

THE 16TH CENTURY SHAKESPEAREAN PLAY BROUGHT INTO THE 20TH CENTURY KERALA

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ABSTRACT--*To re-explore the Shakespearean plays in the Malayalam movies. The 16th century situations and the time brought into 20th century Kerala. Malayalam movies and the industry have best explored the potentiality of cinematic version of Shakespearean plays. Both the movies 'Kannaki' and 'Kaliyattam' shows the main unveiling of Shakespearean plays 'Othello' and 'Antony and Cleopatra'. Exhibiting the resemblances and the backdrop changes along with the time period. 16th century cultures, peoples mind change and how much difference it took, when it was interpreted on 20th century.*

KEYWORDS-- *Shakespearean plays, Re-explore, 20th century, 16th century*

I. INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare's plays always have the honor and being greatest among the English language. The plays are divided into different kinds of genres tragedy, history and comedy. These plays have been made into movies, some with the same emotions and genres. In this includes the Jayaraj Rajashekar Nair movies 'Kannaki' and 'Kaliyattam' which are the plays of Shakespeare 'Othello' and 'Antony and Cleopatra'. 16th century Shakespearean play is shown and differently portrayed in the way of a 20th century Kerala. The emotions and circumstances have been changed according to the time. Jayaraj has tried to show the peculiarity of the characters, but the places and thoughts have changed according to the time and period, or the changes have occurred after the 16th century. It is a long duration. So the thoughts of the people in the play and the movies have a great disparity. However, the time and period has changed, characters are the same, but the names and mannerisms are different.

II. OBJECTIVES

The paper brings up the study over the illustration of 16th century Shakespearean play and adapting it into the 20th century Kerala. It shows the particularity between the character and the time occurred. Also how the play 'Othello' and 'Anthony and Cleopatra' was taken by the people during the 16th century mindset, and how that perspective changed to the 20th century in the form of a movie. Each movie has the same character behaviour and Jayaraj recreates the European narratives in the context of Kerala.

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III. HYPOTHESIS

“Is adaptation movies the cut copy of the originals?”,Some adaptation movies can be a cut copy of the originals,but there are many other works that consist of the difference in the way it is portrayed,which period of time it exhibit etc. In consideration of which language the adaptation occurs,the character names and the backgrounds will be arranged. Adaptation of movies shows how a language can change the characters and panorama.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Theory of Adaptation

In the analytical writings of film,savants like Bela Balazs,George Bluestone and Sergei Eisenstein remarkably survey the nature and the method of the adaptation as an inter relative thing between literature and film. The theories of Bela Balazs arose between 1920 and 1930 and are of great importance to a historical viewpoint of the adaptation process. Balazs in his collection of essays,”Theory of the Film”:Character and Growth of a New Art” quibble that film script is an entirely new literary form. According to Balazs,the novel and the plays should be observed as a potential raw material to be recreated at will by the writer of the screenplay he says that screenplay has the capacity to approach reality,to approach the thematic and the formal design of the literary model and represent it with a view point. Consolidating a new aesthetic design and technology,creating thus anew artistic version. Balazs further argues that even though an adaptation takes the subject of another work such as Kafka’s novel or Shakespeare’s plays,the new adaptation is an exclusively new entity. Literature bring the raw material for the film adaptation to create new visual forms and thematic contents; there are several variations possible. The film versions of ‘Othello’(1952) and Welles adaptation of ‘Trial’(1962) delineate Balazs altercation that adaptations are indicative works of art.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Antony and Cleopatra - Kannaki

‘Kannaki’ is the oriental version of ‘Antony and Cleopatra’.Jayaraj creates the story of ‘Antony and Cleopatra’ in a novel ambient,culture,tradition etc. For making a philosophically relevant environment in ‘Kannaki’,he separates the ‘Kannaki’ myth which is prevalent in Tamil literature. Jayaraj finds a personification of Shakespeare’s Cleopatra in Kannaki,Cleopatra is generally regarded as ‘Femme Fatale’ and her beauty is exalted as serpentine. Jayaraj invokes the soul of Cleopatra in Kannaki.Cleopatra is one of the most corpulent lady character of Shakespeare. He transplant the mythical and cultural background of Kerala and TamilNadu,the main features of this film is the village Chemmanampathy on the Kerala and TamilNadu border. Shakespeare’s queen of Eypt becomes the village beauty of Chemmanampathy,Kannaki. As Cleopatra was praised for her beauty,here Kannaki is also surrounded by male characters who are scrounging around her locality at least for a look from her. All are proscribed by the persuasion that she\$- has some wicked/magical powers that she has got from her father. Thus they are reluctant to approach her. Jayaraj also presents her as one who can cure patients from asp bite any some poison. While adapting the story on screen,he creates the characters in a filmic craft for the effect,he puts a

