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BA English Honours | Semester VI | ENG6EJ303

Adaptations in Literature

Module 2: Adaptations in Film: Darabont, Kurosawa, and Vishal Bhardwaj • Comprehensive Notes

Chapter 2: Cinematic Transpositions: Global and Indian Contexts

Cinematic adaptation demands translating literary interiority, abstract themes, and textual metaphors into visual composition, sound design, and actor performance.

2.1 Frank Darabont's The Shawshank Redemption (1994)

Adapted from Stephen King's 1982 novella *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption*, Frank Darabont's film elevates a pulp prison drama into a profound allegory of human hope, resilience, and institutional critique. Through Morgan Freeman's warm, contemplative voice-over narration and Thomas Newman's transcendent musical score, Darabont translates King's literary prose into enduring cinema.

2.2 Transcultural Shakespeare: Akira Kurosawa and Vishal Bhardwaj

Adapting Shakespeare across global cultures demonstrates the universal vitality of dramatic archetypes. Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957) transposes Shakespeare's *Macbeth* into feudal samurai Japan, utilizing Noh theater aesthetics, mist, and dynamic framing.

In India, director Vishal Bhardwaj accomplished the brilliant Indianization of Shakespeare's tragedies: transposing *Macbeth* into Mumbai underworld gang warfare in *Maqbool* (2003), *Othello* into rural Uttar Pradesh politics in *Omkara* (2006), and *Hamlet* into the militarized conflict of 1990s Kashmir in *Haider* (2014), demonstrating how classical drama critiques contemporary postcolonial politics.

Advanced Critical Theory, Hermeneutics & Literary Praxis

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Critical inquiry into Module 2: Adaptations in Film: Darabont, Kurosawa, and Vishal Bhardwaj reveals how textual forms construct meaning through complex aesthetic strategies and structural choices:

- **Structuralism and Semiotic Deconstruction:** The organization of signs, tropes, and syntactical structures establishes narrative authority while simultaneously revealing internal fissures. Binary oppositions embedded within the discourse—such as center versus margin, tradition versus modernity, and subjective interiority versus objective reality—are systematically problematized through textual slippages and ambiguous signifiers.
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