

Unit: 19: Rewriting and Adapting Shakespeare

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Adaptation involves transposition and appropriation and ranges from re-productions to transformation of the original in differing degrees. It abridges, transforms and elaborates a work. Sometimes they become independent and get adapted themselves, and is not to be measured in terms of fidelity alone.

Like the editions, translations, literary revisions reversions, intergeneric texts (graphic novels, cartoon scripts etc.) which belong to page adaptations, other media also have different adaptations of Shakespeare. Shakespeare's availability in many languages as adaptations and communicative rewritings make his Elizabethan English difficult and uncommunicative. One fails to know the original. Laurence Olivier was known for his faithful Shakespeare reproductions. It is said that once he asked an old lady leaving his *Othello* at the interval why she was leaving. She replied: "I had seen it in Yiddish a few years ago at Brooklyn. Too much is lost in this translation."

In this unit we will be looking at Shakespeare and Adaptations, Localization in Adaptations, Rewriting and Adapting Shakespeare in Literature and Films, Local Interpretations, and Adaptations and Intertextuality.

Shakespeare and Adaptations

We know that Shakespeare is being adapted and rewritten all across the world. His scripts were meant to be performed on the stage in his period. He adapted and rewrote the works of his predecessors and even contemporaries to respond to the needs of his period. Similarly, Shakespeare himself got rewritten and adapted according to the needs of the later periods. The ideological and political readings of Shakespeare which we come across today show this.

Shakespeare's scripts were meant to be performed—first by Lord Strange's Men and later by the group known variously as Lord Chamberlain's Men, Lord Hunson's Men, and finally the King's Men. These were performed mainly at the Theatre, the Globe, the Blackfriars, English royal court, some private houses, and a few innyards. Even during his own time, the staging of a play was a unique experience, unlike cinema which is but a mechanical reproduction.

Shakespeare himself had adapted the works of many past writers, his predecessors and contemporaries. Robert Greene was not unjustified in saying that Shakespeare was "an upstart crow beautified by our feathers". Even the First Folio was neither entirely Shakespeare's nor did it contain all the works of Shakespeare.

After his death, and probably during his lifetime itself, Shakespeare's plays were being re-written for page and on stage, in English and translations. The good quartos, the bad quartos, and the folios show how his scripts were played differently. It is said that the First Folio text of *Measure for Measure* is Middleton's adaptation of Shakespeare's play in 1621 (Taylor & Jowet, 1993). It was his modern editors, beginning with Nicholas Rowe (1709), who 'recovered' Shakespeare. In this process, his plays gradually got adapted on the page, stage, screen and digital formats over a long period. The motivation for these simple to contrapuntal adaptations ranged from pure adulation to insidious political subversion.

The trend of a period gets reflected in Shakespeare adaptations. The Restoration stage saw all Shakespeare plays except *Othello* and *1 Henry IV* rewritten. Some were adapted in more ways than one. Today, it might look strange that *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, *King Lear*, *Coriolanus*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Winter's Tale* etc. were not appreciated in their original form, but only in adaptations by the Restoration audience. The Restoration dramatists experimented with adapting. Sometimes, two plays were conflated into one as William Davenant did in *The Law Against Lovers* (1662) combining *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Charles Johnson's *Love in a Forest* (1723) not only combined *Pyramus and Thisbe* but also changed the course of the play by getting Celia and Jaques betrothed. Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida, or, Truth Found Too Later* (1679) changed Shakespeare by making Cressida commit suicide to prove her innocence. Aaron Hill's *King Henry V, or, The Conquest of France by the English* (1723) adds a new character, Harriet, the scorned ex-mistress of Henry, disguising herself as a page and pursuing him to France. William Hawkins's *Cymbeline* (1759) observes classical unities unlike in Shakespeare's version.

He is also changed after the spirit of the age. The twentieth century's response to its concerns could be seen in Bertolt Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (1941), Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1966), Edward Bond's *Lear* (1971), Eugene Ionesco's *Macbeth* (1972), Arnold Wesker's *The Merchant* (1976), Heiner Muller's *Hamlet Machine* (1977), Paula Vogel's *Desdemona: A Play About a Handkerchief* (1993), Djanet Sear's *Hamlet Duet* (1997), Charles Marowitz's *The Marowitz Shakespeare* (2000), etc. These productions ideologically position Shakespeare and become contrapuntal readings of the Bard.

