On Remakes and Translations: a Study of the Tangle between Hindi Films and Popular Culture with Special Reference to *Paheli*

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In the Beginning: on Mass Culture and Popular Culture

How to differentiate between mass culture and popular culture? Is there even a difference? Theodor W. Adorno famously suggested that mass media reserves the right to dizzying reductions, monolithic aggression and false representation; entitled producers of mass culture propagated through mass media seek to convert the audience into complicit addicts of stereotypes of their invention and infliction, stereotypes that further entrench the status quo, its alarming innocence and embedded inequities/exclusions.[1] Such an understanding of mass media and mass culture axiomatises the existence of popular culture as the binaristic counter – that ecology of culture authentic and organic, created cultivated remade and preserved in collaboration, by the people across generations.

Given our 2017 spatial-temporal locations, is it possible to charter and preserve the afore-mentioned alterative territories for mass culture and popular culture, positing them thereby as binaries piously inoculated and invisibilised from each other? The plurality of "locations" unfortunately embeds a hunger for unitaries in the contemporary glocal[2] context; competing media houses clone programmes of entertainment and spectacles of outrage, with variations limited to titles or the time-slot. Their charter regarding the media non-people or non-news, to be exiled

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[1]Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception." *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr. California: Stanford University Press, 2002. 94-136. Print.

Also, Adorno, Theodor W. "How to look at Television." *The Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television* 8.3 (1954): 213-35. Print.

[2] The term "glocal" is a portmanteau of "global" and "local," suggesting the necessary nexus between the twinned spatial qualifiers in a late capitalist world. The term "glocalization" was first used by Roland Robertson in his analysis of this nexus.

Qtd. in Zygmunt Bauman, "After the Nation State-What?" *Globalization: The Reader.* Eds. John Beynon and David Dunkerley. London: The Athlone Press, 2000. 250-260. Print.

always from visibility, seems uncannily identical. Media-houses and film studios, keepers of the trans-habit[3] post colonies, remain as invested in their lust for cosmetic variations as in the death of alternatives. The lucrative, increasingly sanitized domain of art and culture which they endorse and define, must whet both the hungers, however divergent on surface. According to this diktat, the mass-culture avatar of art and representation must dis(re)member its roots and forget to disturb or question, beyond the ascribed chore of entertaining or creating clique-capital for the creative, complicit. In such a matrix, the global invades, translates and curates the local as its tender totem;[4] mass culture cannibalizes, and finally masquerades as popular culture. A lethally potent illustration of this phenomenon in the South Asian context could be the tangle of the Hindi film industry – a classic instance of Adorno-ian mass culture spawned by a miniscule capital-hoarding elite, and made an addiction for a South Asian, even global audience spread across linguistic, religious, caste and colour divides – with locally circulated narratives emplaced in popular culture across diverse spatial and temporal frames.

"Entanglement" spells a post-structural spin on the convention of the abyss between binaries; it invokes a flow to and fro between counter-categories thus twinned. What happens when a mainstream Hindi film adapts popular regional folktales for its screenplay? What does that entanglement entail – collusion or colonization? Does the film with a mass outreach loom as the

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[3]"Trans-habit", a term used by Ranjan Ghosh in *Thinking Literature across Continents*, refers to the liminal habit of crossing over or exceeding various shadowlines that partition disciplines and territories.
See Ghosh, Ranjan and J. Hillis Miller. Introduction. *Thinking Literature across Continents*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2016. 3. Print.
Ironically, mass media with its boundary-bending clout in making and unmaking opinion across issues ranging from economics, election, nation, the transnational, artistic and protestant politics to farmhouse or filmy parties, increasingly claim ownership of the "trans-habit" today. The claim represents a neo-colonial lust to travesty the possibility of alterities and conversations with various others braided with the term, for mass media including mainstream Hindi films tend to tether the "trans-habit" to stereotypes.
[4] For colonial possibilities of the import and translation of elements exotic and outsourced from colonies, see Leask, Nigel. Introduction. *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. 1-12. Print.
Also see Bassnett, Susan, and Harish Trivedi. "Of colonies, cannibals and vernaculars." *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*. Ed. Bassnett and Trivedi. London: Routledge, 1999. 1-18. Print.
Such colonial appropriations and transplantations remain as resonant in the neo-colonial marketing of brands and totems as ethnic orientalia, robbed of context and consumed as kitsch. Neo-colonial appropriations could range from the chhau masks of Purulia martial dance, sold as interior decoration for tour-savvy urban consumers, to the use of Kashmiri musical instruments rabab and santoor in the number "Haminasto" from *Fitoor* (2016), a film which otherwise curates Kashmir as passive colonial picturesque.

