



# Bhardwaj's Adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as *Haider* in Bollywood: A Study of the Plights of the Kashmiris

Ashraful Hussain (Asst. Professor)

(Department of English, Progati College, Agomani.

Research Scholar, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati)

Dr. Nabamita Das (Asst. Professor)

(Department of English, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati)

## Abstract

The dramas of William Shakespeare have been embryonic origin for many adaptations and appropriations. For many years now, great literary pieces of art have inspired the global filmmakers to make cinema. Vishal Bhardwaj's adaptation of Shakespearean plays in Bollywood has become a new genre of study. *Haider* is one of the most critically acclaimed movies that left behind several questions regarding the worst situation of Kashmir during 90s. In this paper, the researchers investigated Vishal Bhardwaj's *Haider* as an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and studied the plights of the Kashmiris as depicted in the movie. As the subject of the study is comparative, the researchers mainly used comparative-historical, cultural-historical, and comparative analysis methods. Here, the researchers try to unearth the plights of Kashmiris through which one can visualize the true picture of Kashmir.

**Keywords:** Adaptation, Bollywood, Bhardwaj, Kashmir, Shakespeare, Haider.

## Introduction

Shakespeare has remained no more a playwright of Britain only. The mass all over the globe considered him as the most loveable and remarkable dramatist. The existence of Shakespeare in India is of two different categories: The Shakespeare of the age of Elizabeth and the Shakespeare of India. We find Elizabethan Shakespeare in the syllabus of different institutions. The Indian Shakespeare appears in the shape of receptions, adaptations, transliterations, presentations, alterations, and appeared as self-restraint in Indian land. From the introductory juncture of British rule, the Shakespearean craft is found in the different states of India. Among them, Tamil Nadu, Bengal, Maharashtra, and Assam are some of the prominent places where Shakespearean plays were

performed to entertain the traders during the tenure of British rule. Karim and Mondal (2020) remarked, “The Assamese dramatic production has been indubitably influenced by Shakespearean plays. Most of the modern Assamese plays have evolved as a result of their writers’ interaction with the West, especially with the dramas of Shakespeare” (p. 8). And over time, the Shakespearean plays moved to celluloid from text and stages in India. According to Mukesh Yadav, “Colonialism brought Shakespeare to the Indian subcontinent. India’s extensive history of colonial domination extends to cultural domination. The colonial education system in India was filled with western texts, including Shakespeare” (Yadav, p. 48).

For the last two centuries, Bollywood has remained the most popular entertainment industry. Not only it brought new changes in the socio-cultural milieu of the country but it also tried to cinematize the great literary works of Shakespeare. His plays have been adapted, translated, re-imagined, and performed in the stages as well as in the television and movies several times. In popularizing the works of Shakespeare among the common and ordinary masses, Indian cinema has played a pivotal role. Satyabrata Rout asserts, “Shakespeare’s dramatic strength and super portrayal of human nature every time draws the attention of the filmmakers to mold them into the celluloid medium” (Rout, p.5). As the Shakespearean plays have universal appeal, the adaptation of his plays is not restricted to the English-speaking world only. People perform his plays in several languages such as Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Japanese, Spanish, and Swedish. He is omnipotent in most of the words of the world, may it be literature, movie, theater, or drama of television. Jose Ramon Diaz Fernandez opined,

Shakespeare adaptations seem to enjoy a moment of immense popularity in the box office. Indeed, after a very bleak period in the late seventies and early eighties, the commercial success of films has opened up the way for new possibilities in the process of the cultural transfer of Shakespeare’s plays to the film medium. (Fernandez, p.7)

Bollywood produces more than 1000 films in a year and it is one of the largest film industries all over the world. It portrays many lives in different genres like action, drama, comedy, romances, thrillers, tragedy, and horrors. But it has been noticed that Bollywood is shifting from the representation of Indian life for the last few years. The film industry of India has become hate oriented now. It manipulates the facts of history and presents wrong views with justifying characters and roles, mainly if the film is on Muslim characters. In India, the cinema has become a powerful political tool for mobilization and mass persuasion. According to Zizek, “there is nothing spontaneous, nothing natural about human desires. Our desires are artificial. We have to be taught to desire. Cinema is the ultimate pervert art. It doesn’t give you what to desire, it tells you how to desire” (Zizek, p.1). An altercation took place in the portrayal of Muslims in Hollywood and Bollywood after the attack of 9/11 and 26/11. They considered Muslims as the main conspirator of those attacks. Though some particular terrorist groups were involved in those attacks, they blamed the whole community. The international media, as well as the moviemakers, started presenting Muslims as barbaric, extremist, terrorist, and suspicious whereas Islam never preaches such ideology. According to Mitra,