Plays have always been used for political messages and Shakespeare has been read contrapuntally on page, stage, and screen. Adaptations of *The Tempest* in the postcolonial period prove this. David Malouf's *Blood Relations* (1988) evokes Australian spiritual life; Phillip Osment's *This Island's Mine* (1988) is a discourse on political, ethnic, and sexual subalternities; and Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête* (1969) is a postcolonial discourse featuring a white Prospero, a mulatto Ariel, and a black Caliban engaged in a struggle for power creating a discourse on race and decolonization. Bob Carlton's Jukebox musical *Return to Forbidden Planet* is a sci-fi version set to golden rock-and-roll classics. These versions challenge Shakespeare's text by negating its hegemony in the light of the present and responding to the cultural, geographical, and ideological differences between the original and the new.

Localization in adaptation

Local narrative forms and native imagination are used in localizing and adapting Shakespeare. His translations vary according to whether they are faithful translations, rewritings, adaptations, reversions, subversions etc. An adaptation is assessed by comparing it with the original in terms of faithfulness to and divergence from the form and content of the original.

Shakespeare is appropriated into local traditions in *Jatra Shakespeare* in West Bengal; into classical forms like Kathakali in Kerala and Kabuki in Japan, and also informally into carnivalesque *Pierrot* at Carriacou featuring players reciting Shakespeare speeches from *Julius Caesar*. Apart from celebrated Shakespeare appropriations like Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest*, and Salman Rushdie's revisiting of *Hamlet* in his "Yorick"; one finds Shakespeare appropriations in part in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*. Individual works are appropriated locally. For example, *The Comedy of Errors* was appropriated as a play into Indian format as *Bhranti Bilas* (1863) in Bengali by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, as a Hindi film *Do Dooni Chaar* (1968), and again as *Angoor* (1980) in Hindi, a Malayalam play *Aalmarattam* (1866) by Oommen Philipose, and into local South African language as

Diphosho-phoho (1930) by Solomon Plaatje. Shakespeare is also regionally appropriated by Aboriginal adaptations in Australia, Dalit Adaptations in India, Québécois adaptations in Canada, Cuban adaptations; black adaptations in the US and Caribbean islands, and he is appropriated in contexts in prisons, schools, universities, and political campaigns. (Dionne & Kapadia, 2008)

Each performance is unique as these performances cannot be compared unless they are recorded in photographs, audio, video or film; and as Again, the divergent forms of performance involving acting bodies, performance conventions, (dance, ballet, opera, *Kathakali*, *Kabuki* etc.); or involving singing, music and recitations (like *Kathaprasamgam* and *Hakawati* performance). Their enunciations are also not identical. The screen gives mechanical reproductions of performance and involves repetitive and non-modifiable performance records. Cinema, TV, radio etc. are examples. Digital versions refer to the digital texts, images or interactive scenes.

Acknowledged and unacknowledged adaptations and rewritings make Shakespeare universally familiar. Like the innocent old lady who thought *Hamlet* was a “string of quotations”, it is possible that an uninitiated Indian might find *Romeo and Juliet* stealing the plot of *Bobby* (1973), *Measure for Measure* that of *Dil Chahta Hai* (2001), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that of *10 ml Love* (2010) etc.

Many Bollywood adaptations do not acknowledge their debt to Shakespeare. Apart from *Angeer* none of the movie adaptations of *The Comedy of Errors* acknowledge Shakespeare. Its unacknowledged adaptations in Bollywood itself include *Ghustakhi Maaf* (1969), *Biwi O Biwi* (1981) *Angeer* (1982), *Yeh To Kamaal Ho Gayi* (1982), *Aankhen* (1993), *Ram Aur Shyam* (1996) *Bade Miyan Chota Miyan* (1999), and *Anari No. 1* (1999) etc. So do the Hindi adaptations of *The Taming of the Shrew* like *Chori Chori* (1956), *Manchali* (1973), *Ponga Pandit* (1975), *Mard* (1983), *Betaab* (1983), *Naukar Biwi Ka* (1983), *Jungle* (1996) etc. More than negligence, it is the long familiarity with their adaptations in local languages through Parsi theatre that makes them unaware of the debt.

There are several Shakespeare ballet adaptations like Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* (1938), Jose Limon's *The Moor's Pavane* (1949), George Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1962), Frederik Ashton's *The Dream* (1964), John Cranko's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1969), Lar Lubovitch's *Othello* (1997); Christopher Wheeldon's *The Winter's Tale* (2014) etc.

