

## Multicultural Education

Research Article

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## TRANSLOCATED SHAKESPEARE: HAMLET, HAIDER AND THE PAIN OF THE KASHMIRI PEOPLE

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### ABSTRACT

"Indigenized Shakespeare" is one approach to understand the alterations brought by the localized reimagining of his play, but it has a tragic history. Despite the fact that colonization pretends to give priority to what came before, indigenous people are not exempt from its questionable hierarchies. Indigeneity ensconces modern cultural developments in a deep historical period, protecting them from the unpredictable temporal and political dilemmas of a culture that is both globally connected and specifically located. Through a debate of director Vishal Bhardwaj's adaptation of Hamlet, this essay knows the values of this crucial vocabulary for the field of Global Shakespeare as it grapples with the tensions inherent in an approach to cultural transmission and appropriation that runs the risk of perpetuating a set of assumptions about Shakespeare's power structure and tries to tell a story. Haider investigates the unexpected resonances of Hamlet in a very specific setting. Immediately after the terrible Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1990 was enacted, the region of Kashmir that is governed by India saw a period of protracted violence. The world that Bhardwaj's contemporary anti-heroic Kashmiri Hamlet inhabits is incomparably more complex than a concept like "indigeneity" could convey where people disappear without a trace in the security forces torture cell.

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:*

Vishal Bhardwaj; Indian Shakespeare; Shakespeare Adaptation; Kashmir; World Cinema; Indigeneity

*Article History:*

Received: 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2022  
Accepted: 27<sup>th</sup> Nov 2022  
Published: 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2022

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The term "indigenization" has been used critically in academic research that has sought to comprehend the relevance of regional Shakespearean adaptations in India. Although the phrase is well-known in postcolonial cultural studies, it has found particular resonance in regard to the intricate shapes that develop when localized cultural traditions are included in Shakespearean production. The idea of indigenization has aided in validating the translocation of theatre created in a civilization far away in time and place from the staging context as well as in identifying the issues at stake in studies that have concentrated explicitly on "India's Shakespeare." 2 The word "indigenization," which contains a verb, seems to give agency to regional cultural forms that are thought to be significantly changing the original into a regionally recognizable form. Shakespeare is also translated locally in a way that adds to the cultural capital that the Shakespearean text has already benefited from.

However, the idea of indigenization runs the risk of creating blind spots in the study of global Shakespeare because it makes it difficult to see how Shakespeare's plays can be adapted to even the most rural or local settings and by drawing on long-standing cultural traditions in the complex contemporaneity of the 21st century. Shakespeare is implicated in modern political entanglements through what academics have dubbed "indigenization," regardless of whether the work appears to transcend time and place boundaries on the one hand

or to become clearly local and "indigenous" on the other. This essay will try to break down the idea of "indigenization" so that we can think about its politics and its importance for current Shakespeare studies and cultural studies in general.

It is significant for postcolonial philosophy that a global Shakespeare is emerging, one that has been translated and relocated into numerous local contexts. Even if they are presented in a well-known and supposedly liberating language, colonial hierarchies nonetheless linger in these talks. Shakespeare's multifaceted cultural inheritance in post-independence India continues to be debated using artificial categories such as "central" or "mainstream", "indigenous" or "foreign," without acknowledging Without recognizing the collaborative imbrication of these groupings or the complicated politics inherent in the achievement of cultural authenticity. Shakespeare's plays become part of the meaning-making of a new moment when they are relocated to a setting the playwright could never have imagined. The difficulty of this endeavour cannot be fully explained in terms of indigenous language. Shakespeare's travels and the complicated changes to his work in a globalized world mean that new words are needed to understand them.

Through an analysis of the adaptation method that has developed in remakes of Hamlet, this article comments on some of its crucial terminologies. While trying to construct a new story, it considers what a contemporary anti-heroic Kashmiri Hamlet may mean for the genre of Global Shakespearean and the conflicts inherent in that model. A study of the work of director Vishal Bhardwaj, namely his cinematographic remake of Hamlet, named Haider, sheds light on the intricate cultural context of Shakespeare's translocation into the Indian subcontinent. Haider's 2014 novel investigates the unexpected connections between Hamlet and, in a very specific place and time in the 1990s, Kashmir, which is ruled by Indians, saw a period of extreme violence soon after the horrific Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1990 was passed. The world in which "Hamlet" lives, India-controlled Kashmir in the 1990s, where people disappear without a trace and the military runs torture cells with no fear of consequences, is much more complicated than a term like "indigeneity" could describe.

Therefore, the article will focus on the origins of "indigeneity" and what this means for researchers before moving on to a consideration of Bhardwaj's adaptation of Hamlet at such a moment when many areas of literature are striving to show their openness to a larger world. The acceptance of terminology like "World Literature" and, in the instance of Shakespearean study, "Global Shakespeare" serves as a symbol of this liberalization, although the impact of these labels and the conceptual approaches that support them vary. A framework such as "indigenized Shakespeare's" may help us make sense of the contradictions and shifts in indigenous reinterpretations of Shakespeare's work. However, the origins of the term are obscure; using the term "indigenization" may help cultural politics work toward its goal of ending colonialism's lingering hold on power. The term "to indigenize" is transitive, which means it involves a subject. As such major canonical literature becomes an element that has been regenerated and changed by the major forces of indigenous cultural activities. However, the concept of indigenous cultural forms contains an inherent duality that pits what is considered "indigenous" against the presumably "high" culture of a historical canon. This contradiction is resisted by modern Indian adaptations of Shakespeare's plays.