singular template from mass culture ready to cannibalize all other locally circulated and hitherto popular translations/interpretations? Could Bhansali's ghoomar-ghooming, uber-Rajputani Padmavati[5] exile from public memory the outlier Sinhali princess and protagonist of Malik Muhammad Jayasi's Sufi romance *Padmavat* (1540)? Yet *Padmavat* remains the ur-text for the folk tale variously re-created in anuvad[6] since the seventeenth century by courtly bards of Rajasthan, political agent of the English East India Company Colonel James Tod, and Syed Alawol and Abanindranath Tagore, Bengali storymakers from the seventeenth and early twentieth centuries respectively.

Bhansali's *Padmavati*, re-baptized *Padmavat* on the Censor Board's counsel, first awaited release in India amidst huge furor and has since been released, received as a vapid subscriber of stereotypes. We could, however, kindle our quest on the web between Hindi films and local folktales with a focus on *Paheli* (2005), another film exorbitantly budgeted, set in exotic, a temporal Rajasthan and based on a popular folk-tale re-told through plural media in multiple spaces and tenses across the subcontinent. The film was produced by Red Chillies Entertainment, co-owned by Shahrukh Khan and Gauri Khan. In this paper, I aim to explore the web between multiple renditions of the folktale that inspired *Paheli*, across geographies and mediums, popular culture and mass culture. I shall also explore the politics in the transformation of the text as it dispersed from popular culture to mass culture. Folklores, almost by definition, inhabit a fluid geography of origins and travel; they move, disperse, are trans-created and trans-habituated across maps and borders. Sources I have explored for this paper, too, are as eclectic, composed in Hindi and English, ranging from the internet and cinema to short stories and plays based on folklore. A brief look at some of the narratives that

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[5] As I write the paper, the film is yet to be released and has irked violent protests and fatwas from outrage-vendors baying for an unrepresentable, uni-dimensional Padmavati the pure; impressions about Bhansali's Padmavati and Alauddin Khilji, have been gathered from the trailer and the ghoomar song released online.

And as the paper is about to be published online in *Lyceum*, Bhansali's Padmavati has finally secured an audience as *Padmavat*, though its shrill binaries seem far removed from Jayasi's layered allegory.

[6] "Anuvad" etymologically signifies "saying after". The word plays on an underlying temporal metaphor – to say after, to repeat – unlike its English/Latin equivalent "translation" which embeds a spatial dimension, the etymological signification of "translation" being "to carry across". "Anuvad" is less anxious about fidelity to the original than "translation"; it invites re-interpretation, even re-creation of originals in the process of re-telling, according the anuvadak greater agency as translator/storyteller.

preceded and inspired *Paheli* would unfold the subversive trans-habits and palimpsests that imprint tales emergent from popular culture.

Peeling the Layers of an Onion: Past Lives of *Paheli* in Print and Popular Culture

According to the maker of *Paheli*, Amol Palekar, the film is based on a folktale rooted in Rajasthan. The tale features in the collection of fabulous folklore compiled by the Rupayan Sansthan archivists of village Borunda in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan.[7] Iconic Rajasthan-based author Vijaydan Detha retold the narrative in his short story "Dohri Joon" ("Double Life") published in the early 1970s; Detha hailed from Borunda and belonged to a family of traditional chroniclers. "Dohri Joon" was trans-created in Hindi as the twin tales "Uljhan" and "Duvidha".[8]

Based on the storyline of "Duvidha", Mani Kaul made his film of the same name in 1973. Kaul's *Duvidha* seeks to re-create and preserve popular culture on film; he weaves Detha's story with haunting stills of local scapes, voiceover narrative and an aural scape composed by Rajasthani folk musicians Ramjan Hammu, Latif and Saki Khan. With its silences, austere sets and lack of final solution, *Duvidha* seeks no part in the mass culture industry, nor did it remotely have a mass outreach. In 2005 we have the youngest re-make of the old story in *Paheli*, with its resplendent sets and feel-good resolution. And this represents only the North Indian bit of the story. At least in terms of plot, Girish Karnad's play *Naga-Mandala*[9] seems an anuvad of "Duvidha". Karnad insists that the plot was inspired by local, Kannad folktales:[10]

Naga-Mandala is based on two oral tales I heard from A.K. Ramanujan. These tales are narrated by women – normally the older women in the family – while children are being fed in the evenings in the kitchen or being put to bed. The other adults present on these occasions are also women.