Shakespeare is so universal that even the slightest similarity with him gets highlighted. As soon as the frame of a Shakespeare story is used, Shakespeare gets evoked. For example, *A Thousand Acres*, an American novel about a family of three daughters living with an incestuous father who subjects them to 'love test' evokes *King Lear* although there is no such connotation in the original.

In English itself, Shakespeare's texts have been rewritten as poems, short stories, novels, plays and movie scripts. His adaptations on page, stage and movie get more noticed than the adaptations of other writers. We also can see that reversions are politically motivated re-readings and these do not mirror his words, locations, characters or works directly. Instead, they invert and challenge his works and even his assumptions.

Even Shakespeare the person gets absorbed into the local native imaginations so much that some even give him a local habitation and a name. The Germans who translated him first claim him as their own as *unser Shakespeare* ('our Shakespeare'). AW Schlegel even called him *ganz unser* ('entirely ours'). A local Shakespeare festival in India is titled *Hamara Shakespeare* ('Our Shakespeare'). Some Indian dialects refer to him as *Sulapani* in Telegu, *Shekhu-pir* ('a wise man') in Kannada, *Sheshappa Aiyer* in Tamil. He is

Shashibiya in Chinese, and *Sheikh Zubair* in Arabic based on phonetic similarity. In Italian, his name is translated as *Crollanza* or *Scrollanza* ('shake-spear') and is regarded as a Sicilian.

Novel, Plays, Movies

The repetitive nature of the literature makes it an interactive concept. Texts influence each other, and past works and sometimes even contemporary works are mirrored in them. Umberto Eco puts it well in his "Postscript" to the *Name of the Rose*:

"I discovered what writers have always known (and have told us again and again): books always speak of other books, and every story tells a story that has already been told" (20).

Rewriting or refers to the reformulation of an existing literary or rhetorical theme or topic in a different narrative register. It reconstructs new works of art using already existing subjects introduced in older texts. This imitative literary production is a process of refashioning existing themes and topics in a new literary form.

Shakespeare's works have been rewritten extensively across the world and have been transformed and appropriated as novels, plays and movies across the world. His theme, titles, characters have inspired literary works and writers across centuries, languages and countries. They have adapted him from many perspectives. These can be seen from the adaptations of some of his plays like *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Taming of the Shrew* etc.

The most adapted Shakespeare play is *Romeo and Juliet*. Anne Fortier's *Juliet* (2010) adapts *Romeo and Juliet* in the present day and 14th century, Siena. It is about a Julie Jacobs who learns that the Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* is her ancestor Giulietta. Irving Shulman's *West Side Story* (1958) was made a movie of the same name. Some recent novels based on *Romeo and Juliet* include Malorie Blackman's *Noughts & Crosses*, Rachel Caine's *Prince of Shadows*, Stacey Jay's *Juliet Immortal*, Lois Leveen's *Juliet's Nurse*, Rachael Lippincott's *Five Feet Apart*, Cassandra Claire's *City of Bones*, Gloria Chao's *American Panda* which is based in Japan, Jen Bennet's *Starry Eyes* set in a business rivalry, Cindy Pon's *Want* set in Taiwan, Rebecca Serle's *When You were Mine*, Martina Boone's *Compulsion*.

Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) draws upon the obsession of *Macbeth* and *King Lear* to portray the hero's over-reaching hubristic quest. Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr Ripley*, (1955) is a version of *Macbeth* and features an unremorseful psychopath. Sally O'Reilly's *Dark Aemilia* is also an adaptation of *Macbeth*.

Hamlet continues to fascinate modern readers. Iris Murdoch *The Black Prince*, (1973) mirrors *Hamlet* play by portraying obsessive love between two writers. Bret Easton Ellis's *Lunar Park* (2005) carries an epigraph from *Hamlet*, connecting it with the theme of haunting by a father. The names such as Elsinore, Osric, Fortinbras also connect it to *Hamlet*. David Wroblewski's *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* (2008) is a modern take on *Hamlet* in rural Wisconsin.

Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* (1991) uses the *King Lear* motif in the modern context. Moore's *Fool* is a bawdy adaptation of *King Lear* by Lear's fool. It also refers to the other plays of Shakespeare.

