



Research Paper

## Revisiting *Mandaar* as a contemporary Bengali Adaptation of Shakespearean *Macbeth*

Ananya Bhattacharya

### Abstract

Literary adaptation is a process which relocate a particular text through alteration of Characters, storylines, plot. Adaptations make a particular work ever appealing to the newer generation of audiences. Shakespeare is a pioneering figure within this field of study. Shakespearean texts have been offering a vast area to practice the process of adaptation. By using Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality and Ronald Barthes's concept of the 'death of the author' this paper would try to focus on a Bengali adaptation of Shakespearean *Macbeth* as *Mandaar* and try to enquire how the socio-political and sexual landscape of contemporary Bengal is reflected through Shakespearean Adaptation of *Macbeth* as *Mandaar*.

**Key words:** Shakespeare, adaptation, transcultural adaptation, appropriation, intertextuality, contextualization

Received 22 Apr, 2022; Revised 03 May, 2022; Accepted 05 May, 2022 © The author(s) 2022.

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### I. Introduction

Julie Sanders in her essay *What is an Adaptation* says, "when we discuss adaptation, we are often working with the reinterpretation of established texts in new generic contexts or perhaps with relocations of an 'original' or source text's cultural and/or temporal setting..." (19). Stories actually have no detectable root. They only shift the border, passing through different cultures, languages and regions. In the field of literature, adaptation becomes one of the most significant aspects. It is a deliberate amalgamation of known with the unknown. In the past the Greek playwrights also used to adapt from the contemporary folklore and used to write plays from those themes. What they used to do, is the basic act of transposition, taking the concept and the plot from a familiar object and change it according to the taste of the time with the new ideas, conventions and themes added to it. Thus, adaptations are always the process of re-telling. In the field of Adaptation, Shakespearean works have contributed to a great extent. Shakespearean adaptation into stage and screen has a wide history. The playwrights like Nahum Tate and William Davenant started changing the plotlines, added characters for performance. Here Daniel Fischlin says, "As long as there have been plays by Shakespeare, there have been adaptations of those plays." (Sanders 17) The primary reason for these adaptations is to relocate Shakespeare according to the taste of contemporary audience. This endeavour of translocating Shakespeare has started in the Restoration period itself in England and has been still in process. In India, Shakespeare has been trans-created based on local languages. Shakespearean works have been adapted in two ways, first, an experimental method to bound his texts according to the local demands and second, as a process of indigenization. These adaptations are a deliberate amalgamation of western material and Indian convention, a bond between the familiar with the unfamiliar. Many conventions are reformed, revived, declined and reviewed from different perspectives. In this process, a single text refers to or gives rise to multiple texts. The 17<sup>th</sup> century English Shakespearean play *Macbeth* was originally written in blank verse. But since then, the adaptors have been making several changes in the original script to contextualise the classic based on different language and region. However, at the same time, they tried their best to retain the original plot to a great extent. The adapters also changed the names from English to local which helped to portray the passions, motivations, and actions of all characters following the local context. This paper would discuss about a recent Shakespearean Bengali adaptation of *Macbeth* as '*Mandaar*'. Shakespearean *Macbeth* and its screen adaptation of Anirban Bhattacharya's *Mandaar*, both versions have unique parities and disparities which create a source of amusement into the minds of audience, that propels us to initiate a sort of comparison between these two. Intertextuality is a fundamental ingredient of comparison because the amount of compatibility and incompatibility, similarity and dissimilarity that the two texts share need to be focused on. However, talking about *Mandaar* and *Macbeth*, the congruity that catches our attention is the central concept, which Anirban Bhattacharya, the director of *Mandaar*

has borrowed from Shakespeare wholeheartedly. And there are innumerable deflections that *Mandaar* also contains. Apart from the Concept, nothing is much intimate that both the versions engage between themselves. Somehow this much of dissimilitude also marks *Mandaar* as an intrinsically Independent Bengali creation for contemporary audience. Hence, the aim of this paper would be to enquire how the socio-political and sexual landscape of contemporary Bengal is reflected in the Shakespearean adaptation of *Macbeth* as *Mandaar*.