Paheli thus rests on multiple narrations. Metaphorically, too, the element of narrativisation (and dispersal across multiple media) is visibilised and narrativity personified in most adaptations of this

[7]Rao, J. S. "Cinema: Old gold, new setting."*thehindu.com*. The Hindu,28 June 2005. Web. 21 Oct. 2017.
[8] Detha, Vijaydan. *Lajbanti.* Trans. Kailash Kabir. New Delhi: Vakdevi Pocket Books, 2001. Print.
[9] Karnad, Girish. "Naga-mandala."*Three Plays.* New Delhi: OUP, 1994. 19-66. Print.
[10] Karnad Introduction *Three Plays*16.

folk-tale. For example, twin kathputlis (wooden puppets used as narrators and characters in Rajasthani puppet-dance) narrate the story as sutradhars and engage with the bhut – ghost and etymologically, "the past" – in Palekar's film. At one point in the film, he even whisks them away with him to his beloved Lachhi's house, his action metonymic of the shadow and shadow-narrative wanting to take control of the story. The kath-putlis' role as disseminators in *Paheli* correspond to that of the story in *Naga-Mandala*. In *Naga-Mandala*, the story is cast as a girl who wears the song in the narrative as her sari. Stories, as temple-flames in the play argue, must be told and thus allowed to disperse in order to be re-told. Not only do they otherwise become sterile, but they could also devise strange means of punishment. An old woman in *Naga-mandala* in possession of the story neither tells the story, nor sings the song. The tale in arrest grows desperate to flee. She escapes from the woman the moment she opens her mouth and steps out of the house, taking the form of a young girl. The old woman sights her flight and suspects the husband of having committed adultery, thus rousing a row in the house. Either one uses language and other media to make a story, or to wound and militate against magic, i.e. the architecture of alternative possibilities. Later in the prologue, the story refuses to narrate herself to the lamps since they cannot re-disperse her and relents only when the playwright within the play promises to stage the story for others on listening to her. In dispersion and translations, then, does a folk-tale etch routes and re-births. The tale is metonymic of the bahurupi (shape-shifting) ghost in "Duvidha" and *Paheli*. Like the ghostly Kishenlal, it too remains fluid, shifts shapes with spatial-temporal shifts and shifts in audiences, and yet refuses to douse the questions, dilemma and desire that quicken it.

Of Ghosts and/or Cores:

Despite the re-makes, I wish to trace a non-negotiable core that kindles the popular folk-narrative/s preceding *Paheli*, even if it be that of a no-bodied ghost. Let us then briefly explore issues that inhabit and unsettle the core.

Hurtspace vs. Heartspace:

The narrative meditates on the dilemma in choosing between communal currencies of survival and clout, such as money and unthinking obedience as upheld by the female protagonist's legal husband and her mercenary father-in-law, and the alternative currency of love/eros that involves rites of excess and lonely intrusions of the non-rational. The story gives disproportionate importance to love, even if it ends with the loss of the lover in Detha and Kaul's "Duvidha".

The name "Kishenlal" given to the husband in Palekar's *Paheli* invokes the devious divinity Krishna whose name etymologically denotes "one who attracts"; Krishna, indulgently called Kishenlal, had played debonair heart-throb to his adorers, male and female, at Vrindavan. The ghost, and not the profit-obsessed husband, does justice to the name. Yet the ghost is but a shadow and constitutes a shadow-narrative that must be exorcised in the end, at least in the popular culture variant of the story. He impersonates the non-articulate, defeated desire of alternative possibilities lurking in all women who remain trapped in the mercenary equations of a patriarchal setup. And the shy female protagonist chooses him over the husband who had left her for a lucrative business venture, knowing that the tryst must be short-lived, till the moment the husband returns in his righteousness.

Feminism in folklore:

The only other indispensable trope of the story seems to be recognition of a woman's right to choose the partner she wants to love and live with over social grids of ethics and propriety, even if the narrative unfolds in hinterlands of the subcontinent where the female supposedly remains invisibilised behind the veil and speaks with a voice unheard. The female protagonist accepts the map of longings/heartspace when it comes her way, choosing betrayal over allegiance to a husband who has estranged and exiled himself from his newly-wedded wife for profit in trade. Can this

folktale in its various versions, then, be seen as a counter-narrative to pre-scripted patriarchal myths?