After the incident of 26/11, Bollywood Movies consistently trying to inject the people against Islam and Muslims and to make this more effective it is using superstars in anti-Islam movies. Not only superstars but Muslims superstars are also being used by Bollywood in portraying Muslim adversary for society. (Mitra, pp. 3-4)

*Haider* is one of the famous Bollywood films. The writer, producer, and director of the film is Vishal Bhardwaj and coauthored by Basharat Peer. The prominent characters of the film are Shahid Kapoor, Tabbu, Kay Kay Menon, and Irfan Khan, who plays the particular role of the ghost. This movie is one of the latest adaptations of Shakespeare’s great tragic play *Hamlet* and an adjustment of the famous novel *Curfewed Night* written by Basharat Peer. The plot of the movie is revolt affected Kashmir of the 1990s and general citizen’s departure. A

scholar from Aligarh Muslim University, Haider, came back to Kashmir in the meantime of revolution in search of his father's sudden disappearance and entangled in the dirty politics of Kashmir. As Kashmir is a Muslim populated area and the primary purpose of this study is to observe the portrayal of the plights of the Kashmiris' with particular reference to *Haider*, the researchers give some idea of the presentation of Muslims in the previous Bollywood film. Here the intention is to determine how Bhardwaj has represented the plights of Kashmiri Muslims in the film *Haider*.

## Methodology

The movie *Haider* by Vishal Bhardwaj and the famous play *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare, as well as other critical and research works concerning Shakespeare's influence on Bollywood movies, became the material of this study. In accordance with the area of the study, mainly the comparative method of investigation has been followed based on the sources. Besides, the researchers also used comparative-historical, cultural-historical, and historical-typological methods.

## The Portrayal of Muslims in Bollywood

The movies of Bollywood have frequently portrayed Muslims negatively, and the scenario is getting worse day by day. Bollywood is one of the largest film industries in the world, and it has the flexibility to change the feeling of the overall population towards Muslim society and also their Islamic faith. In this regard, Paul posits, "As a technology able to picture and embody the temporality of the past, cinema has become central to the mediation of memory in modern cultural life" (Paul, p. 2). He clarifies that the memory of the audience is additionally impacted and furthermore their notions towards the society developed as shown in the movies and television. Since there are several negative depictions of Muslims in film, the memory of the spectators would be impacted by the negative footage as depicted in the film. Subsequently, the group of spectators would have hurtful and one-sided contemplations towards Muslims and Islam.

The portrayal of Muslim characters in the films of Bollywood from 'Badshah' (king), 'Nawabs' (nobility) and aristocrats to rascals, street men, thugs, hooligans, and terrorists is systematic and very gradual. According to Ali et al. (2012),

The alternation of Muslims from philanthropists to terrorists is the reflection of changing the perception of Muslims in Indian society. *Shah Jahan*, *Mumtaz Mahal*, *Anarkali*, *Mughal-e-Azam*, *Mere Mehboob*, *Bahu Begum*, and *Chaudwienka Chand* were the type of movies, which portrayed Muslims as rulers and showed their resplendent past. The theme of such movies was affirmative from the perspective of Muslims. (Ali, p. 141)

Those days are no more when Bollywood depicted the Muslim characters and commended the Muslim essence with the magnificence and merit. In the seminal article *Muslim Ethos in Hindi Cinema*, Late Iqbal Masud appreciated the ethics of the producers like Sohrab Modi, Guru Dutt, and ShyamBenegal. Being non-Muslim, they never hesitated to portray the Muslim ethos in Hindi films. (Masud, 2004)

However, during the 70s, the concept of presenting Muslims in Bollywood movies started to change. The Muslims were depicted as sluggish and frivolous. Many movies depicted Muslims who love to go to the brothel and waste their money on a prostitute. In the film like *UmraoJaan*, *Pakeezah*, *Mere Hazoor*, the depiction of Muslims is inactive and apathetic, though some movies like *Bazaar* and *Nikah* were prolific and wealthy in content but harmful in intent. Ali et al.(2012) asserts,

The development of Muslims as the characters of the underworld was the hallmark of the 70s and 80s movies. Though the Muslim characters remained anonymous, yet the viewer could recognize the

appearance as Arab, wearing a specific costume, carrying a briefcase and puffing cigars. These types of presentation of the Muslims became direct and clear in the late 80s and 90s; *Ghulam-i-Mustafa* and *Angaarare* its examples. (Ali, p. 142)