Garry Kilworth's *A Midsummer Nightmare* (1997) shows Titania falling in love with a human baby. In Michael Buckley's *Once Upon a Crime* (2007) features child detectives trying to find King Oberon's killer. Chris Adrian's *The Great Night* (2011) is a one-night interaction between three heartbroken mortals and the fairy world in peril. Although its title is from *The Taming of the Shrew*, Amanda Craig's *Love in Idleness* (2003) adapts *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in a Tuscany villa where a London-based American attorney and his wife are on a summer holiday.

Angela Carter's *Wise Children* (1991) tells the story of Dora and Nora who are illegitimate twin daughters of a Shakespeare actor. It is based on *The Taming of the Shrew*. It refers to and quotes from 26 Shakespeare playsⁱ and his *Sonnets*. Anne Tyler's *Vinegar Girl* (2016) is set in modern-day Baltimore and adapts *The Shrew* to tell how a father coerces his daughter to get married.

Shakespeare has supplied titles and themes of many works of fiction. Some are adaptations: As we have seen, *Love in Idleness* (2003) adapts the *Dream* and takes the title from *The Shrew*. Somerset Maugham's *Cakes and Ale* (1930) takes the title from *The Twelfth Night* and also adapts it. Some novels use his words and phrases as titles. Sometimes, different authors use the same title, as in *The Dogs of War* by Sheila Keenan and also by Frederick Forsyth. The title is from *Julius Caesar*. Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) is from *As You Like It*, William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) is from *Macbeth*; Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) is from *The Tempest*, David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* (1996) is from *Hamlet*; and Myrlin Hermes's *The Lunatic, the Lover, and the Poet* (2010) come from the *Dream*, and Anthony Burgess's *Nothing Like the Sun* (1964) comes from Sonnet 130.

Some Shakespeare play gives rise to many titles. *The Tempest* gave titles to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*; Andrew Boyd's *Our Little Life*, Andrew Soutar's *Strange Bedfellows*, Jenny Diski's *Nothing Natural*, Kathleen O'Brien's *Our Little Life*, Mary Stewart's *This Rough Magic*, Norman Elder's *This Thing of Darkness*, Philip Owens's *Picture of Nobody*, Robert Peters's *Where the Bee Sucks*, David Pace's *As Dreams are Made on*, Robert Bloch's *Such Stuff as Screams are Made of*, and Thomas M. Disch's *The Dreams Our Stuff Is Made of*.

Many novels are also based on Shakespeare's characters. Robert Nye's *Falstaff* (1976), John Updike's *Gertrude and Claudius* (2000), Lois Leveen's *Juliet's Nurse* (2014), Virginia Woolf's *Orlando: A Biography* (1928); Christopher Moore's *Fool* (2009) etc. There have also been fictional accounts of Shakespeare's life like Robert Nye's *Mrs. Shakespeare* (1993) and *The Late Mr. Shakespeare* (1998), Jude Morgan's *The Secret Life of William Shakespeare* (2012), Ros Barber's *The Marlowe Papers* (2012).

The effort to dislodge Shakespeare from his canonic centrality has only contributed to strengthening Shakespeare's canonicity. For example, Afro-Canadian author Djanet Sears's *Harlem Duet* (1997) tells the story of Othello's first wife who was abandoned in favour of a white woman. Orson Welles staged *Voodoo Macbeth* adapting it to the magic of a Caribbean island. The Reduced Shakespeare Company's *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)* in 97-minutes was inspired by Tom Stoppard's *Fifteen Minute Hamlet*. All these subversive texts have only increased the popularity of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's appeal as a playwright also lies in how his plays are adapted by other languages, cultures, media, and nationality. One may see this by looking at how *Macbeth* gets unlocked when it is presented in local formats. Some adaptations of *Macbeth* include silent movies by J. Stuart Blackton (US, 1908) John Emerson (US, 1916), and those by Orson Welles (US, 1948), Roman Polanski (US, 1971), Arthur Allan Seidelman (UK, 1981), Jeremy Freeston (UK, 1997), Geoffrey Wright (Australia, 2006), Justin Kurzel (UK, 2015).

Adaptations such as Ken Hughes's *Joe MacBeth* (UK, 1955) set it in a Chicago gang war, Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (Japan, 1957) set in medieval Japan, Sande N. Johnsen's *Teenage Gang Debs* (USA, 1966) telling the story of a teenage street gang girl, William Reilly's *Men of Respect* (USA, 1991) set within in New York mafia, Billy Morrissette's *Scotland, Pa.* (USA, 2001) set in a fast-food restaurant in the 1970s, and Vishal Bhardwaj's *Maqbool* (India, 2004) set in the Mumbai underworld.