## II. Literature Review:

While talking about adaptation we have to take into consideration what Julie Sanders in her essay *what is adaptation* talks about. At the first place, Sanders clearly mentions that the process of adaptation is mainly a sub-section of intertextuality. According to her, the process of adaptation is also linked with Homi Bhabha's theory of Hybridization. This concept of Hybridity suggests to the fact that how things are "repeated, relocated and translated in the name of tradition" thus, she says, the process of adaptation is not necessarily linked with only the scientific idiom as T.S. Eliot mentions it in his essay, *Tradition and Individual Talent*, which deals with the chemical reaction between the inheritance of a text and the artist which gives rise to a wholly new 'compound', but it is a cultural movement of postmodernism and post colonialism. Adaptation studies also gives rise to various terms like, transformation, transposition, parody, forgery, revaluation, rewriting and revision. Adaptation is not only a text's closure to alternatives but also to identify with the other texts and artistic production. According to Sanders, the act of adaptation is a revision where it can include editorial practice to exercise 'trimming and pruning' (18) and also it can be an amplificatory procedure where it can engage the process of addition and expansion. It is a process of commentary on a source text. At the same time adaptation can also make the source text relevant and contemporary in accordance with the audience's interest. It can make the text easily comprehensible to the new generations through the act of proximation and updating. This can be observed as an artistic movement in many adaptations of the so called 'classics. Shakespeare is a bright example in this field. Adaptation is also a process which involves transition from one genre to another, such as drama into films, a recent move is, drama or novel into series, (as in the case of my topic). Sanders clearly mentions that "when we discuss adaptation in these pages we are often working with reinterpretations of established texts in new generic contexts or perhaps with relocations of an 'original' or source text's cultural and/or temporal setting..." (19). The act of adaptation may or may not have fidelity with the original. It might have different perspectives depending on the contemporary frame of time and region. She gives example of Baz Luhrmann's 1996 adaptation of Shakespearean *Romeo and Juliet* into contemporary North American Setting. In these sense, Sanders says the process of Adaptation is an act of "transposition, relocating their source texts not just generically, but in cultural, geographical and temporal terms." (20) A very recent contemporary Bengali adaptation of Shakespearean *Macbeth* as *Mandaar* incorporates all these aspects of translating, rewriting, reviewing, editing and pruning, adding and subtracting, expanding and updating the source text so as to contextualize the original in cultural, Geographical and temporal terms of Bengal.

While discussing about *Mandaar*, one might have a confusion whether this is an act of adaptation or appropriation. To deal with this issue, we can again revisit Julie Sanders's idea about the method of appropriation in her essay, *what is Appropriation*. In this essay Sanders clearly distinguishes between 'adaptation' and 'appropriation'. She says adaptations aims at the relationship with an informing source text or original. It is a reinterpretation by a collective effort of director, actor, screen writer to produce or relocate a text. Whereas an "appropriation frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain." (26) Here she talks about *west side story* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Tony and Maria are clearly modern reworkings of Shakespearean Romeo and Juliet in a 1950s New York context where, this creation significantly has its trace in the source text. On the other hand, it is an adaptation with another mode. *West side story* can also stand as an independent musical on its own, Without the need of being connected with Shakespearean *Romeo and Juliet*. Though for audience, an intertextual knowledge deepens the understanding of the musical. Thus, it is an act of appropriation. Hence, *Mandaar*, in this sense can be identified as both an act of adaptation and appropriation where it refers to a relationship with the original Shakespearean *Macbeth* and can also stand out to be a fresh documentation of the social- political frame of a particular region of contemporary Bengal without being connected to the source text through its use of language, use of themes and manner of dealing with the socio-political scenario.