Moreover, there are some movies based on Hindu – Muslim issues and communal riots. In those movies, the Muslims are shown as the root cause of all communalism and riots. Whereas the opposite party's hands were not washed too. They represented Muslims as ferocious, bloodthirsty, and terrorists. Movies like, *Gadar Ek Prem Katha*, *Bombay*, *Roja*, *Fiza*, *Mission Kashmir* are such examples. After the terrorist attack of 9/11, the depiction of Muslim characters as terrorists and extremists reached its peak. The Muslims became the victim of fury and doubt of the West and the world. The fuel to the fire increased as soon as the Mumbai attack took place on 11/26. Faiza Hijri opines that being an obligatory part of Bollywood Islam is always depicted in an outrageous, and harmful way. She has argued how the norms of violence, terrorism, and intercultural misconceptions are related to Islam (Hijri, 2008). Even there is negativity in the depiction of Muslim female characters. Dwyer has opined,

Islamic Culture is placed within a woman who dwells out of an honorable society. In the movie, that woman was depicted as a lady of low virtue such as a whore who was fascinating and exotic. On the other hand, the Hindu girl was portrait within the social bonds of family and marriage. (Dwyer, p. 90)

### Haider - the Movie

While a few of the most prominent adjustments of Shakespeare's plays on celluloid screens are British, no one does it superior to Vishal Bhardwaj in India. He pushes all the limits of creative vitality in Bollywood, not only by cleverly and dexterously reinterpreting Shakespeare to an Indianised setting but also by truly and skillfully bringing to life an entire modern scene and culture. William Shakespeare's most celebrated drama *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, is one of the most adapted texts in the history of film making after *Cinderella*. It has been interpreted from time to time in different genres and contexts. However, the best adaptation of *Hamlet* was by Russian filmmaker Grigori Cozintsev who adapted *Hamlet* in 1964 based on the Russian translation by Boris Pasternak. The Indian filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj takes up an almost herculean task in recreating *Hamlet* for an Indian audience in *Haider*.

Here *Haider* is *Hamlet* and Kashmir is Denmark. Gautham Ashok (2014) asserts, "The genius of this film is how its director Vishal Bharadwaj has managed to adapt *Hamlet* to a whole new setting, and yet as an audience one wonders if they are watching an entirely new story" (Ashok, 2014, p.1).

Adapting *Hamlet* as a revenge tragedy, Bhardwaj organized to delineate the staple feelings of Hamlet while maintaining his attention solidly on the geographic region of Kashmir is commendable. It would not be a distortion to consider *Haider* a necessary adjustment of *Hamlet*, tangled in a story that includes politics, Kashmir, aggressors, desire, love, control, and furthermore the idea of chutzpah. As the plot of the movie is Kashmir, a Muslim populated area, the main characters in the film is Muslim and represents the sufferings and atrocities of Kashmiri Muslims. Vishal Bhardwaj, the director of the film proclaims *Haider* is the first movie in Bollywood through which we get a real picture of Kashmiri Muslim's life.

Bhardwaj brings Hamlet from Denmark to Kashmir, a place in India which was regarded as Heaven on the earth is now not less than a Hell. Hamlet is not a prince here but a simple Muslim guy named Haider who suffers all the torments of life, mentally, physically, and politically like Hamlet. It is a grim, dead land of stratified snow and buried anguish. Where people awake with surprising 'crackdowns,' where homes are blown up before the eyes of its helpless homeowners, where thousands of men and women 'disappeared,' for questioning militant links. Only the luckier ones resurface in unmarked graves. Another critical factor is the conflict of religion. Taebi et al mentioned, "Both *Hamlet* and *Haider* happen in a time when the religious chaos is in its peak. In *Hamlet*, these

tensions are mostly among the Protestants and Catholics while *Haider* displays a conflict between Muslims and Hindus” (Taebi, 2016, p.6). However, the movie lacks the atrocities that the Kashmiri Pandits suffered during that time.