Locating Lachhi/Rani in other Traditions:

In the introduction to his play Girish Karnad observes:[11]

> These tales (i.e. the folk narrative/s that inspired *Naga-mandala*), though directed at the children, often serve as a parallel system of communication among the women of the family. They also express a distinctly woman's understanding of the reality around her, a lived counterpoint to the patriarchal structures of classical texts and institutions [my parentheses].

This cycle of tales and performances – including "Duvidha" the story and the movie, as well as *Paheli* and *Naga-mandala* – could be seen as alternative framings of the test of fire set to verify the satitva[12] of Sita in *Ramayana*. In a shift from the omniscient narration of epics fixated with the crises of epic, and inevitably male, heroes, folk narratives often adopt the perspective of the woman being judged and tested for her chastity and worth, and there is a concurrent shift in paradigm. The crisis for the woman in these tales is not the test of fire prescribed by a surveillant society, but the opportunity to choose between becoming sat (true) and sati, the latter having come to connote a sacralised cutie conditioned to equate truth with sexual, nay marital, chastity. In an adaptation of the fire-test, Rani of *Naga-mandala* puts her hand into a cobra's ant-hill, but her lover being the cobra, the test turns benign. In Vijaydan Detha and Mani Kaul's trans-creations, the female protagonist lives with the tragedy of losing her lover and resigns herself to the role of the mother-in-law appeasing, docile housewife once her 'true' husband returns with his craft of heartbreak and certitude. She had earlier refused to identify the husband when he first returned and the village was faced with a doppelganger.

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[11] Karnad Introduction *Three Plays* 17.

[12] Etymologically, "satitva" renders truth and greatness in a woman; the word has come to denote marital chastity for the female, apparently her only route and testament for truth and greatness in South Asian patriarchy.

Apparently the most revolutionary take is that of *Paheli*, where the causes of feminism and fantasy unite and the woman can afford to become both chaste and true, sati and sat, when her lover the ghost returns to possess the body of the husband. Kishenlal at the end of *Paheli* is no extramarital sin to be expunged but the transformed spouse and alchemic hybrid dreamt by all women, where the conflicts between desire and dictates dissolve in an alchemy of the heartthrob-morphed-to-forever-adorer-and-spouse. *Paheli* ends on a note of unapologetic fantasy not indulged in any of the popular culture variants of the narrative. Why this shift? Is it symptomatic of the many ways in which *Paheli* is an uneasy hybrid, much like the two-in-one Kishenlal too good to be true?

To Make or Re-Make, that is the Question: Story and the Film, and an other film:

Vijaydan Detha's "Duvidha" does not share the optimism of the ending of *Paheli*. In his starker story, the female protagonist is left to cope with her nothingness, freshly fearing for her new-born daughter who would have to survive such losses in a society where every woman is readied for unspeakable sacrifices. She thus remains a woman contained by her circumstances though she had dared to choose: she must at last succumb to the role of the sati. She cannot confide to her husband or the in-laws that she had accepted a lover knowing him to be not her husband, something Lachhi musters the courage to confess in the movie. The possibility of dohri joon/schizophrenia facing every woman who attempts to script an autonomous bildungsroman for herself looms large in "Duvidha", a possibility exiled from screen-space in *Paheli*.

The screen-space of *Paheli*, though, seems home and healing space to feminisms and female conditions not foregrounded in Detha's "Duvidha". The opening song "Minnat kare" enacts the cosy intimacy and playfulness which webs the female matrix when protected from the male gaze and its fatwas. In mulling over names for their yet-to-be born daughter, the lovers perform the priority of individual identity for a woman over her relationshipal status. The role played by Juhi Chowla as Lachhi's sister-in-law is non-existent in the short story and represents a woman's desolation within patriarchy, even as she plays the pliant conformist.

Paheli thus resolves that woman should have the right to choose and live by that choice. What it douses in the process is the dilemma indispensable to the folk-narrative, as to how to decide between what is right and wrong or true and false when binaries tend to blur. What should the bride or the ghost in love have done when the newly-wedded husband chose to leave her for more lucrative trade, leaving no doubts around his ruthless lack of dilemma? *Paheli* salves the angst of such existential dilemmas with its feel-good ending where the ghost and the husband are but one, with binaries rendered irrelevant and the partition between alternative choices dissolved. *Paheli* retains the form of Detha's "Duvidha" but sanitises out of it the duvidha i.e. unresolved split inflicted on various margins in a subcontinental patriarchy. Such was not the case with an other, earlier adaptation of Detha's story on screen. The 1973 film had been made on a low budget by a filmmaker turned producer who wanted to trans-create the stark story on screen.