### *The Hamlet of India and the idea of the indigenous*

The researcher who studies Shakespeare's plays on stage and screen has seen a trend; Shakespeare has been incorporated creatively into Indian drama styles in a number of novel ways. According to Rajiva Verma, Shakespeare's plays were primarily introduced to Bombay films by the Parsi theatre, which flourished between 1870 and 1940. "The most successful adaptation is Hamlet, which has had as many as three film iterations, all of which have been performed in the Parsi theatrical style," according to a study that found that "almost all the previous movies based on the dramas were cinematic copies of Parsi theatre adaptations" (Verma 270). Poonam Trivedi kept insisting on the transforming impact of the work, which she called "indigenous art." She examines Shakespeare in Parsi and Kathakali versions of theatre. In her book "Folk Shakespearean" (also known as Shakespeare's Work as Performed on Traditionally Indian Stages"), Trivedi objects to the condemnation of the term folk and the assumption that folk forms are inferior to more simplistic. Trivedi claims that "folk, songs, Western-trained postcolonial observers may not always be able to see such formations since the dance and the attire of these forms are intricate and take lifelong study for excellence" (176–77). Trivedi establishes a space in which we may examine the tensions between anti-colonial and revolutionary movements and non-hegemonic cultural practices by giving credence to the folk tradition.

Although the problem with the concept of indigenous rights within cultural anthropology is that it specifically invokes historical time, it paradoxically embeds culturally innovative ideas seen only in modern

Indians within a time span that extends far back into a historical past followed by geological differentiation. It is predicated on the notion of an indigenous culture which has been taken from globalization and localization that has entangled the contemporary world. Even if it may seem to favour the past, indigenous peoples are not exempt from colonialism's questionable systems. This is why the term "indigenized" Shakespeare also exhibits an unsettling divergence between pre-colonial India and the highest echelons of world culture. The term "indigenous Shakespeare" also requires an authentic performance on the part of an "indigenous," which secures Shakespeare's status as the proper noun first and foremost. Shakespeare does not need to be accurate; nevertheless, the foreign in "foreign Shakespeare" must be. This is the claim made by Colette Gordon in regards to the concept of "in a broader sense, "western Shakespeare". Even now, Shakespeare is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers ever in the highest regard and remains the senior partner in terms of "foreign," "local," or "indigenous." The language of indigeness suggests that the expression of cultural heritage and its evocation of affinity to place have a factual basis at their centre. However, a theatrical technique has the power to evoke and unnerve these individuals.

In the context of India, indigeness has such a dark past and an uncertain present. Considering the necessity to Anthropologists, political theorists, and land restitution advocates have good reason to take the concept of ethnic heritage seriously if they are serious about addressing past injustice and the ongoing effects of colonialism. Nevertheless, despite the ambiguity at its heart, the concept of indigeneity must confuse any relevance it might have for Global Shakespeare, even if it does signify the potential of postcolonial correction in the culture of modern India and others. Peter Hulme says the following about the uncertain status of indigenous rights for Alienated or deprived people to explain why indigeneity makes postcolonial theory uncomfortable.

The clearest definition of indigeness is indeed an affirmation of cultural difference and territorial integrity based on a historical assertion that one is, in a certain way, a member of the area's original residents. These are outmoded assertions, and cultural critique could easily erase all of them. Nevertheless, they must not and shouldn't be disregarded. (295)

It is essential to know where the word comes from, what it means, and how it is used in India today.

This recognition of India's "native inhabitants," according to the present international rhetoric of ethnicity and culture, is fueled by modern political mechanisms that demand justice for disempowered entities. With the legal protections afforded the so-called "Tribal Communities" and the confident relations fostered by legitimate national organizations like the Indian Council of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ICITP), in addition to the global scale via transnational indigenous movements and membership in the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the indigenous peoples of the Americas are increasingly able to assert their rights. They claim their fair share of the economy. Identification of indigeness functions both on a global scale. However, there exists a deeper and also more disturbing history to be aware of initiatives by colonial authorities to classify rural areas in the 18th century in order to better govern them could be linked to the designation of indigenous people. The "dark side of indigeness", according to sociologist Alpa Shah, is involved in the aspect that "local provision and perspectives of international narratives to maintain a social order that does more to isolate the poor" She draws our attention to criticisms of the evolution of a "myth of the tribe" (1808). (1807). Since the formation of the ICITP and the proof of identity of officially valid "Tribal Communities," Shah argues, the concept of indigeneity has solidified into a mechanism for the monitoring of groups of claimants, despite the "official" position in India that it is difficult to recognize ethnicity and culture given India's complicated history of the establishment. "The official view of the Indian State is that there are no indigenous people in India," writes Shah. "India's intricate migration patterns make it impossible to show who the original occupants of a certain place are, unlike these nations like Canada and Australia" (1807).

Thus, in a highly stratified society, the assertion of indigeness is connected to the prevailing legal and social taxonomies. Although it seems to speak of a pure pre-colonial period, its theoretical roots are deeply rooted in colonization. Shah claims that "the whole notion of indigeness depends on outmoded Victorian ethnographic notions and a romantic and erroneous anthropological vision" (1818). While indigeneity, which is sensitive to justice issues in the context of colonial dispossession, provides a path to reconciliation, the link between indigenous rights and ethnicity is difficult to break. A hotly contested issue in modern politics and the courts is whether or not a person may lay claim to a home they formerly lived in based on an inheritance from a prior generation. And yet, there's a pressure to be noticed which is based on human physiology and readable so legally speaking, families are considered a way to establish rights of oneness, has two sides reinforcing hierarchy based on race that it aims to alter.

Hulme argues that the terms "native" and "indigenous" have a far narrower meaning than coloniality and post-colonialism. When it comes to determining who or what constitutes an indigenous people, the word

"indigeneity" presents a challenge to postcolonialism and the role of international human rights law. He argues for greater in-depth research of colonial times,

Those who are presently termed "indigenous peoples" under globally recognized criteria are seldom the same ones who are portrayed as "colonized" communities striving to struggle for independence, whether in the Americas in the 18th and 19th centuries or in Asia and Africa in the 20th. (294)

As a result, the concept of indigeness is still problematic (or "out-of-date") in cultural anthropology. In fact, as this article suggests, the line between "indigenous" and "racial continuity" is still troubling. This is because the term "indigenous" is based on a concept of different levels of "progress" and a historical context that puts "indigenous" people at the bottom of a hierarchy. Although the vocabulary of indigeneity is tainted by racial categorization, there remains room for reconciliation and recognition. Although Audra Simpson expresses tremendous uncertainty and difficulty with the word and its history, she offers a suggestion for how to effectively use the language of indigenous people in order to highlight something she refers to as the "question of acknowledgement" (75). Simpson says that there is a big difference between how "indigeneity" was defined by expansionist anthropology in the 19th century and the conflicts that show up in indigenous narratives, which are based on personal experiences and local knowledge; "expertise translates into the 'feeling side' of acknowledgement, which isn't legal, is residential, and is respected by local historical knowledge" (78).