Throughout the rebellion in Kashmir in 1995, Hilaal Meer (King Hamlet), a doctor who lived in Srinagar, agrees to work an appendectomy on Ikhlaque, the head of the separatist movement. To keep away from identification, he plays out the careful treatment at his home in the presence of his wife Ghazala (Gertrude). The next day, at some phase in a military assault, Hilaal is blamed for harboring fear mongers. A shootout results at his home, all through which Ikhlaque is executed, and Hilaal is arrested for probing. The specialist's house is besieged on account of this to murder some other activists covering up inside. A few days after the fact, Haider (Prince Hamlet), the son of Hillal and Ghazala comes back from Aligarh Muslim University in search of his father who disappeared suddenly. But he is shocked to discover his mother singing and chuckling alongside his uncle, Khurram (Claudius). Being shocked, he starts to search for his father in several police headquarters and detainment camps with the assistance of his youth sweetheart Arshia Lone (Ophelia), a columnist.

Being disturbed because of the developing connection between Ghazala and Khurram, and incapable of discovering any leads, Haider begins to lose trust. However, Arshia's encounter with Roohdar (Ghost of King Hamlet) brings some hope. He told her to convey to Haider that he may disclose the fact of Hillal's departure. Haider meets Roohdar, who is one of the members of the militant group. Roohdar then portrays the account of how he met Hilaal in one of the detainment camps, where they faced severe punishment. Hilaal credits his detainment to his sibling, Khurram. Roohdaar then recounts the tale of Hilaal. He disclosed how the militants of Khurram brutally murdered his father and how he is still alive after being shot and tossed into the stream with Hilaal, which ceased his blood and enabled him to get away, although Hilaal passed on. Roohdaar then reveals to Haider that he wanted to go by on his dad's message to him: retribution for Khurram's disloyalty. Hearing the detailed facts, Haider promised to avenge his father's death. Approaching his father's grave, Haider breaks down mentally. He begins to develop the impacts of a post-awful pressure issue and starts to behave like a mad man. After knowing the meeting of Haider and Roohdar, Khurram discloses to him that Roohdar was the person who murdered his dad. Haider is currently worried concerning whom to trust. He is in great dilemma and reveals his situation to Arshia, including that Roohdar gave him a firearm to execute his uncle. Arshia reveals it to his father Pervez (Polonius), who informs Khurram about the firearm. Khurram, at a function related to his marriage with Ghazala, promptly arranges for his folks to discover Haider and ship him to a lunatic asylum.

Like the source text, Haider is ready to kill his uncle the following morning; however, he cannot do it as his uncle is in prayer. His ethics prohibited him to do so. Pervez caught Haider with his followers, who requested him to execute, yet he figured out to get away, killing the Salmans (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern). He meets his mother and tells about it. His mother reveals that she had told Khurram about the staying of terrorists in their residence, not realizing that Khurram is a secret agent of the Indian armed forces. Arshia's father, Pervez follows them and tries to shoot Haider when Haider shoots him dead and runs away.

Depressed at the death of her father in the hands of Haider, Arshia kills herself. Haider goes to the graveyard, where his father was buried. There he examines the certainty of death. Meanwhile, he sees Liyaqat (Laertes), Arshia's sibling in the cemetery, and deduces that the dead body must be of Arshia's and runs towards her. A battle takes place between Haider and Liyaqat, where Liyaqat receives a fatal death. In the meantime, Khurram lands there with the military and a gunfight starts. When Khurram was going to blow the fort where Haider was hiding, Ghazala intervenes and demands an opportunity to persuade Haider to give up his motif of revenge. She attempts to convince Haider that retribution generates vengeance, yet he decided to avenge his dad's demise. She kisses Haider and ventures outside, wearing a suicide vest. Before Khurram and Haider contact her, she pulls the pins of

the explosives, causing her death and leaving Khurram with a severe wound. Regretting his mom's demise, Haider proceeds to shoot his uncle. But he reminds the final words of his mother that "revenge only affects revenge," and leaves him. Khurram requests Haider to avenge his father's death by killing him so that he becomes free from the burden of guilt. But, Haider leaves him.

### **Hamlet and Haider – A Comparative study**

*Hamlet* and *Haider* have both similarities and differences. The key similarities are with the gallant structure of both the play and the film's plot. According to Hogan (2008),

The heroic plot is actually two plots which are linked by connecting the invasion with the usurpation. Specifically, the usurper is often in close contact with the invader. As a result, the most archetypal way of overcoming the invader is for the hero to return from exile and lead the defense himself or herself. (Hogan, pp.40-41)

The story of the movie is similar to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Here the plot is different, and the names of the characters are changed to depict *Hamlet* in Indian Culture. Bhardwaj converts Shakespeare in different ways for his artistic adjustment. Haider's monologues in the Lalchowk regarding the disappearance of Kashmiris "hum heinke hum nehi, agar hum hein to kahahein?" (Do we exist, if we do where we are?) explores the dilemma of Haider's mind at its best which resembles the same difficulty in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* "To be or not to be: that is the question," in Act III, Scene-I. And the ability of a genius to depict the Hamletian predicament in the lives of the Kashmiris is seen. Anuradha Tiwari (2016) writes,