Local interpretation

A look at the politics of the production and reproduction of Shakespeare shows the importance of regional cultures in producing sustainable Shakespeare discourses (Cohen, 1976). He is rewritten to create a discourse out of his texts.

The readings of *The Tempest* by African and Caribbean writers like Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire influenced the Negritude movement, associated with Léopold Senghor. These had a significant impact on how African cultures engaged hegemonic Francophone and Anglophone cultures, and challenge their ascribed subaltern status. Shakespeare was a favourite of Nelson Mandela. He read him during his imprisonment on Robben Island and wanted Welcome Msomi to revive his African Shakespeare interpretation of *Macbeth -- uMabatha* (1970), a musical based on the famous Zulu chief King Shaka and based on Zulu culture and African Theatre. Nelson Mandela who was in prison in 1970, requested Msomi in 1995 to revive. Msomi revived it for Mandela's birth centenary in 2016 ([Msomi](#)). It is also significant that Africans resented when President Thabo Mbeki quoted Shakespeare in English. They wanted to engage Shakespeare in African reality, as the Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the South African writer Mazisi Kunene had done.

When one adapts and interprets the play in the local context, one has to be sensitive about the local traditions and sensibilities. An example is Richard Cumberland who transforms Shylock into a philanthropist in the spirit of the Enlightenment Age in *The Jew*. *The Merchant of Venice* could never be fully Indianized because of its racial issues. In the Indian context, Bharatendu Harischandra portrayed Shylock the Jew as a Jain, traditional Indian moneylender in his *Durlabh Bandhu*. Still, it fails to address the racial tension and hostility since the Jains are treated as part of the Hindu community and not as outsiders, like the Jews in Christian Europe. Pammal Sambandha Mudaliyar the Tamil changed Shylock into a Jain money lender in the Hindu Saiva Tamil society of Vanipuri. Here, it becomes more communicative because of the difference between the Tamil Saivite contexts. The hostility between the Jains and Saivite Hindus is largely forgotten but makes more sense in connoting the hostility in Shakespeare's text.

Malayalam Shakespeare adaptations of *Othello* as *Abdulla* (1965) by Pattahil Radhakrishna Menon localize it in the context of the Hindu-Muslim tension of Malabar, while *Premahomam* (1956) by MR Velupilla Sastri sets in the sub-caste conflict within the Hindu Nair community in Kerala. Jairaj made it into a Malayalam movie *Kaliyattam* (1997) in the backdrop of Theyyam performers of Malabar, and Sadanam Balakrishnan rendered it as *Kathakali Othello* (1996).

The better organized Parsi theatre adapted Shakespeare and interpreted him for social and political purposes also. A gender-retelling of *Macbeth* from the perspective of Lady Macbeth could be found in *Vasundhara* (1910). As politically sensitive monarchies resent overtly political plays like *Macbeth*, writers make use of the possibilities of other plays. Arab writers, for example, articulate their political message using Shakespeare. *A Palestinian Love Story* adapts *Romeo and Juliet* to narrate the story of Arab-Israeli conflict; *The Al Hamlet Summit* tells makes its political commentary on Arab monarchies loud and clear. The future Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser acted in *Julius Caesar* which portrayed the British as Caesar, sending a clear political message against British occupation. Tanzanian future president Julius Nyerere translated *Julius Caesar* (*Julius Kaizari*, 1963) and *The Merchant of Venice* (*Mabapari wa Venisi*, 1969) into his local language, Swahili. South African political leaders like Nelson Mandela and Ali Mazrui were conscious of the political use of Shakespeare (Mazrui, 1967).

Even romantic tragedy like *Romeo and Juliet* is cleverly exploited for political purposes across the world. *Indian Romeo and Juliet* (1912) by Laurence Trimble who sets it in the Mohawk and Huron tribes in the early days of cinema itself. Its Urdu version *Bazm-e-Fani* added comic scenes to poke fun at the Indians who blindly imitate the British. *A West Side Story* highlights the problem of the US black community. In the Middle East as *The Palestinian Love Story*, it becomes a powerful discourse of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Its Indian adaptations have become discourses of language (*Ek Dujhe Ke Liye*, 1981), class, caste (Saudagar, 1991) and religion (*Bobby*, 1973), and family feuds (*Qayamat se Qayamat Tak*, 1988; *Ishaaqzade*, 2012; *Issaq*, 2013), clan-fight (*Goliyon ki Rasleela Ram-Leela*, 2013) in the Indian context. Its many film versions from India act to comment on the religious, linguistic, cast, and the class divisions within the society.