For the benefit of many peoples, Francesca Merlan has detailed the "internationalization" of the idea of indigenous rights. Who have been evicted and subjected to "cruel and barbaric, inequitable, and exclusivist treatment" throughout the history of colonialism and imperialism. While acknowledging the ambiguity of the term as well as the fact that nations like India, whose native culture is at odds with Western values, have rejected it, the "underlying reason" for acknowledging indigenous identity so frequently and in so many different contexts come from "patterning's of conflict" against discrimination and dispossession. According to Merlan, it is challenging to express a critical perspective on indigeness since it "may represent assertions of a high moral order" (304). Nevertheless, the word and its widespread usage may need to be criticized in light of Merlin's findings. The indigenous peoples' protest against internationalization is based on such a manufactured sense of attachment and belonging, which comes with exclusive, nationalist ideas of validity that aren't supported by histories of occupancy and attachment. Categorization is a controversial topic that could put a hostile hierarchy on the complex networks of affinities and identities created by global mobility in the 21st century.

However, one can wonder how "indigeneity" functions in an academic environment. What kinds of benefits might result from a shift toward the indigenous or from the act of translating into a form that can be identified as "indigenous"? Resistant signals, or the refusal to integrate into canonical forms, enable authors and artists to explore dominant forms and give priority to local realities and present resistance politics, even while depicting a return to an imagined past. The performance of "indigeneity" means regression, no matter how amusing or inventive the meeting, since this return is predicated on a set chronology that places the "indigenous" inside a long-gone paradise while disguising their participation in current politics.

Peter McDonald (in "Against Indigenization," n.pag) considers the constraints of "indigenized poetics" in light of the recent release of the latest edition of the Songs of Kabir by Krishna Arvind Mehrotra. McDonald draws attention to some of the conflicts that arise when early modern writings are translated and adopted into modern English, as well as the challenging poetics this requires. He provides a helpful framework for considering the potential and constraints of an "indigenized" Shakespeare. India's cultural legacy is centred on Kabir's songs. However, despite their historical and literary importance, Kabir's Songs paradoxically defy the presumed common decency associated with canonicity. It is what makes them so believable, both as a piece of literature and as a discussion of modern "translations" of Shakespeare. The appreciation that Mehrotra's adaptation has received highlights his outstanding ability to convey an understanding of Kabir's "improvisational energy" (Kleinzahler). According to Choudhury Chandras, Mr. Mehrotra's adaptations of Kabir's work are the most successful English translations of Kabir's famous iconoclasm, speed of thought, acute contradicting style, metaphoric zest, and rhetorical brilliance (n.p.). According to Weinberger, Mehrotra's rendition is a "jazz performance" that nails Kabir's uniqueness. According to McDonald, Mehrotra's reimagining of Kabir as Ginsberg is a novel approach to textual adaptation since it is a "deliberate anachronism."

McDonald says that Mehrotra's blatantly sarcastic adaptation is "One means of "declining to indigenize" is to reject developmentally appropriate practices that create hierarchies in which distinctiveness is a defining trait." (Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, 281).

However, Kabir is not a product of colonial-era British schooling; instead, he is a part of a Hindi spiritual and cultural tradition. This is a fact that Gauri Viswanathan has studied in her renowned study of the significance of English literary studies in entrenching British colonial power in India, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. There is much more nuance to the setting than an "Indian" Hamlet would be set in than can be captured by the terms "ethnic heritage" or "folk" cinema. However, there are echoes in Mehrotra's representation of Kabir that may be seen in research into translation and appropriation processes. Because of this, we may ditch the "indigenization" model's fixation on "authenticity" and geographical frameworks.

The criteria David Damrosch used to define and assess "world literature" literature that may be claimed by a certain group of readers who belong to a bigger world than their region of origin and literary works that become more valuable as they need to travel far above national borders—have limitations. McDonald's assessment of Mehrotra's work incites a flaw within the paradigm of translation that places significance on faithfulness. These constraints are also reflected in the work of Mehrotra. Mehrotra's Kabir goes beyond simply progressing from a recognizable site of origin, obtaining complexity and valuation along the way. It has always been a very "eclectic" thing, taking ideas from both "here" and "elsewhere" and breaking the "local" or "national" frames that might be used to identify indigenous literature:

By opposing the indigenization of the written language and creating a diverse, multinational literary heritage for itself, Mehrotra posed a direct challenge to Parthasarathy's poetics of authenticity as well as the larger discussions over literary theory and cultures, of which his nationalizing assertions are critical. He poses an incredibly effective challenge to Damrosch's concept of writing by conceptualizing translating as transmigration and overturning many types of historical and geographic frameworks. (Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, p. 281, McDonald).

McDonald asserts that Mehrotra's writing exemplifies the "labyrinthine nature of the world's literary tradition" and that this puts him "at conflict with both the older concepts of literary history" that are "focused on occasionally lyrical assertions of equality" ("Arvind Krishna Mehrotra," 281). We would do well to notice McDonald's denial of patterns of value and transmission that ultimately affirm a hierarchy based on country cultural taxonomies and to reconsider the many contexts in which "India's Shakespeare" may be interpreted.

