



REIMAGINATION OF OTHELLO AS OMKARA

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ABSTRACT

Othello is one of the most celebrated tragedies by William Shakespeare set around the Ottoman Venetian War. Omkara (2006) is the transposition of "Othello" adheres to the landscape and culture of eastern Uttar Pradesh (UP). Critically acclaimed and nominated for eighteen Filmfare awards and won half of them.

KEYWORDS — *Othello, Omkara, Bollywood, Adaptation*

Omkara set in eastern Uttar Pradesh is a second Shakespearean adaptation by Vishal Bhardwaj after his first critically acclaimed *Maqbool* (2003) which is based on *Macbeth*. He was Born in Bijnor, and was schooled and raised in Meerut. Early growing years spent in the unruly wastelands of eastern.U.P. were sure to leave their own indelible mark on his psyche. The use khariboli dialect which is heavily used in eastern province of U.P., the language oozes richness of texture and tonality that somehow remains incomparable in Hindi cinema even today.

Although the film differs a little from the subject of race that is generally brought out in *Othello* (the blackness of moors) but it substitutes that concept what the maker saw in his everyday life which was caste. Most of the characters in the film identify as Brahmins having the surnames Mishra, Tyagi, Shukla, Tiwari.

A short overview of Othello

Othello starts with a conversation happening between Roderigo and Iago. Each of them have their personal motives for enmity with *Othello* and therefore they determine to take revenge in opposition to him.as the plot moves forward we come to know that *Othello* and *Desdemona* who is the daughter of the Senator, got married in secret. Rodrigo, who was the early suitor of *Desdemona* plots to get her through a evil plan. he's followed by means of Iago who's indignant with *Othello* due to the fact he has promoted Cassio above him.near the end of the third act of the play, the doubt is seen to be sown in his mind because *Desdemona* loses her handkerchief (a gift given by *Othello*) which was later in the play found by *Emilia* who is Iago's wife.

Iago asks his wife to give him the handkerchief to fulfil his plans. He places the handkerchief with Cassio and tells *Othello* that *Desdemona* and Cassio are having affair.

To make him accept as true with he asks *Othello* to notice Cassio's reactions whilst his affair is noted. *Othello* then decides to kill his spouse.

Frustrated by *Desdemona's* love ; *Othello* kills *Desdemona* on the mattress wherein they as soon as made

love. *Emilia* later tells *Othello* about the innocence of *Desdemona*. After knowing the real truth, *Othello* regrets about his decision. Because of the overpowering guilt, he instantly commits suicide.

In the film it is shown early that *Omkara's* Brahmin father beget him on a low caste woman making an excuse for his enemies calling him "half bramhan"(adha-baaman). The casting choice of Ajay Devgn who has a little dark complexion makes a contrast with Kareena Kapoor who is his beloved and has Caucasian like fairness which is said to be a good marker of a pure blood and feminine beauty. Bhardwaj just simply transform the Moor of Venice into a half-Brahmin of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. His peculiar choice of character names and plot details are as fascinating as they are rich with commentary on the brand-new world they live in. A disposable handkerchief gets transformed into a jewellery i.e. a cummerbund that is passed down through the generations and is now regarded as a symbol of purity in relationship, making its bastard owner even more attached. And one that later, as *Langda Tyagi* wraps it around his head in the midst of frenzied lovemaking, becomes the visual representation of his ardent desire for *Omkara's* demise. The plot is a lot similar to that of "*Othello*." As the film begins, *Langda Tyagi* informs *Rajju* that his bride to be, *Dolly*, is being kidnapped by the powerful but socially corrupt *Omkara*, and urges him to complain to *Dolly's* father. *Dolly* confesses her love for *Omkara* and that she and *Omkara* had colluded in overthrowing her father's plan of an arranged marriage. Because of *Bhaisahab* there are no violent clashes but a warning from the lawyer to *Omkara* about *Dolly* being unfaithful to him in future. Creating a doubt in *Omkara's* mind which we see used by *Langda Tyagi* in the future The implicit theme of patriarchy that the male need to control the female sexuality becomes explicit in *Omkara*. Iago from *Othello* is considered as one of the most complex villain and interesting character. *Ishwar/Langda Tyagi* who is played by *Saif Ali Khan*, gives us a really worthy Iago, an ambitious man hampered by a physical disability. *Langda* translates to "lame, crippled," and he walks with a noticeable limp. He is



plotting his own rise to the rank of mahabali ("general") in Bhaishab's vast army. His resentment towards Omkara is cleared early when he alludes to omakara being a half-bramhan. His resentment grows as Omkara appoints Kesu as his second in command overlooking Tyagi due to Kesu's influence among the student cadre's in Bhaishab's political empire. From this point onward we see Langada tyagi plotting Omkara's demise through systematically plotting Rajju, Kesu and Omkara.

This transfer of cummerbund which is equivalent of Shakespeare's embroidered handkerchief does its intended job, helped along (in a suitably updated move) by a misleading mobile phone conversation between Kesu and Langda that Omkara is made to overhear. The rest is, more or less, theatrical history, though the manner in which Othello's sad fate plays out, on his and Dolly's wedding night, and with a surprise twist in the fate of secondary characters that further compounds the carnage and the film successfully depicts the tragic story in the setting of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Actor	Character in the movie	Character in the play
Ajay Devgn	Omkara 'Omi' Shukla	Othello
Kareena Kapoor	Dolly Mishra	Desdemona
Saif Ali Khan	Ishwar 'Langda' Tyagi	Iago
Konkona Sen Sharma	Indu	Emilia
Vivek Oberoi	Kesu	Cassio

REFERENCES

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