Tamilian aroma. The principal characters from 'Antony and Cleopatra' are Antony, Octavius, Caesar, Lepidus, Sextus Pompey and Octavia. Their equivalent characters in Kannaki are Manikyan, Choman, Gounder, Kaliyappan, Kumudam respectively. Though a minor characters Ravunni, Kannaki's guide, (the counterpart of queen Cleopatra's guide Madrian) acts a stronger part in Kannaki's life. Jayaraj adds a new character in his film, Kanakamma, the local fortune teller, who always carries a caged parrot with her. There is a belief in Kerala and TamilNadu that the caged parrots have the ability to foretell their future. Shakespeare uses the characters witches, fortune teller etc very aptly in his plays. Jayaraj uses the character fortune teller; Kanakamma to expose the lives of Manikyan, Kannaki, Kumudam and Manikyan's helper Muthu (counterpart of Canidius). Her sayings are blindly believed by all and it causes their tragedy too. Jayaraj handles the trans-culturation process in his adapted text by using 'cockfight' game. He changes the war field in the play as cockpits where the raged cocks fight each other. Each cock represents its owner in the game. Meanwhile Choman decides the marriage between his sister Kumudam and Manikyan, by the advice of Kaliyappan and friends, for making a distance between Kannaki and Manikyan, also to make Choman's bond more strong with Manikyan. The scenes reminds the plays scene in which Octavius decides to give his sisters hand to Antony by Lepidus instruction, for diverting his thoughts from Cleopatra and brings his concentration back to royal duties. The marriage news shocked both Kannaki and Manikyan. Like Antony, who sees Octavia as his sister, Manikyan loves Kumudam as his sister. For getting back to the normal self, Choman and the elderly members of the society advice Manikyan to follow the famous ritual *kaavu theendal*. The local beliefs and rituals have a part in this movie. Here Kannaki is a devotee of goddess Kali and *Naga Daivangal* (snake God). *Nagaradhana* (snake worshiping) is famous among Kerala and TamilNadu, especially among Hindus. Other visual treats Jayaraj captures in the camera are the statues of *Kali, kettukala, Thulasithara, homekundam, kolam* etc, other local rituals that are shown in the movie is *Veedutheendal*. In the movie, Manikyan and Kannaki appears in a costume of *Velichappadu* (oracle) and carries *pallival* with them, this ritual is done to gain mental peace. At the end of the scene Kanakamma intrigues to create problem between Kannaki and Manikyan. At a point where emotions blinds Kumudam, she lies to Kannaki that she soon becomes the mother of Manikyan's child, her words wrecks Kannaki. She decides to sacrifice her life as it is the solution of the problem and her final plea to Ravunni was to ask Manikyan to marry Kumudam. Cleopatra's death in the play is of the snake's venom, Jayaraj take the scene in his movie as Kannaki is the fervent worshipper of Nagaraja and she chooses her death from a asp bite. After hearing the recession of Kannaki, Manikyan who won the cockfight with Gounder shatters and he himself fight with his own cock and it cuts the vein at the throat and Manikyan dies. Jayaraj could detain the tragic effect in the climax scene as in the play and succeeded to create high impact on the audience. Jayaraj's 'Kannaki' is an oriental version of mythical, cultural and parochial aspects.

Othello and Kaliyattam

Jayaraj showcases the movie 'Kaliyattam' (The play of God) as a backdrop to show Hindu cultures and values. The movie is set against the scrim of Hindu *Theyyam* performance, in that the artist who performs it is considered as god, who wears red color on the faces and black color outside the eyes, with a different costume, it dances along with fire. The character Kannan Perumalayan (equivalent to Othello), was critically acclaimed and it was considered as one of the best performances. Kannan is a *Theyyam* artist, Shakespeare portrayed his character Othello as a brave soldier of advanced years and Moorish background in the service of Venetian Republic. Jayaraj

sets this movie in a village background,with the main aspect is *Theyyam*. Desdemona is the beautiful daughter of Venetian Senator,here Jayaraj 's Desdemona is Thamara, who is brave and a village beauty,daughter of the village head. Paniyan (counterpart of Lago) plays a Komali,covets the role of *Theechamundi* which Perumalayan holds. Paniyan plays the role of making difference between Kannan and Thamara. Just like in the play,were Lago tries to create misunderstand between Desdemona and Othello. Paniyan plants the seeds of doubt about Thamara's devotion in Kannan's mind,making him suspect that Thamara is having an affair with his assistant Kanthan. In the play the situation occurs as same as in the movie,were Lago infects the poison of jealousy in Othello telling him that Desdemona is having a secret affair with Lieutenant Michael Cassio. For making the situation more curious Jayaraj makes that jealousy of Kanan into grief and anger,were he spots a silk robe which he had gifted to Thamara in Kanthan's hands. This make the situation worsen and Kannan takes Thamara's life by suffocating her with a pillow. On the same night,Paniyan plans with Unni Thampuran,who is a character plays a main source for all the cruelty that has infused to Paniyan. They both plans to get Kanthan killed,but the plan goes astray and Thampuran is killed. Kannan comes to know about the truth from Paniyan's wife Cheerma. Kannan crushes Paniyan's legs with a stone,and allows him to live the rest of his life enfeebled. The climax scenes were kannan gives the *Theechamundi* role,which has handover by his ancestors,to Kanthan and he commits suicide out of grief and pain,because Thamara was innocent and faithful towards him. He gives his life in the *Theyyam* ritual fire. As the movie ends,the storyline was same,and Jayaraj succeeds in creating same emotions as in the play.

VI. ANALYSIS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

Both the movies give different impact among the audience, with the same emotions as such in the Shakespeare plays. In 'Kannaki' and 'Kaliyattam' both gives the Indian spirituality and cultures. Looking at the movie 'Kannaki', worshipping of Goddess Kali and the magical power of Kannaki to save local people from the asp bite, which she has got from her father, is all the Kerala tradition and the beliefs of local people. In 'Kaliyattam' also the culture of *Theyyam* which is carried out from the ancestors by Kannan Perumalayan, as a work he does for his family traditions, shows how Jayaraj has tried to include the traditions and cultures. Both movies have in common is the inheritance and mythical culture which Jayaraj has splendidly portrayed.

VII. CONCLUSION

Portraying the life and culture of 20th century of Kerala in a different way,it is shown out through the 16th century Shakespearean play. It gives a whole different vibe with new tradition,culture,language,place etc. Where Shakespeare has created it in the 16th century of culture, were war occurred, family rivalries etc were taken place. Jayaraj reinvents Shakespeare according to a template of regional tradition. Jayaraj makes a difference in everything, just to make it acceptable in the 20th century Kerala.

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