelievable gall' is shown in the comic relief scene with the 'fools' Salman and Salman

(Haider's spies and also school friends) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Haider goes on to tell them jokes about doing 'chutpah' in Kashmir. But then he finally tells them that he will find his father, they ask where you would look for him, in jails, camps or detention centres to which Haider replies sarcastically "poora Kashmir hi kaid-kahna hai" (Haider, 2014) (the entire Kashmir is a jail) (Haider, 2014). Haider leaves the audience questioning the state of Kashmir and Kashmiris. Haider asks if people are free to choose, adding, "hum hain ki hum nahin" (Haider, 2014) (Do we exist or do we not exist).

People who live in India do not know the plight of the other side of the border, where people 'exist' who have also flesh and blood like any independent person. They also have a right to 'live' a peaceful life without check-posts and guns at every corner. Haider not only entertains but also pricks the 'conscience' of the general public about the existence of Kashmiri people.

Let me cry out,
Say it as I can.
Kashmir, kaschmir, cashmere, Qashmir,
Cashmir, Cashmire Kashmir, Cachemire,
Ushmeer, Cashmiere, Casmir
Or Cauchemar in a sea of stories?.. (Basharat Peer, pg, 98)

Kashmir: From Firdaus to Kafas (Heaven to Prison)

Agar firdaus bar roo-e zameen ast,
Hameen ast-o hameen ast-o hameen ast. (Amir Khusrau)
(If there is a paradise on earth,
This is it, this is it, this is it.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the name Kashmir Valley was the exclusive option for the region in northeast India. Today, the valley is adorned with snow-capped mountains and the Pir Panjal Range, which form the heart of the Great Himalayas. On the other hand, it now includes areas ruled by three different countries: India (Jammu and Kashmir), Pakistan (Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan), and China (Aksai Chin and the trans-Karakoram tract).

Ranjit Singh's Sikh Empire captured Kashmir in 1820. After the Sikhs lost the First Anglo-Sikh War in 1846 and the British acquired the territory in the "treaty of Amritsar," Gulab Singh, Raja of Jammu and Kashmir, succeeded Nizam Singh as ruler of Kashmir. The princely state of the British Indian Empire became a contentious region presently managed by three countries: Pakistan, India, and China after the 1947 partition of India, ending the reign of his ancestors under the paramountcy (tutelage) of the British crown.

Haider focuses on the 1995 Indian-administered territory of Kashmir. Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night* gives real background stories to the adaptation of *Hamlet* to appear as a putative original story of Kashmir with the backdrop plot of Hamlet. Hence, we see how Kashmir heaven turns into a prison for the Kashmiris. They only belong to India, Pakistan or China. The setting of

Kashmir for Vishal Bhardwaj to bring Shakespeare to Asia must have been very thoughtful. Kashmir generally known as Firdaus (heaven) is turned into a 'kafas' or prison by the Military forces. They call it the doing of Militants, but Kashmiris believe it is the doing of the Military. Since 1989, the resistance struggle has plagued Jammu and Kashmir, a region that has long been a breeding ground for separatist aspirations. While some militant organizations in Kashmir want the region's ultimate independence, others want it to join Pakistan. Since both Pakistan and India gained their independence in 1947, the subject of whose authority over the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir has been brought up. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 outlined a plan for partition that gave the rulers of the princely states the choice of remaining in India or moving to Pakistan.

Armed tribesmen and troops from Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province marched into Kashmir on October 22, 1947, with the intention of seizing Srinagar, the capital of Jammu and Kashmir, according to the publication "The Hindustan Times". This incident occurred on October 28, 1947. In response to this invasion, Maharaja Hari Singh officially created the state of Jammu and Kashmir as an Indian territory on October 26, 1947, by signing an Instrument of Accession. (The Hindustan Times, 1947).

Since then, two more declared wars between India and Pakistan have taken place, in 1965 and 1971. Jammu & Kashmir also has an independence movement, which has been gaining ground steadily since the late 1980s. According to "The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, hopes of Peace" by Sumit Ganguly (1997), the insurgency sprang from "political mobilization" and "institutional decay" (21-39). "Political mobilisation comprises a form of political awakening and it happened in Indian-administered Kashmir due to an increase in literacy rate," he continues thereafter. After 1983, the number of madrassas (Islamic schools) in Jammu and Kashmir increased significantly, and the state's general literacy rate increased by 43% between 1971 and 1981. (Ganguly, 21-39).