The quintessential Shakespearean question turns out to be the hushed up howls of the Kashmiris whose right to self-determination, at odds with the hegemonic intent of the state, produces a cauldron of violence and nihilism that matches the anguished utterances of the Shakespearean tragic hero. It is here, Haider's story becomes the life haunting narratives of thousands of Kashmiris and Bhardwaj attains the height of universality the Bard possesses. (Tiwari, pp.85-86)

Moreover, the scene where Haider is supposed to kill his uncle, Khurram but reluctant to do so as his uncle is in the prayer which reminds us of Shakespeare's Hamlet, where prince Hamlet does not kill his uncle Claudius at his prayer in Act-3, Scene-3. The resemblance is that both Haider and Hamlet forgets about their revenge at that time. Haider leaves Khurram thinking about the moral ethic, and Hamlet leaves Claudius as he believes, killing Claudius at this point would lead him to Heaven.

The significance of the skull is another crucial element of the plot. The head plays a significant role in *Hamlet* as well as *Haider*. Both the heroes address the skull; both of them test the perspective of death through it. Moreover, some changes are made regarding the plot, as well as the monologues are made new. The movie producers may recreate the soliloquies from multiple points of view to make them fit in a film. According to Hatchuel, "They may transform them into a verbal or visual dialogue, and even sometimes into a verbal as well as visual dialogue" (Hatchuel, p.78). In *Haider*, we find the same. The monologues have been newly made, through which the criticism of politics and the madness of Hamlet are revealed.

At the end of the movie, another point of change is marked where Haider thinks about peace rather than revenge. He decides to leave his uncle without killing him. But in the original drama Hamlet kills his uncle at last. A portion of the difference is there in portraying the role of Fortinbras. Fortinbras' part is definitely not stressed. Again, the part of the Oedipus complex is centered much more which can stun the audience of India. It plays another crucial role among the themes that bind the drama and the movie. Some changes are also made regarding the main events. The director transfers the third act into the starting of the film and makes its plot linear to *Hamlet*. Hutcheon points out, "linear realist plots are more easily adaptable for the screen" (Hutcheon, p.15).

Another critical point in the movie is where *Haider* recreates the play-inside play. Here the spectators watch a gathering of voyaging on-screen characters who are playing out a game that reminds the befallen Hamlet's father. Here, the primary purpose of Hamlet is to see the reaction of his uncle to take action. The trick has worked according to Hamlet's suspicion that his uncle is stunned and goes away. In this way, he ensures that none but his uncle is the killer of his father and chooses to kill him. But later, Hamlet discovers that his uncle is planning to kill him. We see a few contrasts in the movie *Haider*, for example, the way Haider sorts out the play to act. It is worthy of being mentioned that Bhardwaj has adapted *Hamlet* in the Indian context. And for the Indian audiences, he creates a dance performance which is a typical part of Bollywood movies. The addition of songs is a technique to localize *Hamlet*. Ganti says, "there are three major ways of 'Indianization' which involve: adding emotions, extending the story, and including songs" (Ganti, p.77).

For a work of adaptation, characterization plays a crucial role. For adaptation, the characters should be based on the adapted text so that one can compare it with the main text. Here the comparison is made between the main characters of *Haider* and *Hamlet*. In reality, Hamlet as well as Haider as the main protagonist offers several similitudes. Their ages are similar, and both the drama and movie are after their name. They are despairing, unpleasant, and suspicious about the craftiness they are encompassed in. Even though Hamlet and Haider connote men with academic examinations, it happens every so often regarding their questions which inclined them to be senseless and negligent activities. In spite of the sufficient proof of their father's murder, they wait like dull men to prove them to take revenge.

The subsequent protagonist, Khurram, and Claudius are also analyzed. Both of them are the uncles of the heroes' furthermore, enemies. They are goal-oriented politicians with sexual desire and thirst for power. But in certain scenes, they appear to be sincere and friendly who love their beloved profoundly. According to Taebi et al. (2016),

The love that Claudius has for Gertrude may be sincere, but it also seems likely that he married her to win the throne away from Hamlet but in *Haider* it seems that Khurram loves Ghazala more sincerely and has no especial motive. (Taebi, p. 5)

As the play or the film proceeds, both these characters' dread and madness develop and drive them too far and away. They empower Laertes' job to retaliate for his dad's passing as they endeavor to quiet him down. Lastly, we perceive how their desire for power prompts an extraordinary debacle, which results in the death of their loved ones.