Shakespeare's adaptations around the world, as well as their reemergence and dissemination in cinema in a larger global context, are the products of more complicated creative modes that can be explained by global literature. A framework for evaluating literature that distinguishes between the realm of circulation and the location of origin and values literature accordingly cannot keep track of the affiliations, both gained and lost, by works of literature on their journeys. Critics of Damrosch have pointed out that a large part of this estimate process relies on the highly specialized, the global North's literary landscape is driven by the market. 4 Damrosch's concept of "global literature" as writing that has allure outside of its origin seems to be supported by the drastic revisions of Shakespeare's plays in work that both commemorate and criticize the "originals." But this description doesn't account for the depth of a reimagined, multi-Shakespeare, or the fact that the trip may be reversed. There's no denying that Shakespeare's popularity spans oceans and continents, but the Damrosch model could only account for the breadth of the adaptations by focusing on Shakespeare's version in Stratford. Except for maybe words that come from the idea that translation is about being faithful or losing something, nothing is known about the complicated mix of creative ideas.

According to Emily Apter's criticism of western literature's value system is the belief that equivalency can or should be attained via the translation process. When she says, we should recognize "the relevance of non-translation, misunderstanding, studies show that companies, and untranslatability," what exactly does she have in mind when she uses the term "untranslatability?" (4). In his critically praised study, *Forget English! Orientalism's and Global Works of Literature*, Aamir Mufti recently took this criticism a step further, contending that world literature depends on the supremacy of English and on a purient preoccupation with cultural diversity. In this book, Mufti discovers remaining examples of what Edward Said referred to as "Orientalism" in literature. The challenge posed by the Mufti may just as easily be directed at the discipline of global Shakespeare studies, which is characterized by an underlying conflict between literary canon and classicism, originality and adaptation, and the origin and dissemination of texts. The field will be limited by the same value systems that have influenced cultural politics worldwide to the point where it depends on the ideas of "indigenous rights" and "integrity" to explain the importance of a translated or translocated work.

With the release of Vishal Bhardwaj's Haider remake of Hamlet in theatres throughout the globe in October 2014, we may reflect on the ways in which Shakespeare's plays are adapted to seem "local" or "indigenous" and what this implies for the larger cultural politics at play. The translatable aspects are problematic because of the

shift from the theatre to the cinema. The film's global distribution network not only brings Hamlet's problems into the present but also makes the disturbance in one corner of the globe an "issue of worry" to borrow Bruno Latour's language (What is the Manner of Matters of Concern)? This is because the conflicted border areas of North India and Kashmir are in a particular situation and are happening at a shockingly current time. It also brings Hamlet's problems together into a vibrant and moving present, where the disturbance in one corner of the globe is elevated to the status of an "issue of worry," to borrow Bruno Latour's language (What is the Style of Matters of Concern?). This is because the conflicted border areas of North India and Kashmir are in a very specific situation and are happening at a shockingly current time.

As Steven Thornton stated, Shakespeare's presence on film in recent years has been a complex phenomenon that has the potential to both reinforce cultural dominance and fundamentally upends it as new expressive technologies open up new frontiers of visibility, based on the findings in Burnett's *Shooting Shakespeare for the Global Market*. Shakespeare's role as a worldwide voice is balanced by the local, which "operates most effectively as a tool of historical peculiarity, as a tool of resistance to corporate hegemony," argues Burnett of the cinema industry's role in spreading "the Bard's constructed powers and pertinence" around the world. Because it is inseparable from what is "different," what is "local" is frequently seen as appealing or consecratory, according to Shakespeare's film. Shakespeare in film testifies to the cultural appropriation and homogenization of worldwide culture and, ironically, to its ability to accommodate limitless differences. The "world" has the potential to be both varied and totalizing; its ability to challenge cannot always be attributed to its embracing of numerous local cultural variants and vernaculars. Therefore, the politics of global Shakespeare's play are unpredictable, and Burnett's analysis properly emphasizes that it is inappropriate to decide how to define the link between "global" and "local." The research, however, only briefly discusses "global" films. Since then, Bhardwaj's film *Haider* has been shown all over the world and has been widely reported. This is a fascinating example of an adaptation that puts sceptics' ideas about "localization" to the test.

### ***Haider and the representational politics of missing persons***

*Haider* exposes the flaws in a cultural studies framework that attempts to pluralize the "world" by claiming that it is made up of several "locals," as if the latter were somehow independent of the former and unaffected by the politics of a more globalized present. Because it is an appropriation of a classic literary work, *Haider* obviously relies on a variety of interpretive inheritances, both folk and canonical, while also speaking directly to the politics of a specific modern time.

In the 1990s, Kashmir was controlled by India. It is obvious from the outset that it occurs in a setting of political supervision, where even the movements of common people are governed by military checkpoints, and, even worse, entire villages can be collected up. This is a world where, as we see from the outset, people can be taken off and put to the indiscriminate violence of a massive military that is given carte blanche to act without consequence under the terrible Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). A Kashmiri dissident who had emergency outpatient procedure surgery thanks to Hamlet's father is later picked out in an identification parade and taken away. Later, it is revealed that he was murdered and subjected to torture when his ideological brother betrayed him. Arshee, who plays the character of Ophelia in *Haider*, works as a journalist, while her dad is a military officer in charge of intelligence. For a while, *Haider* looks for his dad or his body in governmental offices, graveyards, and military camps established along rivers to handle the dead bodies.

According to critics, the movie can provoke controversy. For example, the byline of Jason Burke's *Guardian* review says that the movie shows "horrifying scenes of abuse in Indian military camps":

The film *Haider* takes place in the 1990s, which were the darkest years of the continuing conflict that has been fought by Azadi fighters and separatists from Kashmir against the military and its regional collaborators for over twenty years. Extremely violent acts of cruelty in Indian military camps and other violations of human rights by Indian authorities are shown in the picture. Although there has been a decrease in the level of violence in Kashmir since India and Pakistan gained independence from Britain in 1947, India still has extremely sensitive feelings about the war and its past. (N.Pag.)

The play's setting in Kashmir's turbulent region has been criticized by both director Vishal Bhardwaj and screenplay writer, Kashmiri journalist Basharat Peer: "Whatever happens in Kashmir is a tragedy that involves many humans, yet nobody is discussing it. However, once you discuss it, you are free of it. All the things I'm saying are true. Bhardwaj stated, "The effect should be soothing, like applying an ointment to a cut (qtd. in Burke n.pag.). Since Burke is also the script's author, he explains.