In the context of Adaptation and appropriation, Shakespearean works have contributed in a meaningful manner. To talk about this, we can again refer to Julie Sanders and her famous essay, called *Here's a Strange Alteration: Shakespearean Appropriation*. In chapter she states that Shakespeare has provided a crucial area for this practice of adaptation and appropriation. Dramatic adaptation of Shakespearean plays has started from the Restoration period and still continuing. The playwrights like Nahum Tate and William Davenant started changing the plotlines, added characters for performance. Here she quotes Daniel Fischlin who says, "As long as there have been plays by Shakespeare, there have been adaptations of those plays." It becomes evident enough when we consider *Mandaar* as a contemporary adaptation of Shakespearean *Macbeth*. Sanders here talks about

the fact how Shakespeare himself had also borrowed from different source to write his plays. There are enough examples of the same. The book, *Narrative and Dramatic sources of Shakespeare* by Bullough has five sub-sections such as, 1. Direct source, 2. Analogue, 3. Translations, 4. Possible source, and 5. Probable source which entirely deals with how Shakespeare has subsequently borrowed from different source to grab inspiration for his own writings. Hence it is no wonder that his own texts would be transformed across culture and languages. She says, "If drama embodies within its generic conventions an invitation to reinterpretation, so the movement into a different generic mode can encourage a reading of the Shakespearean text from a new or revised point of view." (48) Hence Shakespearean adaptations becomes a significant documentation of re-writing and translocating texts across culture and generations. Here she also talks about what Ben Johnson said about Shakespeare, that he "was not of an age but for all time" (48). Three texts are more frequently adapted from Shakespeare. 1. *Othello*, 2. *Hamlet*, 3. *The Tempest*. She says here in this list, *Macbeth* also contributes in a significant manner. According to her, filmic adaptation is one of the important sections of adaptation and appropriation where the relationship to an original Shakespearean play text remains relevant and present throughout and at the same time retains its own originality. In this manner, *Mandaar* also plays a significant role and could be included in the list as a successful one.

*Mandaar* is a product of re-textualization of the pre-existing 17<sup>th</sup> century Shakespearean *Macbeth* in a different cultural context. Discussing the history of Indian cinema and the influence of Shakespearean "re-textualizations" (153),

While we adapt a text, context becomes very important aspect to consider. When *Mandaar* was getting adapted the director had to pay close attention so as to how he should contextualise a 17<sup>th</sup> century Scotland setting of *Macbeth* into a 21<sup>st</sup> century coastal region of Bengal. In an article, "*Mandar review: macbeth perie banglar nijer golpo hoe uthlo Mandar, avishekei century porichalok Anirban er* by Rishav Bose, Bose talks about an interview with Anirban Bhattacharya after the release of the series *Mandaar* for the ABP news (Bengali) where Anirban said, "Macbeth is a character which can be re-created anywhere at any point of time" (2). Hence, context plays a significant role. Linda Hutcheon in the chapter *Vastness of Context* talks about four major aspects which the adapters should consider while adapting a text. Hutcheon says, adaptation is a "formal reception with difference" (142) where a story is told based on a particular time and space in a society. Time plays an important function for context. Hutcheon gives example of film adaptations like *El cid* and *Gerusalemme Liberata* during the time of Libyan War. The adaptations included Italy's nationalist imperialist thoughts. This makes the adaptations accepted by the contemporary audience as it portrayed the essence of time. Next comes culture according to Hutchen. Culture always makes a shift according to the place and time. How the very culture is getting adopted and adapted is another vital point of discussion here. Here she talks about *Throne of Blood* as a Japanese film Adaptation of *Macbeth* by Kurosawa. She says that this adaptation not only has a shift of time and place but also there is a shift in the political Valance where the two culture is entirely different. Therefore, Hutcheon brings forth the issue of transcultural adaptation.