Both the heroes' moms Gertrude and Ghazala are now the beloved of their late husband's brother but unconscious about the real truth of their husband's death. They love their children so much but simultaneously feeble and show no interest to find out the real cause of their husband's death. It gives us the impression that they depend on men to fulfill their personal goals. Another remarkable point is that Ghazala and Gertrude share their deep affection towards their youngsters, and occasionally it works as an impediment that they forget to achieve their goals. This equivalent is the same as the play and the movie. Both the mother realizes about their activities which disturb their children, as it were, yet this will not cause them to disregard their moms. Waraich (2014) observes that they don't love their husbands, and they love their sons instead.

The portrayal of Ophelia, the female protagonist of the play is another important aspect of the film. She is known as Arshia in the movie. Both of them are lovely little youngsters and the heroes are in love with them. They are sweet and honest young ladies who depend on men to guide them. Lastly, they surrender to their dad's plans to find the heroes, which prompt their franticness and passing. As Foakes asserts, "It seems that madness is the final solution through which they can proclaim their independence and suppressed desires in a male-controlled society." (Foakes, pp. 159-160).

Another critical aspect of the similitude and contrast is between Ghost and Roohdar. Here, Roohdar uncovers reality. It is the ghost of King Hamlet in the play but in the movie instead of the spirit, Bhardwaj has portrayed a man in white-clad who is the friend of Haider's dad. Whatever his clothes are, his name suggests a soul which is calling the hero to vindicate his dad like the spirit of King Hamlet in the play. According to Taebi et al. (2016),

In *Hamlet*, the protagonist speculates that the ghost might be a devil sent to deceive and tempt him into murder but in *Haider* there is not such a belief because instead of the ghost, Roohdar appears to disclose the reality. (Taebi, p. 6)

It may be that the director of the movie decided not to mimic the play writer in using an apparition in the film. So that he can include the vulnerability theme, and the film becomes more convincing.

Shakespeare's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and Bhardwaj's interpretation of Haider's friends as two Salman Khans have additional importance. They are great companions of Hamlet in the drama who keep eyes on Hamlet because of the request of Claudius. Their portrayal is the same in the film also. They take steps according to their advantages and never care for their friendship. They act only to satisfy their goals. As a matter of fact, "it seems as if Kashmir is rotten because of such rotten characters whose sole goal is to quench their thirst for power just as in *Hamlet*" (Taebi, p. 6).

The director of the movie might have decided not to mimic the play as a whole but instead changed the scenes and parts in another style. In the film, there are the addition and cancellation of characters. Horatio is among these characters that are missing in *Haider*. We find Horatio at Wittenberg University as Hamlet's friend, a dear companion who is a suspicious, studious, and trustworthy friend of Hamlet. By the end of the drama, Hamlet made Horatio dependable to recount his story. But, here we find no compelling reason to describe Haider's story because the closure is different and the hero himself will live in *Haider*.

### Depiction of Kashmiri Muslims

The movie portrays a vivid picture regarding the issues of identity among the Kashmiri Muslims. And the very question is raised by Haider like Shakespeare's Hamlet: "To be or not to be," when he says "hum hein ke hum nehi, agar hum hein to kahahein?" (Do we exist, if we do where we are?). This is the same question of whole Kashmiri Muslims regarding their existence whether they are Kashmiri, Pakistani, or Indian. Sometimes they are blamed as Pakistani, anti-national and as a terrorist, and there is no answer to this question. Because the torments and atrocities of the Indian military compel them to think of joining a terrorist group like Haider and join the training in Pakistan and sometimes they demand independent Kashmir. Vinayak Chakraborty (2014) remarks,

The plight of the state and its people as depicted on-screen perhaps comes full circle in realism with *Haider*, a far cry from the over-the-top ridiculousness marking the plastic patriotism of Bollywood in the eighties. Those were the days, after all, when terrorists were simply referred to as 'DeshkeDushman' (enemy of the country) and had names such as Dang, Dong, and Donga. They vaguely operated from a 'padosi/videshi mulk' (foreign country) that was never named but the plenitude of snow and abundant use of the term 'border' in the dialogues suggested the location was perhaps Kashmir and the 'enemy' state Pakistan, at times China. (Chakraborty, pp. 10-11)