Peer expressed his hope that the movie would offer a different perspective on the Kashmir dispute and contradict the narrative that had been established by earlier mainstream films. Kashmiris have frequently been characterised as irrational fanatics or as just beautiful tourist destinations. "It's a totally different perspective," he remarked. (N.Pag.)

Shahid Kapoor movie's leading actor, and Bhardwaj have downplayed the political difficulty of the drama in interviews. However, in a different interview with Viji Alles is Asian editor in the UK from around the same time, he evaded queries about the AFSPA, abductions of protestors, and his decision to take them into the movie (n.pag.). The first interview appeared in *The Hindu* in October 2014 and was conducted by Anuj Kumar (n.pag.). Bhardwaj, the director of the movie, contends, "you can't take a side since you can understand the absurdity of the scenario. You must, of course, feel empathy. We wanted to witness Kashmir from the inside, which is why Haider's character, played by Shahid, was a native of Srinagar. We were interested in hearing from the everyday citizen who was being dragged or forced into the conflict despite not wanting to be there and not having any political agenda (qtd. in Alles, n.pag.).

When asked to describe the film, Bhardwaj opts to stereotype instead. There is movement throughout the narrative. In a flashback, we learn that the breaking point in the family's relationship occurred when Haider's mother discovered the pistol her teenage son attempted to hide in his bag, insisted that he be transferred to a university in north India and give up his ambition to join a terrorist in Pakistan. This shows that Haider is not an "ordinary guy" without a political perspective on the Kashmiri struggle. In the last act of pretended insanity, the adult Haider shouts angrily into the centre of town about the violence of the invading army. The movie also offers a voice to Indian military leaders, who tell journalist Arshee that it was the Indian military that fought and bled to defend Kashmir in 1948; extremists from Pakistan entered Kashmir as "tribal people" and killed children and raped women." The Indian military's involvement is justified by his warning to her that "if we leave this place then it will repeatedly happen." Answering about Arshee question regarding torture" we are the most disciplined military in the world It is our policy to train our troops to interrogate, rather than torture, suspects." This viewpoint is challenged, however, as viewers are given a different viewpoint on the Indian army and its involvement in the fight by the use of turns of phrase. For instance, cuts to a television program on the fake election that presents opposing viewpoints, such as that "Indian troops pushed hesitant voters into voting stations," regularly disrupt Arshee's conversation with the Indian army commander. The voice-over alerts us to some worrying figures on the numerous disappearances and the broad authority given to the Indian army as a result of the AFSPA: Rule 4 Section 5 states that anyone detained in accordance with this Act must be delivered as soon as possible to the officer in command of the closest police station. Political treachery is used to justify India's continued presence in Kashmir: "Pandit Nehru pledged a referendum for the people of Kashmir in front of the whole globe. That which occurred? Leave a referendum aside... Militarization was even the initial referendum requirement. That didn't take place. This version of Hamlet's conflict takes place in Kashmir, which is not a neutral place. Hamlet's predicament is worsened by the protracted, bloody battle in Kashmir, which is accompanied by gorgeous Kashmiri landscape and music that has been labelled "classical."

Both Kapoor and Bhardwaj, the film's actors and director, respectively, have discussed the political problems between India and Kashmir as well as their experiences shooting at Srinagar and the "grace" & "kindness" of the natives. According to Bhardwaj in an interview with Viji Alles in October 2014, "Kashmir is not on that agenda" in the Indian media, whereas "in the local [Kashmiri] papers, people are dying, as you are aware. Daily conflicts take place there... The first thing you notice when you visit Kashmir is that there is a lingering fear and that there is agony in the air (qtd. in Alles, n.p.).

The controversial politics of the region are largely obscured in favour of the personal and speculative when the discourse moves to Shakespeare, with the focus no longer on the particularity of this conflict but on the well-known assertions of Shakespeare's universal and human appeal. Haider adds, "It's not only about Kashmir; it might be any unrest-ridden place. It's a personal tale, to be sure. In my opinion, the movie Haider isn't trying to make any kind of overt political statement. I believe the movie is portraying these people's journey and hoping that it will resonate with them on a community scale, which is much more important (qtd. in Alles, n.p.). Both Bhardwaj and Shahid cite Shakespeare as a significant source of inspiration. In these conversations, Shakespeare is presented as something that will always be important. However, we soon see that the value is actually set by the work of the filmmaker in the present.

In these conversations, Shakespeare is presented as something that will always be important. However, we soon see that the value is actually set by the work of the filmmaker in the present.

Hearing the artists discuss their work, conflicts in Kashmir," Shakespeare's potent drama, Hamlet/Oedipal Haider's fear over his mom's wedding," traditional Kashmiri music, and North Indian shooting a movie style all

seem to coexist for them. The outstanding score for the movie was written by Bhardwaj, who adds that it has "True traditional Kashmiri music to it" (qtd. in Alles, n.pag.). Bhardwaj says, "it was the signal for me... in the mousetrap scene from Hamlet," referring to the time when Hamlet assembles a cast and sets up a stage to act out his father's death.

We wanted to include a Kashmiri sound in both the music and the lyrics (qtd. in Alles, n.pag.). Haider's mousetrap sequence is a potent mashup of folk, Bollywood, and, yes, Hamlet, as he dances in traditional garb while singing a gravedigger's song. Shakespeare's "iconic" vocabulary makes it difficult to render his works into other languages, as acknowledged by Bhardwaj. Due to the deceptive nature of dramas, Shakespeare once said, "No matter how many times I rewrite a play, I always try to stay faithful to the original intent rather than just the words. (qtd. in Alles, n.p.). As Kapoor puts it, "Vishal [Bhardwaj] is capable of reproducing the rest of the world that one learns about in several Shakespeare dramas, and in my view, it is simply why Indians have really been capable of responding to the work that he's done in the past." His position in Haider, however, is not nearly as honourable. When performing or speaking, he employs easily understandable diction (qtd. in Alles, n.p.).