Kashmir was torn between two nations war. On one side were militants from Pakistan and other side were Military forces from India both trying to crush each other. "The night of 20th January was long and sad," writes Kashmiri author Basharat in his book *Curfewed Night*, revealing the truth about the conflict. Like clockwork, my family would gather around the radio to listen to BBC World Service's nightly newscast before supper. An Indian bureaucrat named Jagmohan, who is notoriously anti-Muslim, had been appointed governor of Jammu and Kashmir two days before. He issued instructions to put down the rising insurrection from his grand mansion on the hillside overlooking Dal Lake. Paramilitary soldiers repeatedly kicked doors in Sri Nagar on the night of January 19th, dragging young guys out. A curfew was put in place after hundreds were detained by morning. (Basharat Peer, 14)

All these events weaved together creating a full-blown protest from every side in Kashmir culminating in innumerable arrests and tortures of civilians. The 'azadi' (freedom) slogan was raised by Kashmiris, freedom from the military and militants. The freedom to eat with peace, the freedom to live together, the freedom to move in their land, the freedom to pray together, the

freedom to love their nation, and the freedom to rule their nation. That winter, my political education started in Kashmir, which became a haven for many types of terrorist and paramilitary organisations. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), the Border Security Force (BSF), and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were the acronyms used. The terms frisking, crackdown, bunker, search, identification card, arrest, and torture were added to my vocabulary alongside these. Another winter saw busloads of young Kashmiris go to border towns, where they would later cross into Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir to undergo military training. “They go back as Pakistani terrorists armed with Kalashnikov rifles, hand grenades, light machine guns, and rocket launchers”. (Basharat peer, 19) The tale of the enchanted Kalashnikov was the most compelling. “It’s as tiny as a hand and can fire 200 bullets.” It can fire fifty rounds per minute and resembles a cricket bat. My brother has held a Kalashnikov and remarked that it is really lightweight. He expressed his desire to join the terrorist group to his mother. And father slapped him. (Basharat Peer, 23)

The plot of *Haider* is set in 1995, during the insurrection in Kashmir, which is more than a tercentennial ahead of *Hamlet*’s timeline. In this timeline, women do not need relationships to express themselves; they can do it through their work, through the arch of their personality. We see Ghazala get involved with her brother-in-law without delay just like Queen Gertrude. She is bold enough to satisfy her needs and also responsible enough to look after her son. “The realities of relationship return in the rediscovery of connection, in the realisation that self and other are interdependent and that existence, while valuable in itself, can only be fed by care in relationships,” Gilligan argues, reflecting the sentiments of most women. (Gilligan 127).

The movie *Haider* has been hailed as the standard bearer for a generation and offers an incredibly moving examination of Kashmir and *Hamlet*. A violent Indian counter-insurgency and militancy are present in Srinagar in 1995, and Haider is seen getting back to his home after hearing about his father’s disappearance. A counter-insurgency outfit known as the Ikhwan, consisting mostly of militants and backed by Indian security personnel, is shown in the film.

Additionally, the film delves into the subject of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), a strict legislation that grants the Indian Army the authority to “fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of death where laws are being violated.” Anyone who has taken any kind of action by this act shall not be subject to criminal prosecution. [The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958]. Law proponents would argue that these safety measures were essential for the safety of the soldiers. Even while this might be the truth, it does not excuse the crimes that the security guards committed while abiding by the law. No army or paramilitary official or soldier has ever faced charges for any sort of criminal activity since the law was passed in Jammu and Kashmir in 1991. India understands little and cares much less about this terrible and horrifying history. In contrast to other films that have addressed the Kashmir Conflict, *Haider* proves that history does exist, which is what makes it such a unique work.