The identity of crisis not only reflects in their outer body but also with their native language and accent in their pronunciations. As Dr. M. A. Bhatt mentioned,

*Haider* asserts and articulates many indigenous linguistic and non-linguistic identity symbols. Probably Bollywood's first project on Kashmir, which starts with a cavernous Kashmiri expression 'hatayemouji' 'oh mother!' It is not a simple Kashmiri linguistic expression and assertion of identity, but an expression of pain, grief, and suffering, whose usage frequency has increased more than any other word in the Kashmiri language, at least from the last twenty-five years. Be it a Kashmiri woman, men, old,



young, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh all have memories associated with this expression, which are not pleasant. It is followed by a background sound of 'aazan' in typical Kashmiri accent.(Bhatt, 2015)

Ghazala, as an instructor in an institution, speaks the common Kashmiri language. The outcome of this identity assertion entails many frivolous and significant narratives. For example, the Kashmiri people cannot talk 'Bharat' (India) properly instead of saying 'Bharat' they pronounce it as 'Barat' and for that, they are always neglected whether they say 'Bharat' by mouth or by heart. So the Kashmiri Muslims and the other Muslims of the country have to prove whether they are true Indians.

The disappearance of Muslim people from Kashmir during the 90s is one of the remarkable themes of the movie *Haider*. It openly uncovers the topic of departure thereby revealing the riddle of the term. It depicts how it is relatively a paradoxical expression to utilize the term departure when it is clear to everybody who removed them from their homes. For instance, Haider's dad ends up because of his departure. It attempts to make a note for the general population who consistently guaranteed that the general population who vanished in Kashmir crossed the border and went to Pakistan for militancy training. The individuals are still ignorant that the spouses of those disappeared individuals are called half-widows. Indeed, it is a land where people disappear without any traces. Young (2017) says,

The world inhabited by Bhardwaj's modern-day anti-heroic Kashmiri Hamlet, a world where people disappear without a trace and the military police torture dissidents with impunity, is infinitely more complex than a term like, 'indigeneity,' could encompass.(Young, p. 1)

*Haider* appropriately shows how the guardians want to spare the lives of their kids amid the militancy disturbance Kashmir. Most of the guardians want to send their kids out of Kashmir, but cannot do so because of their financial condition. Some of them managed to send their kids out of Kashmir for a better life and education. This relocation gave their child an unintentional chance to get a decent education. The film illustrates how a family recommends Haider's family to send Haider outside the state so that he can see the shades of India. Haider also went out for studies at Aligarh Muslim University. Many of them went outside of the state during the contention years for reviews. But the issues, sufferings, and memories of Kashmir always ruled their studies or examinations. The pains of Haider are the pains of the whole Kashmiri youth. Dr. M. A. Bhatt asserts,

Haider's destroyed house, semi-burnt cricket bat symbolizes how both the inner, and outer spaces for the Kashmiri youth were completely taken away, destroyed and squawked. Like Haider, they were not responsible for any acts they were punished for, and never deserved the ill-treatment they were gifted. The way Haider is being troubled for no fault of his, in the same pattern. (Bhatt, 2015)

## Conclusion

To conclude, we can say that Vishal Bhardwaj has made a very bold attempt in adapting *Hamlet* to portray the traumatic situation of Kashmir and the plight of the Kashmiri Muslims. It is a very bold effort in Bollywood to present the realistic picture of Kashmir, which can compel the masses as well as the intellectuals to rethink the situation of Kashmir. Though it is an adaptation of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, Bhardwaj has changed the plot, characters, and scenes to fit it in the Indian context. Without a doubt, *Haider* leaves us with an enchanting incident of life that prevails in the valley. The film transmutes Hamlet, an irritated soul into Haider with exceptional courage. Besides, it gives another phase of the investigation of the narrative of much-talked play *Hamlet* in the degree of craftsmanship and composing. The realistic adjustment of William Shakespeare's most genuine play *Hamlet* has got its significance in our contemporary time with new elucidation in the matter of setting. It is the first movie through which we can see a realistic picture of Kashmir and the sufferings of its people. This movie breaks the stereotype representation of Muslims in Bollywood. Instead of portraying the

Kashmiri Muslims as a terrorist like other Bollywood movies, he has portrayed their sufferings and misfortunes which were never before in Bollywood movies. He has made a drastic change in portraying the Kashmiris to its best. The movie depicts how the military blasts homes, the disappearance of people, the crisis of identity, and the frustration of youngsters very well, which are still the burning questions of the inhabitants of Kashmir.