Internalization of Hamlet's conflict with the boundaries of India-administrated Kashmir doesn't really result in a completely new interpretation of the play because it still bears recognizably familiar elements, such as the influence of Freudian theory. In regards to his earlier films, the "sexual conflict" has been discussed by Bhardwaj," and in Haider, just as Freud's interest in Hamlet inspired Laurence Olivier to develop the acting abilities that would launch his career, so too do we witness the lasting ramifications of the Oedipal interpretative frame that came to predominate when Olivier took up Freud's interest in Hamlet. Like Olivier, who was 40 when he married Gertrude, who was 27, Shahid Kapoor's mother is just nine years older than her son. The camera focuses on their awkward closeness. But in Haider, the Kashmiri backdrop makes Ghazala's physical bond with his uncle Khuram extremely disturbing. Like many of the grieving women we see waving banners and waiting at government offices asking about their disappeared loved ones, the circumstances behind Ghazala's husband's death remain murky. She is a "half-widow," a term used in Kashmir for the wives of the "disappeared" who, due to their uncertain legal standing and need to always be on guard, are unable to mourn, enjoy life, or get the privileges that widows are typically granted. Ghazala belongs to the local ruling establishment rather than this class of "half-widows" because she frequently attends public events with the recently elected Khuram. However, just like with Gertrude, we provided a closer look into Ghazala's life by giving the camera exclusive access to her bedroom. She says, "I am half-widow," which shows that she is like other women in her society while also denying that they are in the same situation and letting out her sense of shame and ego.

Therefore, even when dealing with intimate issues, Bhardwaj's work includes elements of longstanding legacies while still engaging in the unsettling politics of the period. Even the most personal of relationships are not safe from the effects of political unrest in the context of the unresolvable war in Kashmir. Bhardwaj has "taken liberties" by utilising a modern idiom and a political setting that is still alarmingly relevant, in his words (quoted in Alles, n.p.). Although the movie is a recreation of Shakespeare's Hamlet, "taking liberties" is not what the misuse of authority in the film is about. Shakespeare's central condemnation of illegitimate power is being highlighted more and more in mainstream productions of the play. Hamlet, played by Rory Kinnear in a 2010 production at London's National Theatre, was constantly observed by intelligence personnel through two-way radios, so he was never shown on the screen alone. Similar to this interpretation, directed by Haider, Hamlet's "antic temperament" is a calculated reaction to a repressive political state and a method for exposing its wrongdoing without bringing undue attention to himself. The play's indictment of authoritarianism was recognized by dissident theatre directors across Eastern Europe in the second half of the 20th century, including Stalin himself. As a result, Hamlet productions were prohibited in the Soviet Union from 1932 until soon after Stalin's death in 1953. See Young for more explanation (1922).

Therefore, Haider's location in India-occupied Kashmir and its invitation to see the state-sanctioned murder and misuse of power that the region has experienced are in accordance with the spirit of the work that served as its inspiration. The decision to adopt an "antic disposition" rings true as stinging political humour that flies under the radar owing to the illusion of lunacy in Haider's Kashmir, for which a state of emergency is constantly present. This tragedy shows how Haider's personal life was influenced by political persecution. In spite of Bhardwaj and Kapoor's best attempts to emphasize the "subjective" aspects of its foundation and ethnic components like the music with "folk music Kashmiri flavour," this "localization" of the Hamlet narrative proves to be a difficult undertaking. As well as illuminating the politics of disappearances, the choice to present Hamlet as Haider in this "localized" context and embrace the "sound and music... of Kashmir" is an issue was fixed on behalf of the people of Kashmir. To the extent that the current Indian government in Kashmir is a source of lingering tension, as has been suggested, then a resolution may be in sight.



Beautiful Kashmiri scenery, mournful Kashmiri music, poetry, and images of Kashmiris carrying photographs of their abducted family members during silent protest rallies all add up to a serious charge of political crimes in modern-day Kashmir. Kashmir's stunning scenery, heartfelt music, engaging poetry, and horrifying sights of Kashmiris carrying photographs of their abducted loved ones all come together to form a devastating condemnation of political crimes in modern Kashmir. Kashmiri music is used extensively throughout the film, but especially early on, as Haider travels from a government office to a forensics laboratory to an army station, all to the tune of Bhardwaj's emotional song about the Jhelum River. In the first scene, Haider claims he's going on a quest for his dad, and then he asks, "Where?" In concentration camps?" Behind bars? Saying it like Hamlet, he replies, "Kashmir is a jail throughout. I'm going to waste no time in looking for him.

The paean to the Jhelum, Arshee and Haider's Quest shows us both the stunning beauty of Kashmir and the helplessness of the families of those who have gone missing.

Jhelum, Jhelum is sung in the river as it makes its way to the shore.

In whose eyes does the sun go down?

The River Jhelum's waters

have become salty.

Haider arrives at an army post in the north, at the foot of the breathtaking Himalayan mountains, while the music begins to play in the background mountains which are covered in snow. Before we can let the beauty of the scenery lull us, a newspaper headline appears, explaining the song's allusion to the River Jhelum's salty waters: "Unidentified Bodies Recovered from the Jhelum River," alludes to what happened to Haider's father, as we find out later. The song's last lyric is a question: "Which party should be contacted and for how long. This anguish we must continue to bear?" As Haider enters a metal container full of bleeding dead, we witness him throw up and then recover; as he starts to turn the bodies over, a youngster wakes, relieved to realize that he is alive. The ensuing photos are taken inside government facilities, where elderly individuals and little girls are seen holding photographs of their loved ones who have gone missing. Then we are taken to the sombre protests held by the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons, who hold posters reading "Where are our loved ones?" ("APDP"). "I need to know where my dad is." The following action takes place at the Kashmiri military's operations headquarters when the Indian army commander announces to the Kashmiri commanders the new security measures that "Delhi has sanctioned."