The Gravediggers sequence in *Haider* takes place in a chilling Kashmiri cemetery. Three graves and three gravediggers are present. With their singing and shovels, the Gravediggers set the strange tone for the opening scene. Like Hamlet, the audience is left to wonder the same thing by the end of the scene. Hamlet asks wondering; “Has this fellow no feeling of his profession,” (Scene I, Act V 65). The Gravedigger, Horatio explains, has become so used to digging graves that he has lost all emotion for the deceased. Since the movie *Haider* is set in Kashmir, where murders are common, the protagonist does not pose this topic. Graves are frequently excavated in Kashmir since death might happen at any time. Even though Arshia is the only one to die, the fact that three separate graves were dug by the gravediggers shows how terrible the situation is in Kashmir. In *Haider*, Bhardwaj incorporates the Gravediggers’ song “Aao Na” (come on) with the sarcasm and foolishness of Shakespeare’s idiots. The Gravediggers discuss the ultimate truth—death—while singing,

Arehaao na, ki jaangayi (Come on, the life is over)
 Jahaangaya, so jaao (the world ended, go to sleep)
 Arehaao na (Come on now)
 Ki thakgayihaizindagi, so jaao (Life is tiring now, go to sleep) (Haider, 2014).

There is no question that the security forces tortured prisoners who were kept in detention facilities all around the state. A reference to the infamous torture facility in Srinagar, located on the banks of Dal Lake, is made in the film when a scenario occurs in which abducted Kashmiris are subjected to abuse in a location called MAMA-II. In the end, the laws helped the oppressors rather than the victims since they were so corrupt. You can’t help but be burdened by the weight of your conscience while you watch *Haider*, as the filmmaker drew the camera so disturbingly near to the subject that you can almost feel the pain and despair of your fellow citizens. “I love my country, I am a patriot, and I am also an Indian”. Mr Bhardwaj assured the Times of India that he would refrain from doing anything that would be considered anti-national. “But I will certainly comment on what is anti-human.” An article by Jason Burke published in the Guardian states, “*Haider* includes graphic scenes of torture in Indian army camps and other human rights abuses by Indian officials.” (Burke, 2014).

The film also refers to the predicament of the Kashmiri Pandits. The true message of *Haider* is that violence must stop because retaliation only breeds more violence. Critical acclaim poured in for Bhardwaj all around the globe for his brilliant decision to merge the tragedy of Shakespeare's Hamlet with the battle in Kashmir. In this concern, Stephen Alter orates: “The shadow puppetry of murder and the savage irony of Kashmir provide an ideal contrast to the familial intrigue and feudal intrigues shown in Hamlet as tragedy... Shakespeare’s tragedy, with its web of bloodshed and treachery, becomes a thread in modern Kashmir... Vishal attempts to portray the terrible truths of a besieged state and the tangled ethics of nationalism and separatism by situating Hamlet in Kashmir.” (Alter, 2014, pp. xiv-xv).

The Phenomenon of Transcreation: Hamlet to Haider

Shakespeare is famous for his ‘Blood-curdling scenes’, piling of horror upon horror, stage littered with corpses and supernatural elements. Similar incidents occur in Kashmir in reality daily. Haider seems to be a clear shout-out to the entire world regarding the condition of Kashmir through the process of Trans-creation. Kashmir is no more different from Palestine. Yet the world seems to be unaware of the blood-curdling scenes of Kashmir and more aware of Shakespearean theatres. Haider adds to the canon of adaptations and transcreations while also being a part of a unique archive of the Kashmiri experience.

The climax of Haider, which is different from the ending of Hamlet, has sparked debates all around the globe. The titular protagonist Haider is depicted battling both his father’s desire for retribution and his mother’s wish, “Inteqam se sirf inteqam paida hota hai, jab tak hum apne inteqam se azad. nai ho jaate koi azadi hume azad nai kara sakti” (Haider, 2014) (revenge breeds more revenge until we free ourselves from revenge, no freedom can free us). In the end, Haider couldn’t kill Khurram, in a way he fulfils the wish of his dead mother who blew herself to save him. Haider leaves the amputated Khurram to suffer in life, giving him the freedom to die from the miserable life ahead without Ghazala.