Linda, again in another essay called *Transcultural Adaptation* talks about what all can come under culture and when an adapter is adapting a text, what all are the phenomena that he considers within culture. Language, political and legal frame, dress and even sexuality everything comes under cultural domain. First, she gave example of F.W. Murnau's 1922 *Nosferatu* modified Barm stoker's *Dracula* in terms of time, dragging it from Transylvania to Germany and those modifications helped the adapted version escape the legal complications of copyright. Again, Hutcheon talks about a very interesting example here, in Adapting Shakespearean *Romeo and Juliet* Franco Zeffirelli makes the lovers affectionate more physically to suit the taste of the audience of 1968. Transcultural adaptations can also shift to unpredictable direction too. Linda here says about how Arthur Schnitzler's sexually and dramatically radical 1900 play *Der Reigen* (or *La Ronde*) transculturated into *Eric Bentley's Round Two* (1990), and there was no banning and no obscenity trial, despite the translation of the straight Austrian sex into the gay American context. Hence, the theme of sexuality is very much into the domain of culture when we talk about adaptation. Dressing attire also serves a great role. A particular society of a particular time has its own fashion. Hence an adapter has to have a focus on those aspects for aranscultural adaptation. All of these aspects are important as *Mandaar* is essentially a transcultural adaptation of Shakespearean *Macbeth*.

*Macbeth* has been getting adapted for screen since a long time and Shakespeare remains one of the popular playwrights among the eastern world and the adapters and filmmakers find Shakespearean *Macbeth* attractive for adaptation for its engrossing and captivating themes of kingship, power, moral and emotional upheaval of the human psyche. Hence, *Macbeth* became one of the Major and prime examples for cross-cultural or transcultural Adaptation. Chun Wang in his article *Intermedial Representation of Asian Macbeth-s* has dealt with three films which are Asian adaptations of *Macbeth* and discussed how cultural meanings gave a different colour to the films. First, he talks about Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* and how the film is noted for its indebtedness to the formal aspects of highly stylized Noh plays while retaining the plotline of the source text. Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* echoes Japanese war literature and he readjusts Shakespeare's major elements to Japanese understanding about the relationships between the feudal lord and warriors. Next, he talks about the

2003 adaptation of *Macbeth* as *Maqbool* by Visal Bharadwaj and talked about the fact that how Bharadwaj has localized the theme of power, human conflict to a contemporary metropolitan Mumbai and how Bharadwaj has totally Indianized the plotline interestingly. Next this paper looks at *Kingdom of Desire* by Taiwan director Zing- Gou where the director employed Beijing Opera to capture the contemporary Taiwan audience and also observes how the director reformed the original *Macbeth* to fit it into the cultural frame of Taiwan. Where Chun Wang dealt with Asian representations, Asijit Datta and Patrali Chatterjee in their essay *Subtracting and Entering Shakespeare: Locating a Malayali Macbeth In Dileesh Pothan's Joji* talk about how Shakespeare entered into local Malayali culture and how *Joji* is basically an adaptation of *Macbeth* based on the process of amputation and subtraction. Basically, Pothan's *Joji* is a film that basically acts as an 'anthropomorphic text' where the text devours the source text it refers to, but at the same time retains similarity as *Macbeth* and *Joji* both the characters suffer from a hunt for centrality. This kind of Adaptations also increase the meaning making process through sheer touch of intertextuality. Datta and Chatterjee, interestingly noted here, "it is Pothan's eye of adaptation scanning, breaking, and reconstructing Shakespeare. Located inside Malayali culture and language, the film transmutes into a polymorphous meeting point that pushes the Shakespearean text to a point of un-recognition or misrecognition. Shakespeare is neither historicized nor preserved by Pothan; rather, Shakespeare, as text and history, is inflated, blasted, and splintered into microscopic filaments." Again, in the article *Theorizing the Neighbour: Arshinagar and Romeo and Juliet* the author Tarini Mookerjee focuses on a Bengali adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* by a famous Bengali director Aparna Sen. Here the author says that Aparna Sen chose the name of the movie very skilfully. the name of the movie is *Arshinagar(town of mirrors)*. Sen has taken the name from a very ancient Bengali folk song that is *Barir Kache Arshinagar*. Tarini, the author of the essay discusses in details the fact how Aparna Sen has connected Shakespearean tragedy with an ancient Bengali folk song composed by Laon Fakir. The film, though it is an adaptation, through the portrayal of the contemporary Indian rather Bengal's Socio-political image, reproduced Shakespearean Work in a very Indianized way. The author argues that *Arshinagar's* investment in idealism, in the values of empathy and unity, is coupled with a disavowal of realistic cinematic technique: a focus, in Sen's words, on the "real emotions and conflict" rather than the "everyday realism" (33) prevalent in film. Thus the article talks about the way in which the Film *Arshinagar* despite being an adaptation of Shakespearean work, became a successful documentation of its own time by featuring the love story of Rono (Romeo) and Juli(Juliet).