Haider's furious speech in the town square, heightened by the terrifying intensity of his portrayal of crazy, sheds new light on the political predicament in Kashmir. This paradox is well known not only because it echoes the sarcastic edge of Hamlet's portrayal of madness but also because it illustrates the possibilities that may be discovered at any stage. The movie avoids political posturing because it is a work of fiction, yet the imaginative conjuring forces societal analysis. Bhardwaj himself takes care not to politicize the film, as seen by his many statements about the movie's commitment to portraying a story of Kashmiri suffering and by his downplaying of the role of the censors. Bhardwaj argues that the majority of the 41 edits made by the new Modi administration (which took power just before the movie's premiere) were his own choice and were done for aesthetic considerations (PretiTaneja).

On the other hand, as spectators, we get to observe the aftermath of the conflict. Even while the film's criticism of the misuse of power becomes clear as we see Haider's furious speech against the AFSPA and its abuses, it is still impossible to nail down the film's political perspective. With Haider's mother and uncle in tow, they enter the square to find him in the midst of a rage that begins with a confused reading of "UN Council Resolution Number 47 of 1948, Article 2 of the Geneva Convention, and Article 370 of the Indian Constitution" ("testing, testing"). Lots of regular folks have gathered around him. As Haider opens his lecture with an existential query ("Do we exist or not?"), he shifts gears to a rhetorical question that puts identity politics ahead of existence: "If we do [exist], then who are we?" This makes me think of Hamlet's famous "Dialogue of the Three Ghosts." Similar to the banners and a group of protestors shouting outside the United Nations buildings in the movie, the query "Do we exist or not?" is more of a statement than a question due to its rhetorical structure. So, if the response is "in contrast," Haider asks us to think about a people who continue to exist ("we") yet vanish from history ("Did we exist at all? Or not? "), as well as the mystery of what became of them once they were stripped of their power in the realm of never. After mocking the word "chutzpah" (which he calls "our issue"), He quickly goes into an attack on the absurdity of military authority ("arrogance, idiocy, AFSPA"). While presenting a critical political criticism of the right to kill in the Indian army, he hammers out the term "chutzpah," leaves off the initial beginning phoneme, and shifts the first vowel sound such that the sentence

transforms into the acronym, AFSPA, and then abruptly changes his tone of voice. Representing the strict letter of the law, Haider explains how any military commander may "shoot at or otherwise use force, even to the inflicting of death," against anybody who is breaking the rules. At this time, Haider puts a rope around his neck and raises it substantially. However, he continues on from there. At the conclusion of his speech, he makes an appeal to the two competing rulers of Kashmir:

"Pakistan! India! is a borderline game. We are like glue to India. Pakistan takes advantage of us. Where do we stand? Why are we doing this? A shout of "Liberty! His head and eye movements may suggest madness, yet he has excellent control over the crowd. When he shouts, "Freedom from this side!" they cheer rhythmically and shout, "Freedom!" Bhardwaj said (in a chat with Preti Taneja, Pre-Screening Q&A) that the all-Kashmiri audience didn't require any direction during the scene since they already knew what to do.

### *In conclusion, indigenous peoples and contemporary politics*

Haider is involved with current politics, despite its fidelity to rural Kashmiri customs, its traditional music and dance, and the breathtaking backdrop at the foot of the Himalayas. When it comes to explaining the intricate translations involved in this remake of Hamlet in India-administered Kashmir, the critical vocabulary of indigenosity is completely insufficient. Even while the traditional register gives the movie character depth, talking about indigenosity in this context would hide the film's disturbing focus on the state-sanctioned "disappearances," which are also strongly tied to this particular period and location. Due to the long history of successive occupations, indigenosity in Kashmir is a contentious issue and a key issue in a war that is still going on. Outside forces are trying to protect their power and interests by, among other things, pointing to examples from history and rewriting history.

Speaking of indigenous people in regard to contested areas means getting into debates over political history. The situation in Kashmir exemplifies a fundamental limitation of the concept of indigenosity: when protracted periods of occupation, rule, and settlement result in intricate maps of human settlement, affiliation, and cultural and religious practice, the concept of indigenosity serves as an ideological shield for one side of a contentious history. It is thus debatable whether an "indigenous" way of belonging that is based on nativism is beneficial. When a location like Kashmir has been inhabited, populated, and claimed by a number of people over the course of centuries, the exclusivity signaled by a modern claim to territorial aggression founded on a traceable pedigree can only be mistaken. The history of Kashmir and its residents is extremely controversial. Touqir Hussain has stated that it has a profound impact on the reasons for the existence of the two states of India and Pakistan (42). Any mention of the word "indigenous" brings up the controversial myths about human populations and who they belong to, as well as the political history of the Kashmir region, which has always been the same.

Recently, it has been clearer than ever that the Indian media is very sensitive to criticism of the Modi government's handling of Kashmir. One such example is the case of Nivedita Menon, a political studies professor at India's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), who was disowned for being "antinational" after she voiced her criticism of the Indian government's response to the rise of terrorist resistance in Kashmir. Wings of the ruling BJP have labelled prominent JNU professor Nivedita Menon as 'anti-national, forcing people to speak out anew against the persecution of dissent she wrote at the time (n.pag) (n.pag.). Menon said in her public speech (n.p.) that the conduct of a plebiscite was necessary to determine Kashmir's membership in India at the time of independence and division.

Menon stated that we are aware that many people believe that India is illegitimately occupying Kashmir. In foreign newspapers like Time and Newsweek, the map of India appears drastically differently, but these copies are burned or censored and never make it to us here. Shouldn't people chanting azadi chants be considered in the context of India's international perception as an imperialist power? " (Source: Sen, n.p.)

For believing that India is unlawfully occupying Kashmir, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Manch (ABVP), the youth wing of the BJP, filed a complaint against Menon for "spouting hatred against the Indian armed forces" and for inciting what they termed "antinationalist" attitude (Sen, n.pag.). Menon, however, associates "India" with militarism and the abuse of power; she says, "the face of Indian nationalism which people are witnessing in Kashmir, the north portions, and sections of Chhattisgarh is the Indian army." To make matters worse, she says that the "illegal" invasion of Kashmir and the authority granted to the armed forces to perpetuate the state of emergency is being carried out "in the name of India" (qtd. in Sen, n.pag.).