## REFERENCES

Ali, S., Chaudhury, S., Aslam, R. & Faridi, A.B. Portrayal of Muslims Characters in the Indian Movies, *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol 33. Issue 1 (2015), pp 138-159.

Ashok, G. Haider: Shakespeare in Kashmir, *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2014/10/haider-shakespeare-in-kashmir/> on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Bhatt, Dr. M. A. . Bollywood's [Re]presentation of 'Kashmir' And 'Kashmiri': From Romance (Kashmir Ki Kali) To Tragedy (Haider), (2015). Retrieved from (<http://www.countercurrents.org/bhat080515.htm>) on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Chakrabarty, V. From Roja to Haider, Filmdom's Kashmir Affair Comes of Age: Haider's Moving Depiction of Kashmir's Crisis is a Watershed in the History of Bollywood. *India Today*, 2014. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/movies/bollywood/story/bollywood-kashmir-films-haider-222805-2014-10-12> on 21st April 2021.

Dwyer, R. Representing the Muslim: The Courtesan Film in Indian Popular Cinema. In Tudor Perfit and Yulia Egorova(Eds). *Jews, Muslim and Mass Media* (2004), pp. 78-92. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203475836>

Fernandez, J.R.D. BELLS: Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies, Vol 9, (1998), pp.7-47. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/3550563/Shakespeare\\_on\\_Film\\_A\\_Bibliography](https://www.academia.edu/3550563/Shakespeare_on_Film_A_Bibliography) on 5th June 2021.

Foakes, R. *Hamlet versus Lear: Cultural Politics and Shakespeare's Art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1993).

Ganti, T. *Bollywood: A Guidebook to Popular Hindi Cinema*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Hatchuel, S. *Shakespeare: From Stage to Screen*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Hijri, F. Change of Pace? Islam and Tradition in Popular Indian Cinema. *South Asian Popular Culture*. Vol 6. Issue 1, (2008) pp. 57-69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14746680701878562>

Hogan, P. C. *Understanding Indian Movies: Culture, Cognition, and Cinematic Imagination*. Austins: University of Texas Press, 2008.

Hutcheon, L. *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Karim, M.R. & Mondal, S.A. Shakespeare's Influence on Pre-Independence Assamese Tragedy: A Historical Perspective, *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, Vol 12. Issue 1, (2020), pp. 1-9. Retrieved from <https://dx.doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v12n1.41> on 5th May, 2021.

Masud, I. *Muslim Ethos in Indian Cinema*, (2004). Retrieved from [http://www.screenindia.com/fullstory.php?content\\_id=9980](http://www.screenindia.com/fullstory.php?content_id=9980) on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Mitra, A. (2009). All for Brownie Points!: Reappraising the New Commercial Media and Media–Terrorism Nexus in the Context of the Mumbai Attacks of 26/11. *Asia Europe Journal*. Vol. 7 Issue.3 (2009), pp. 433-447.

Paul, G. *Memory and Popular Film*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.

Rout, S. *Indianizing Shakespeare: Adaptations and Performances*, 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/29053101/> on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

Taebi, Z., Ghandeharion, A. & Badrlou, L. A Comparative Study of Hamlet and Haideras its Indian Adaptation by Vishal Bhardwaj: An Intertextual Approach, 2016. Retrieved from [https://www.civilica.com/Paper-ELSCONF04-ELSCONF04\\_015.html](https://www.civilica.com/Paper-ELSCONF04-ELSCONF04_015.html) on 23rd October 2021.

Tiwari, A. The Bard in the Bollywood: A Study of Cinematic Adaptation and Appropriation. *The Creative Launcher*. Vol 1. Issue 4, (2016), pp. 73-87.

Waraich, O. *Hamlet in Kashmir* 2014. Retrieved from <http://roadsandkingdoms.com/2014/hamlet-in-kashmir/> on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Yadav, M. Domesticating Shakespeare: A Study of Indian Adaptation of Shakespeare in Popular Culture. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*. Vol 2. Issue 3, (2014), pp. 48-58.

Young, S. (2017). Beyond Indigenisation: Hamlet, Haider, and the Pain of the Kashmiri People. *Shakespeare*, Taylor & Francis Online. Vol 14. Issue 4, (2017), pp. 374-389.

Zizek, S. *The Pervert Guide to Cinema-Lacanian Psychoanalysis and Film*, (2009). Retrieved from <https://beanhu.wordpress.com/2009/12/07/the-perverts-guide-to-cinema/> on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022.