It is the truth universally known that Shakespeare didn’t solely produce characters; rather, he created ‘types’ and ‘beings’. From the very beginning of *Hamlet*, we see the way Shakespeare introduced Gertrude before us – a woman who gets into a relationship with her brother-in-law Claudius which eventually numbs her relationship with Hamlet. But we do not see anyone to talk about her needs. Throughout the play, we see Gertrude recovering her identity as a mother after her marriage to King Hamlet has ended. However, she cannot be around Ophelia until after her death, when she is in mourning. In her extensive book, *In a Different Voice*, Carol Gilligan discusses the challenges and progress that men and women confront in terms of ethics. According to her, a man’s main concern is justice, whereas the mind is the most important concern for women. A man presents himself through disagreements and personal achievements. When women begin to express themselves, it’s usually through relationships. The character arch of Ghazala Meer in *Haider* is beyond expectations. She often manipulates her son to keep him safe. When Ghazala finds a pistol in his backpack, she suspects that he is getting involved with militants. Haider also explains his ploys to edify himself as a militant across the border in Pakistan. His mother, afraid for his safety, holds a gun up to his head and threatens her son to kill herself unless he promises to leave their hometown to study at a college outside Kashmir. We can also analyse the character of Haider’s mother through her philosophy that “revenge begets revenge.” throughout the film, Haider is more prompted by his father’s cues and Roohdar’s exhortation to shoot his treacherous uncle, Khurram, between the eyes. But Ghazala stops him by ending her life for Haider.

Ophelia’s frantic behaviour on stage has been attributed to her domineering father, Hamlet’s harsh attitude toward her, or her congenital insanity. In *Haider*, we see Arshia as an employed woman who is a journalist by profession, who eventually falls between the dominance of her father and the wrath of Haider. Arshia becomes the victim of the male ego just like Ophelia,

even though Arshia is way ahead of her time. This goes to show how Shakespeare has paved the way to the core of all the societal directives and how they are still ruling us even after all these years.

As for the soliloquies, Prince Hamlet delivers seven soliloquies in the original *Hamlet*, but Bhardwaj's version narrows down to only one. "To be or not to be" (Shakespeare, 127), Prince Hamlet's most famous soliloquy, becomes "Hum hain ki hum nahin" (Do we exist, or not?) (Haider, 2014) in *Haider*. In his speech, Haider expresses his anguish and suffering. Similar to Prince Hamlet, he is bewildered and unsure of his existence; he is also unable to make a decision. The choice of Lal Chowk to show the mad speech of Haider is intentional on Bhardwaj's part because the "political leaders of Kashmir deliver their speeches here" is significant in this case. Since Hamlet and Haider are in a similar predicament, the defiant soliloquy twists the concept of being and not being in a new way (Ayaz et al, 2015).

The play within a play is brilliantly interwoven with the storyline of Bhardwaj's adaption, much as it is in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. It is, as Stephen Alter puts it, "a moment of light entertainment amidst a tale of deceit, intrigue, and murder" (Alter, 2014, p. xi). Shot atop the 8th-century Martand Sun Temple ruins, the Mousetrap scene from *Hamlet* seems to have been transformed into a Bismil song in *Haider*, to capture Khurram's conscience. Bismil song uses the Brechtian way of telling the story through a puppet show which is also called Bhand Tradition in local context. The choice of the Sun Temple also portrays the ancient legacy of Kashmir.

We can also mark the contrast between the death of Ophelia in *Hamlet* and the death of Arshia in *Haider*. When Hamlet came to know about Ophelia's death, he did not know how to react. Hamlet explodes on the audience, declaring his undying love for Ophelia. After a heated battle with Laertes in the graveyard, during which he utters phrases like "forty thousand brothers/could not, with all their quantity of love/make up my total," he finally jumps into the grave. (Shakespeare, 255). In *Haider*, we also witness the same thing. Arshia commits suicide after Haider kills her father. Arshia's funeral is nothing more than a foreshadowing of Haider's impending demise.

Hamlet's descent into madness and despair accelerates the longer he waits to take vengeance. While reading the monologue of *Hamlet* in Act 3, Scene 1, "To be, or not to be" (Shakespeare, 127), we can observe him going through an existential crisis as he tries to inspect the meaning of life and death. We cannot compare him with the other tragic heroes of Shakespeare, like Macbeth, Othello, etc. The tragic flaw in the character of Hamlet is that he overthinks about every matter and falls into the trap of feeling way too much. He is upset by his ilk of 'self-analysis. He is always sneaking into himself, digging into his psyche to search for an explanation for every deed he performs, and releasing his feelings through soliloquies. According to Coleridge, his extensive intellectual avocation averts immediate action, and the result is procrastination and uncertainty. "Shakespeare's method of creating characters is to imagine a singular moral or intellectual quality to an unhealthy extreme, and then to put himself, Shakespeare, in a situation where this excess is evident." (Coleridge, 344-345).