All of these Asian rather Indian adaptations play a significant role while we think of *Mandaar* as a contemporary transcultural Bengali adaptation of *Macbeth*. These adaptations give us a detailed insight as to how Shakespeare has been re-located, rewritten and at the same time how the contemporary audience grasped the essence of the Shakespearean classics portrayed through local lens.

### III. Research Question and research Gap:

As a result of the review of scholarly articles and essays one thing comes to the fore that adaptations are the medium of re-telling old stories, remaking them for the contemporary audience. It is a process of breaking the boundary across cultures through language, region, political map and so on. Shakespearean works play a crucial role in this field. Shakespearean plays have been re-written, translated across cultures since Restoration period. Shakespearean classic *Macbeth* has been adapted in based on the demands of Asian audience. The plotline has been reformed in a very Indianized way so as to fit to the taste of the new generation audience. And *Mandaar* could be considered as one of the most important Bengali Adaptations of Shakespearean *Macbeth*. But since, it is the latest released series on a Bengali OTT platform and it is released on December 17, no scholarly experiments have been done on it as of now. This is absolutely a fresh product of Transcultural Adaptation and there are a lot of scopes to explore on it. Hence this Paper would look into the series as a product of Adaptation and would be focusing on the aim to enquire how the socio-political and sexual landscape of contemporary Bengal is reflected in the Shakespearean adaptation of *Macbeth* as *Mandaar*.

### IV. Methodology and Theory:

To study this, I would be closely analysing the source text *Macbeth* and the adaptation, the series *Mandaar* and would be comparing both with each other to understand the minute changes through which the process of adaptation took place. For this particular study, I would be using Julia Kristeva's theory of Intertextuality and Ronald Barthes's concept of the 'death of the author'. To contextualize the source text to a coastal region of Bengal, what Anirban did was an act of pruning and adding to the source text *Macbeth*.

### V. Discussion

Mainly there are two key aspects based on which Anirban Bhattacharya, the director tried to contextualized Shakespearean *Macbeth* to the contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century Bengali audience. These are 1. The theme of sexuality, 2. The use of language. Though these two major aspects are intertwined with each other in

the course of the series, for a better understanding of the issues, I would be separately discussing about these two aspects below.

- Theme of Sexuality:

*Mandaar* from the very beginning of the series introduces to the audience the theme of sexuality and which is carried throughout the adapted text. The Scotland royal setting of 17<sup>th</sup> century has been located to Geilpur, a coastal area of Bengal. Firstly, to understand this aspect, one has to realize the changes in the characters. All the characters of play have been adapted and altered with very local names just to contextualize. The first episode of the series introduces the central character of the play *Mandaar* as skilful, equipped goon who works under a local leader of that coastal region *Dablu vai*, adaptation of Shakespearean *Duncan* in the series. In Shakespearean *Macbeth* *Ross* addresses *Macbeth* as “*Bellona’s bridegroom*” (Shakespeare 135) for his undefeatable courage and valour whereas in the series *Dablu Vai* says, “there is no one in the whole area who can take care of *Dablu’s* heinous activities better than *Mandaar*.” (*Mandaar*) *Dablu* addresses *Mandaar* as the best. Very interestingly here *Mandaar* is shown as impotent and unable to satisfy *Laili’s* (adaptation of the character of lady *Macbeth*) sexual urge. This theme of sexuality is carried throughout during the course, where at the beginning *Mandaar* in spite of having courage and valour has been shown as powerless. The very notion of the concept of power is intrinsically linked with the concept of sexual Potential. Again, in Act two, In *Macbeth* when Lady *Macbeth* provokes *Macbeth* to kill *Duncan*, she says, “Had he not resembled My father as he slept, I had done’t” (Shakespeare 179). But in the series, we can see that the director has incorporated an extra marital sexual relationship between *Laili* and *Dablu*. A question might arise here, when the source text portrayed a resemblance of Lady *Macbeth’s* father imagery, is it fair on the part of the director to portray such scenes? But in this context *Kristeva* writes, “The concept of intertextuality does away with the traditional distinction between right and wrong, high and low. Intertextuality aims at tensions and multiplicity within the single text which expands the scope of criticism beyond that particular work so as to discuss it with relation to whole literary system and to culture, society and history as well” (*Kristeva* 268) Till now, it has been firmly established that an adaptation and appropriation are mainly the subsections of the process of intertextuality. This notion of intertextuality is associated with *Julia Kristeva* which talks about no text is a singular entity and refers to multiple interpretation and thereby referring to other texts as well. *Maria* and *Zaragoza* in the article *Intertextuality: Origin and Development of the Concept*, have talked about the idea in details. According to *Julia Kristeva*, A text is always a dynamic entity which cannot have any fixed meaning. She argues that each text is an intersection of other text within it. This concept delivers texts not as ‘self-contained system’ (268) but as “differential and historical... open to traces of otherness” (268). *Maria* and *Zaragoza* also talk about the fact that how in the postmodern era there is an increasing tendency of this concept of intertextuality which now includes films into consideration. The concept of intertextuality does away with the traditional distinction between right and wrong, high and low. Intertextuality aims at tensions and multiplicity within the single text which expands the scope of criticism beyond that particular work so as to discuss it with relation to whole literary system and to culture, society and history as well. This concept, as *Maria* in the essay says, refers to *Ronald Barthes* as well. *Barthes* also says that a text depends not on the author or a writer but on the interpretation of readers. A birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author. Therefore, a text is always an open entity referring to and borrowing from other texts. Thus, if we take *Mandaar* into consideration, we can see, to contextualise the script, the director invites several deflections from the original *Macbeth* which violates absolute fidelity to the source text but at the same time, with its own use of language and themes emerges out to be an independent text altogether. Thus, Shakespearean *Macbeth* refers to other interpretations which it contains within it which gives rise to its adaptation in a Bengali cultural context as *Mandaar*.

Hence the question of being right or wrong becomes dismantled here. *Poonam Trivedi* in her essay *Filmy Shakespeare* writes, “The repeated resurfacing of such Shakespearean traces shows that Shakespeare is no longer the other, but exists as absorbed into the cultural imaginary of the nation, the result of a process elucidated by the cannibal theory of translation in which the original has to be “devoured” for the colonized to break free, and where the act of devouring is both a violation and an act of homage. This cannibalistic metaphor helps us to reconfigure the dynamism of the film industry with its borrowing or “consuming” of texts and their reproduction only in tangentially identifiable forms”. (157-158)