Adaptation and intertextuality

Julia Kristeva puts forward the concept of intertextuality to refer to the Bakhtinian idea of dialogism. She suggested that instead of looking for the single and mono-logical meaning, one may better look for polyvalence, in the author-reader dialogue constituting the text, and the text's dialogue with other texts, which constitutes it as intertext (Kristeva, 1980). For Roland Barthes, a text is not a "repository of an objective signification" which can be "embalmed" (Barthes, 1981), but an activity, than an object.

Intertextuality could operate directly through revisions, translations, quotations, and use of sources; indirectly through conventions and genres; and discursively through paralogues. Revision refers to the obvious close relationship between two versions of the same text and is caused by exigencies like editorial, censorship, theatrical interventions. The differences between Shakespeare's quartos and folios, and the change of Sir Old Castle as Falstaff are some example.

Translation is the transference of a text into another language. Quotations can be intertextual and Shakespeare himself uses quotations intertextually as Richard Simpson had pointed out how Hamlet's "Come, the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge" (3.2.251-2) is a terse mimicking of a speech in Richard III (1591-2) which uses "for revenge" a dozen times and uses

"The screeking Raven sits croaking for revenge.
Whole heads of beasts come bellowing for revenge."

Indirectly intertextuality operates through the use of conventions and genres. Shakespeare remote sources through secondary means. Shakespearean drama uses Senecan conventions like chorus, messenger, stichomythia, soliloquy etc. and Terentian conventions like eavesdropping, disguise, witty servant, bragging soldier, old interrupters etc. The subtlety and evocative power of generic intertextuality could be seen from Shakespeare's evocation of the sonnet sequence in Petrarch's *Canzoniere* in his sonnet sequence in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and in Romeo's use of Petrarchan ship at sea imagery (5.3.116-18) comparing a lover. Discursively, Shakespeare also evokes intellectual and political echoes from other texts. References to biblical, classical, political and English contemporary writers are found in abundance in Shakespeare.

That most of Shakespeare's texts are taken from other sources is an acknowledged fact. Oliver North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*, Holinshed's *Chronicles* are some of Shakespeare's proximate sources. Although the sources of Shakespeare's texts are well-documented, in the popular imagination he is the source. He is used intertextually in almost all works of literature across the world through revisions, translations, quotations, as the source, through conventions and genres, and through discursive evocations. Other units in the course will discuss them in detail. If a local discourse uses a

Shakespearean frame to highlight its discourse, it gets a wider appeal. On the other hand, even the classical material used by Shakespeare becomes unnoticed because of his aura. For example, Holinshed's chronicles are ignored as the Scottish history of *Macbeth* and the old English story *King Lear* come to us through Shakespeare; Similarly, *Othello* comes from Cynthia's *Gli Hecatommithi*; and that *Hamlet* from the Latin book *Saxo Grammaticus*. After passing through Shakespeare's hands, they carry the indelible stamp of Shakespeare. No Arab literature could immortalize Cleopatra as Shakespeare did, and Hamlet has become larger than life because of Shakespeare.

The Shakespeare connection is even evoked in an anachronistic manner. Stories which predate Shakespeare also get linked to Shakespeare. For example, the pre-Shakespeare tragic romances like *Laila Majnu*, *Heer Ranjha*, and *Sohni Mahiwal* often get compared to *Romeo and Juliet*. Many Indian movies which are speculated to be based on *Romeo and Juliet* might also have been derived from the Indian sources themselves.

It is also common to compare a character in a modern story with a Shakespeare character displaying the same traits. A jealous husband, an ambitious person, someone hesitating to make a decision, a too dotting father, a pair of reckless lovers, a quarrelsome spinster, a scheming villain etc. are identified respectively with Shakespeare characters like Othello, Macbeth, Hamlet, Lear, Romeo and Juliet, Catherine the shrew, and Iago, although such characters have existed even before Shakespeare, and most of them are not Shakespeare's independent creation. Such pre-figurations are overlooked because of the centrality of Shakespeare in the literary polysystem.

ⁱ CE, MND, WT, AWW, Ant., AYLI, Cor., Ham., 4H1, 4H2, H5, JC, Lear, Mac., MM, MV., Ado, Oth., 3R, 2R, Rom, MWW, TS, Tmp., Tim, TN