Mani Kaul's *Duvidha* was an austere production with amateurs on and behind the screen. It experimented with medium and storytelling, creating a fusion of film and still frames, few dialogues, local folk music and voiceover narrative as oral storytelling. Kaul images a popular culture narrative on screen; his *Duvidha* retains the earthiness, layers and silences of Detha's story. *Duvidha* then shares a genre very different from the resplendent palette, pomp and loquacious love of *Paheli*. Kaul's female protagonist cannot come up with an answer when women demand to know which of the two rivals is her true husband. "If men had asked thus of me, I would have managed a "yes" or "no", but what can I answer when women speak so?" she responds.[13] The film highlights the lucre-lust of the older merchant and father of the groom when the ghost impersonating his son is allowed to stay in the house, on the bargain that he yields five guineas per day to his father. The camera focuses on the sethji's pocket, as he counts and puts away the guineas each morning. Later the voiceover narrative observes the poor villagers' relish for the prospect of playing judge and witness at the sethji's trial over choosing between two sons, one of whom is the imposter.

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[13] *Duvidha*. Dir. Mani Kaul. Perf. Ravi Menon, and Raisa Padmasee. Mani Kaul,1973. Film.

Kaul's *Duvidha* highlights and politicizes the layers to the weave of kinship, love, loyalty and neighborhood in a feudal patriarchy driven by economic inequity to begin with.

Both producer-actor Shahrukh Khan and director Amol Palekar promoted their film *Paheli* as entirely removed from Kaul's *Duvidha*. This, despite the quest for re-makes of the bahurupi folktale which reinvents itself across spaces and tenses. While Shahrukh Khan confessed in one interview that he "had seen Mani Kaul's 'Duvidha' and liked the thought behind it",[14] elsewhere he categorically stated: "*Paheli* is *definitely* based on Vijaydan Detha's award winning novella 'Duvidha,' but it's *certainly not* a remake of Mani Kaul's film Duvidha which was *incidentally* based on the same story" (emphasis added).[15] Amol Palekar maintains in almost all interviews that Mani Kaul and he are directors as antipodal as could possibly be and the two films have nothing to do with each other. Both acknowledge Detha's "Duvidha" as the original text, yet seek a cautious distance from the earlier film. Why this anxiety of influence? Is it the mere angst for originality of representation in a medium? Or the compulsion to create a mass culture template bordering on fairytale for a folktale, the template that must exorcise alternative, unsettling representations of a popular culture narrative on celluloid?

The Uneasy Hybrid

In a post-colonial, post-centric milieu, hybrids are in season. Director Amol Palekar too celebrates the season when he claims that the most exciting part of *Paheli* is the "Amol Palekar-Shahrukh Khan synthesis".[16] Does he then promote *Paheli* as a hybrid of parallel and mainstream cinema? The collaboration constitutes a departure from Palekar's earlier trajectory. Before the making of *Anahaat* (2003), his Marathi and Hindi films were mostly socially motivated documentaries made

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[14]Khan, Shahrukh. Interview by Subhash K Jha. "'Paheli' is a whim of mine, says Shah Rukh." *hindustantimes.com*. Hindustan Times, 20 May 2005. Web. 22 Oct. 2017.

[15]Khan, Shahrukh. Interview by Shaheen Raj. "SRK's new obsession." *deccanherald.com*. Deccan Herald,19 June 2005. Web. 22 Oct. 2017.