*Julie Sanders* also mentions, adaptation always involves intertextuality which dissipate the very notion of fidelity with the original text. According to *Kristeva*, the concept of intertextuality involves openness of a particular text. A text can refer to, argue with, borrow from various other texts. Therefore, *Mandaar*, despite containing deflections from the original text, becomes a successful adaptation of the original *Macbeth*. All the act of trimming and pruning has been done only to make the series relatable with the contemporary Bengali regional audience. The last two episode of the series portray *Mandaar* as all powerful. After the murder of *Dablu*, *Mandaar* takes charge of his position and becomes the leader of the entire coastal region. In the source text *Macbeth* also, after the murder of *Duncan*, *Macbeth* becomes the king of Scotland. Here the audience can find similarity with the source text but at the same time this part also has many disparities based on the chosen theme of sexuality. In this part, the series has portrayed *Mandaar* having sexual capacities after consulting

doctor regarding the same. Then again, here the series thus reinforces the main concept upon which it has been adapted. Having sexual potential is equivalent to having political power. This certainly brings forth the ongoing corrupted and socio-political ambience of contemporary Bengal with which the audience can relate directly.

- The use of Language:

There are other aspects also which reiterates the main theme of sexuality in the series. But among them the use of language catches the attention of the audience and the critics. The director has skilfully made use of the Bengali Language. The three witches play a significant important role throughout *Macbeth*. Actually, it is the prophecies of the witches that construct the main plot and acts as the driving force for every action in the play. In *Macbeth* there is a distinct element of super natural which lends it a flavour of its own. A mystery and an awe- a strange enactment of atmosphere, a certain richness of content and a depth of total appeal for which one feels particularly drawn to the play with its witches. *Macbeth* remains an excellent example of the Shakespearean use of supernatural imagery. Shakespeare begins the play with the witches in a gloomy atmosphere of “thunder and lightning”. (Shakespeare 128).

But here in *Mandaar* one can notice a shift, a change in the entire plot. The three witches are slightly altered and here the three are played by three separate characters. The first witch is played by an old woman, Majnu buri, second witch is her son Pedo and third which is played by a black cat, Kala. The prophecies which the witches make for Macbeth are interestingly altered using Bengali language only to contextualise for the audience. The Bengali prophecies in the series also carries the theme of sexuality from the very beginning.

At first, in original *Macbeth* one can observe that the play opens with ‘Thunder and Lightning’, which is one of Shakespeare’s shortest opening scenes evoking much that is to follow, disturbance in the nature, confusion and turmoil evil nature and riddling language that both offers and retracts meaning. Therefore, the scene and the atmosphere foretell the impending doom that is to come whereas in the series *Mandaar* we get to see Majnu buri, the first witch according to the Bengali one, foretells entire plot of the series and what is the supposed future of that small coastal area of Geilpur. All the prophecies are carved in a very interesting rhyming pattern which makes the play at once catchy to the eye of the audience.

At the very beginning Majnu buri says, “আকাশ যখন ডাকে/চাতক তাকায় থাকে/... রাক্ষস নিজে

বাপ/তাও থামেনি পাপ/সাগরের জল নোনা/তল পেটে কামনা” (“Akash jokhon Daake. /Chatok

Takay Thake...Rakkhos nije Bap/ Tao Thameni Paap/ Sagorer jol nona,/ Tolpete Kamona.”) (*Mandaar*) which means when the sky calls, reference to thunder and lightning / the bird chatok eagerly waits for the rain to come/ The monster himself is a father/ Still commits sin, reference to Dablu/ ocean water is salty/ it bears lust in its abdomen, reference to Laili. Actually, in the series, Dablu vai (the adaptation of Duncan’s character) is portrayed as a lustful corrupted character who shares illicit relationship with Laili (adaptation of Lady Macbeth). But in the original text we can see Duncan as a very benevolent king who cares for his kinsmen. Hence, we find slight deviation from the original.