In the movie *Haider*, the protagonist faces the same issues that Hamlet faced. Haider is also confused about his deeds; he cannot decide his actions by himself. The end of the movie doesn't follow the same path as *Hamlet* does. Haider hobbles through a seething, bloody ground scattered with dead bodies and their mangled parts, including of his mother, Ghazala Meer. He moves toward a dubious future where he is perhaps doomed to a life with unbearable and incurable trauma, which is even worse than death. Similarly, Hamlet in Act IV, scene V declares:

“O, from this point forth my thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!” (Shakespeare, 205). Haider seems to be on the same path as Hamlet when he addresses a public gathering :

Hello...hello...mic testing one, two, three...
 Awaz aa rahihaiiaap logo ko? (Can anyone hear me)
 Hello...According to the UN Council resolution number 47
 Of 1948...Article 2 of the Geneva Convention and article
 370 of the Indian constitution...
 Bas ek sawal uthata hai ... (raises only one question)
 Sirf ek (only one) ... Hum hain ki hum nahin (Do we exist or do we not) (Haider, 2014)

Haider too feigns madness through this ironic speech. Hamlet and Haider both fall into the trap of their hubris which is their ‘procrastination’; “to be or not to be, that is the question” (Shakespeare, 127).

The sixteenth-century play *Hamlet* ends with Hamlet's mother dead and the stage littered with corpses. Though the twenty-first-century adaptation movie *Haider* too ends with Haider's mother dead but he forgives his uncle. Haider too lived a life of the same kind in Kashmir but could not take revenge. Rather, after knowing the truth of his father's murder, Haider feigns madness and puts an “antic disposition” upon himself and asks the same question to people. “Humhain ki hum nahin, hum the bhi ya hum the hi nahin, agar the to kahan gye” (Haider, 2014) (Are we real, or are we not? Where are we, if we are real? And if we aren't, then what happened to us? Were we ever here or were we never around?) His uncle Khurram had done the same deed as Hamlet's, to his noble father and married his beautiful mother. Now Haider is caught between his parents' competing goals of vengeance and maintaining the stability of his mother's second marriage. His mother pleads him to shoot her, and not make her a widow again.

The movie ends on a tragic note as Haider never expected that his mother would shoot herself for his life. Motherhood was on full display right up to her death. “Inteqam se sirf inteqam paida hota hai, jab tak hum apne inteqam se azad nai ho jaate koi bhi azadi hume azad nahin kara sakti” (Haider, 2014) Ghazala told him, (Revenge gives birth to further revenge. No freedom can make us free until we free ourselves from revenge). Ghazala's sacrifice is not particularly astonishing based on her past actions, but her decision to strive to execute as many militants as possible is. Her attempt to terminate the militant and almost successfully kill her former husband was an act of retribution, which erodes the theme of the film.

Conclusion

Shakespeare has been both applauded and criticized for his modern adaptations specifically those coming with recent political notions. They often quote the soliloquy by Hamlet: “The Play’s the thing/wherein I will capture the consciousness of the King” (Hamlet Act II, scene II). When it comes to adapting and appropriating classic works, this idea of theatre for its intended audience has always been crucial. More than any other dramatist, Shakespeare has reflected the universal human emotions of love, hatred, and retribution. Therefore, Haider automatically becomes a political film, ‘Glocalizing’ Shakespeare. Haider doesn’t only reflect Haider’s sole character; it reflects the entire Kashmir, unearthing the dark truths buried under the white snow of Kashmir. Even in contemporary Kashmir, the classic poem “Hum Dekhenge” (We shall see) by Faiz Ahmad Faiz is relevant. After facing opposition from India’s conservative Hindu community, the film Haider was eventually screened, where it became a smash hit while being outlawed in Pakistan. The fact that Haider finally brought “Kashmir out of the closet” and put it on the global map is the reason for its success.

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