[16]Palekar, Amol. Interview by Harsh Kabra. "The lone ranger's star trek." *thehindubusinessline.com*.The Hindu Business Line, 3 June 2005. Web. 12 Oct. 2017.

on shoe-string budgets, e.g. *Dhyaas Parva* (1996) based on Raghunath Karve's life. Since *Anahaat* there has been a shift in his position, which becomes stark in *Paheli*. Before discussing the shift, let us look at his erstwhile ideology as reflected in an excerpt from an interview on the making of his films:[17]

> I am fascinated by the marginalized people, the forces that drive them, and where they derive the strength to stand against society for their beliefs and convictions… You are talking of the *simultaneous release hype* of mainstream cinema. Mainstream cinema works on *different kind of insecurity*. Such multiple releases are done because you don't know whether the film is going to bomb or not. *I am not worried about that.* (2) (emphasis added)

Anaahat was his first film with an upcoming star – Sonali Bendre – in cast. *Paheli* uses Bollywood gloss lavishly. Not only did Palekar and producer SRK deck up the film with Tanishq jewellery – just as Bhansali did in *Padmavat* – it oozes the extravaganza of a Bollywood fanfare. There are many firsts for the director in this movie. It has a mega star cast, both in the main roles as well as in the special appearances of SRK's then two most special friends, Amitabh Bachchan and Juhi Chawla. M.M. Kreem composed the music. The budget far exceeded that of any other Palekar movie. Indeed SRK, inspired by his zeal to do 'different' movies, volunteered to produce the film when he was offered the role. This led to Rajasthani havelis being simulated on huge sets in Mumbai as well as special effects and sync sound – cutting-edge technologies both, given the year of release – 2005. SRK's preferred team of cinematographers and editors had to be roped in, instead of Palekar's regular band. The difference so installed exuded in the lavish look of *Paheli*, to begin with. If star-cast, colourfully choreographed songs and a huge budget do not in themselves constitute deep departures from the director's previous style and stance, then there is the international release

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[17]Palekar, Amol. Interview by Nitya Ramanan. "Actor by Accident, Director by Choice." *indiacurrents.com*. India Currents, 12 Feb. 2003. Web. 12 Oct. 2017.

of the film to compensate, along with sanitized packaging of a GI-tagged[18] fairytale locale meant to entice the global audience. Brilliant colours define the garish costumes and settings of *Paheli*. The camel race, puppet dance and idyllic village and villagers feature as regular showpieces of exotic India. And the touristy film morphs into jubilant promo-ad for Rajasthan.

Decontextualised, the ghost does not seem to differ from the hovering lover SRK plays in his signature nomadic role which travels from one film to another beginning with *DDLJ*; he no longer remains metonymic of the possibilities absented from a feudal marriage. Magic in the folktale is a register for alternative possibilities and protest, as well as for excesses and the enchantment associated with the erotic. In the film, interpretation of magical/fantastic elements never exceeds the orbit of special effects in a timidly timeless locale. Scenes meant to be comic or entertaining, like the camel race or Bhoja's confusion, are reduced to kitsch. Other than the ghost, male characters including Bhoja the postman and Kishenlal's father are cast as caricatures of the inane, rustic. The popular culture narrative loses its edge, dream and despair in the translation to its mass culture masala Bollywood avatar.

Paheli flopped at the Indian box-office. Clichés of portable, picture-postcard India with its politically vapid ghosts and magic might not have gone down well with the desi audience. Portable, since Amol Palekar gave interviews on reaching out to wider audiences with this film. *Paheli* was well received at the UK, USA and the UAE and nominated as India's entry in the foreign films category at the 2005 Oscars. With its feel-good fantasy, the film was touted as a glocal product.

And yet, not all hybrids come off well, even in the post-colonial tense with its avowed taste for positions betwixt and between. *Paheli* – the much-hyped hyphen between the local and global, Hindi feature films mainstream and parallel, popular culture and mass culture, between Shahrukh Khan as film producer and icon of mass culture translated into the popular culture ghost – could be read as an imperial translation/colonization of "Duvidha" into song-and-dance orientalia

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[18] GI, abbreviation for geographical indication, refers to a sign used to authenticate products originating from a specific geographical location. The tag is glocal in a tour-savvy, late capitalist grid and plays on the global consumer's touring lust for the local authentic and the semiotics of belonging.

characteristic of Bollywood routines. It robs the popular culture narrative of its regret, and questions. *Paheli*, etymologically a riddle, leaves us with a Sphinx puzzle around hyphens/hybrids in our hyphenated age. Can the hyphen between mass culture and popular culture be preserved in a niche of co-habitation, even entanglement? Or must the many versions of a popular culture narrative collapse into the fiercely singular, globally marketable mass culture kitsch, just as Malik Muhammad Jayasi's Khalji, the quester in thrall to his quest, seems to have been detraced from Bhansali's depiction of the archetypal Islamic invader – as narcissist, devour-delighting carnivore – for an allegedly Hindu, utterly excusionary imaginary.

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