Again, the series deviates from the original one when Macbeth meets the witches in the first act. The prophecies which Macbeth and Banquo encountered while returning from the battle field foretells Macbeth that he would be the king. The witches say “All hail Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Glamis, All hail Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor, All hail Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter” (Shakespeare 141) and for Banquo the witches says, “Lesser than Macbeth and greater, not so happy, yet much happier, though shalt ger kings, though thou be none.” (Shakespeare 142). Similarly enough, in the series *Mandaar* When Mandaar and Bonka encounter with Majnu Buri in a gloomy night she also tells about their upcoming

future. She says, “যে ঔবাজা/সে রাজা/যে বাপ, সে রাজার বাপ/ কালের কোলে কপাল ফেরে/কেও

রাজা/কেও রাজার বাপ” (“je Banja, se Raja/ Je bap se rajar baap,/ kaler kole kopal fere, keo

raja, keo rajar Baap)” (*Mandaar*) which means the person who is sexually impotent would be the king and who is already a father, would be the father of a king. Though both of the prophecies, in *Mabeth* and *Mandaar* bear similarity, the series incorporates the fact of Macbeth’s sexual impotency and incapability to become a father within that prophecy itself and thereby enforcing the sexual theme of the series ever again. Thus, through the magic of using Bengali language in an efficient rhyming pattern, the series not only catches the attention of the audience, also contextualises the original source text with the contemporary socio-political and sexual scenario. one of the key concepts of the play, “Fair is foul and foul is fair” (Shakespeare 128) is also very interestingly borrowed from the original *Macbeth and*

altered with the very mundane local style of Bengali language as “ ঔপোদ ইজ কপাল/কপাল ইজ

ঔপোদ” (pond is kopal/ kopal is pond). This kind of mundane shabby style of language is used

only to relocate the text to a very regional coastal area of Bengal where the people regularly use this kind of low Bengali instead of using the elite one. Towards the end, Macbeth, realising the riddling prophecies of the witches, tells that, “tomorrow, and tomorrow and tomorrow/Creeps in this petty pace from day to day/To the last syllable of recorded time”. In

the series, keeping the same flavour intact, the director shift the language to Bengali as “কাল

কাল বালের কাল, কালের ঔপোদে ঔপোদে তো আজ লেখা থাকে রে বুড়ি” (kal kal baler kal, kaler ponde ponde to aj lekha thake re buri) which means somewhat same with the original lines spoken by Macbeth. Only the style of language is deliberately changed for contextualization.

Throughout the series, there is a bond between the familiar with the unfamiliar. The endeavour to contextualize the prophecies sometimes causes deflections from the source text. The use of regional Bengali Language for making the adaptation relatable is an interesting point to note. Ronald Barthes in this context talked about the fact that a text is always open ended and can have different interpretations. Barthes sees authors as the controlling authority that prevents a work from becoming a text. As long as we assume that the author carries and owns the meaning of that work, it will remain a work and not become a text. Barthes writes, “the explanation of a work is always sought in the man and woman who produces it. As if it were always in the end, through the more or less transparent allegory of the fiction, the voice of a single person, the author, confiding in us” (Nayar 38). Thus, a work becomes a text when the reader refuses the authorial authority. The birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author. Thus, we can say that, though the series *Mandaar* carries deflections, it somewhat helped the original *Macbeth* to reach to a wider range of audience with a change in perspectives, thoughts depending on the regional culture and behavioural practices. Hence, *Mandaar* becomes a successful adaptation of Shakespearean Macbeth

## VI. Conclusion:

Located inside Bengali culture and language, the Series *Mandaar* transmutes into a polymorphous meeting point that pushes the Shakespearean text to a point of un-recognition or misrecognition. Shakespeare is neither historicized nor preserved by Anirban; rather, Shakespeare, as text and history, is inflated, blasted, and splintered into microscopic filaments. *Mandaar* as a character is rooted into the Bengali culture of twenty first century where his language, culture, behaviour and practices do not match with Shakespearean Macbeth. But Macbeth and *Mandaar* are on the same plane only if we consider their inclination towards overwhelming covetousness and an insatiable hunger for centrality. Both the characters execrate all kinds of margins, and their joint hamartia involves removing all objects that pose as obstructions in the journey from the margin to the centre.

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