Ever since, new violence in Kashmir has broken out, increasing the conflict's visibility in Indian and global media. Unsurprisingly, news accounts present differing viewpoints even when the events themselves are undisputed. For instance, newspaper stories, for instance, focused on anti-Indian attitudes among funeral attendees chanting in August 2016, but their justifications for the hostility and their suggestions of responsibility range noticeably. Srinagar, the location of Haider, is located in Jammu and Kashmir. There, "troops in Indian controlled Kashmir had shot five civilians dead and injured at least 15 others" after increasing clashes with anti-India demonstrators ("Kashmir death toll rises," n.pag.). Demonstrators shouted, "Go India, go back," and "We demand independence" during the funerals. Al Jazeera stated on the same day that this rebellion started that "the recent killings have increased the toll in rallies in cities and villages all throughout the disputed territory to 63." ("Five killed in new Srinagar conflicts," n.pag.). The assassination of Burhan Wani, a youthful opposition leader, sparked these protests. The Indian daily The Indian Express recently reported on an unrelated subject, a military operation in which 5 "jihadists" from "Pakistan-occupied Kashmir" were killed and their alleged "plans to harm the Indian government" after addressing the violent activities of demonstrators. This story differs significantly from others since it justifies the aggressive presence of the Indian army in the region. Even though the "plans" are just guesses, it looks like the militants were getting ready to attack a major military or civilian target based on how many and what kind of weapons they were carrying (Masood and Ehsan, n.d.).

It is not unexpected, given the polarization, that the reporters' allegiances are readable.

Nevertheless, a movie like Haider isn't a news story because of the strife in the area and the political nature of news reporting. In contrast, its approach to narrative avoids linearity and the rigid polarisation that splits people's allegiances into political or national issues. Rather than taking a clear stance on the issue, the movie provides a glimpse into the imagined daily life of Kashmiri communities living in the shadow of AFSPA. Without judging the situation unambiguously, the film encourages us to bear witness to the devastating consequences of a protracted battle for self-determination and sovereignty that is both historical and contemporary. That doesn't mean the movie is apolitical, though. The movie allows its audience to experience the indignation of unbridled militarism and to identify with those who endure the abuses and betrayals it engenders without publicly declaring its allegiances. Bhardwaj provides a wide range of imagery to visualize the struggle through the use of Shakespeare's language and structure, as well as the sounds and textures of Kashmir's unique environment and the poetic rhythms of its songs. The concluding scene of the movie features a lengthy lament from the area, written by Pakistani poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, whom Jyotsna Singh and Abdulhamit Arvas regard as "the sense of social responsibility of the sub-continent" (189). Rekha Bhardwaj performs Faiz's poem "Intesaab," which presents itself as a "devotion" to the "carnival of agony"—which is my nation—to Vishal Bhardwaj's eerily lovely music (Faiz 94). Even though the first line seems to set a happy tone for a song of praise for the country, this song of love soon turns into a song of sorrow for his "homeland" and its people who are suffering:

Allow me to compose a song for today!  
The pain of this day and the day itself  
For this barren, leafy wasteland, which is my native place,  
For this suffering carnival, which is my country of origin,

Because "the earth is so dirty" and the shadows are so deep that almost all life fades away like a sob, unheeded, the motherland, as depicted here, cannot be honoured in the abstract or divorced from its people's "pain and grief" and the deterioration of its landscape (Faiz 94). Faiz's words cause us to pause and reflect on "those "mothers" whose children "sob in the night" and "not confess their sorrows," those "farmers" whose sheep were stolen, and those "Fathers" whose daughter was abducted (94). This tragedy is still being hidden by the ongoing silence. Prisoners "in whose heart and spirit, all our yesterday's begun to shine like sparkling diamonds" and "innocents" who "came seeking to find light/where they sell nothing but" are "now just faraway stars" as the song concludes "all relevant factors should be raised (Faiz 94). If not for the last phrase, we would've been left mourning the students as well as the political prisoners—relatives. Hamlet's Bhardwaj gives us one more symbol of hope through Faiz: his song foretells "the Foretells of the Approaching Dawn." So, Bhardwaj's films, which are based on different kinds of poetry, take us on a deeply emotional, creative journey into the destruction of a nation's psyche caused by constant political unrest.

Attempting to translate Hamlet into the specific context of Kashmir, whether one considers it "my Kashmir," "India-occupied Kashmir," or something else, necessitates confronting the region's complicated past and bearing witness to the region's ongoing fighting and suffering. As Bhardwaj puts it, the "sounds in music" of Kashmir entice us into an emotional connection with a beleaguered Kashmir just as much as Haider's hopeless

search for his father's ghost in government offices and the continuous uploads of images of Kashmir's "disappeared". Speaking of this intricate artistic interaction as the "indigenization" of Shakespeare simplifies the film's complex interaction with Kashmir in the 1990s. It mutes the social critique that arises from within its "traditional" components, such as Haider's costuming and dance in the mousetrap scene, demoting it to a past era. The creative skills of Shakespeare, Bhardwaj, and his co-creators are all undervalued, so it would be wrong to say that Shakespeare is to blame for this.

Global Shakespeare has the freedom to tell new stories, illuminating a more complex world and offering a perspective that is at once more substantial as well as intensely focused. However, there is a risk that the field will dull the edge of the unknown and reinscribe uninvited hierarchical structures of value through tainted essential paradigms. In Bhardwaj's stunning but problematic Kashmir, Shakespeare's "tales" are recreated for the screen in a complex scenario that removes us from the bounds of nationality and places us in a global mode of imagination that addresses the questions of what is "here" and "ours." Bhardwaj's Haider breaks down strict timelines by referencing both recent politics and profound history at the same time. By creating an unsettling atmosphere, Shakespeare is asked to add magic; it goes beyond "indigenization" and forces us to see Shakespeare's relocation to a certain region as an eclectic and politically provocative act of the imagination.

### *Disclosure statement*

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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