

# Social Consciousness: Revenge and the Quest for Justice in Thomas Kyd's Play 'The Spanish Tragedy' And the Movie 'MOM'

P. Soundarya,

AP/English, Akshaya College of Engineering and Technology, TamilNadu, India

**Abstract--** Revenge is as old as history and has been discussed and illustrated throughout literature, film, and conversation. The concept of revenge is an abstract idea to which anyone can relate. Kyd's play "The Spanish Tragedy" and the movie "Mom" is not just a revenge saga. It talks melancholy about parents' undying love. The play and film's pivot is the strained relationship between Hieronimo and Devki with their son and daughter respectively. Both tend on its emotional tug and struggle to contend with the moral quagmire of revenge and opt instead for the escape of pulp. This paper deals with parental love which makes them not only to find the justice for the victimized person of the family but also move towards the extreme end 'revenge' because of Ex post Facto that prevails around us even though it is prohibited.

"Revenge...is, in very large measure, an act of communication."<sup>1</sup>

This paper focuses on a movie and a play that depends on different genres. The work finds out the similarities in a few aspects. It deals about the movie MOM in which the director has portrayed the love and affection of the mother and revenge causing for abusing her step daughter. There is something deeply satisfying and visceral about watching rapists suffer. Throw in a castration as a violent method of retribution and the cheerleader in us is nudged awake. Mom, is about a parent who avenges the brutal gang-rape of her teenage daughter in a moving vehicle which is designed to evoke those feelings.

Revenge is a private act carried out by individuals. Similar concept is seen in Thomas Kyd's play The Spanish Tragedy that shows the love and affection of the father and revenge taken for his son's death. It also focuses on the core themes of revenge and the problems of justice. The notion of revenge, as a desire for retribution, versus justice, which brings with it the burden of a legal, moral, or divine authority, is carefully explored within the context of Renaissance thought.

Vengeance movies are uniformly exploitative. They ignite and pander to the base instincts and primal impulses. These two stories show the similar pathways which people can understand by comparing both of them. The similar theme for both plots is revenge. The theme appears in many different aspects of the plot, with varying degrees of moral justification.

The most important character of the play is the avenger. Much attention is taken to create a perfect hero according to the need of the story. Hieronimo is the very first hero of English revenge tragedy. He is an elderly man, father of an eligible son Horatio. He is the Knight Marshal of the Spanish court and a man of high official. He is very well known as a judge. His innocent son is killed and in grief for his son, his wife commits suicide. He is left with nobody in life whom he would wish to live for. He actively avenges his son's murder and at the end commits suicide.

In contrast to Hieronimo, Sridevi in the movie Mom is compelling as Devki, the tormented mother of a rape survivor. Her angst-ridden step daughter Arya, played by Pakistani actress Sajal Ali, is equally in control of her role. She brings her troubled dynamic with her step mother who is eager to win over her affections, without much drama and fuss. The helplessness of those seeking justice after a crime like rape — often a reality in a country like India — is biting captured in the first half of the film. Sridevi attacks her role of a fierce mother who takes law and justice in her own hands with a rabid ferocity. The scene in which she breaks down emotionally on seeing her wounded daughter hooked to machines in a hospital is heart-achingly raw. It is the collective solid performance that makes the revenge drama delicious. In Mom, however, revenge is just the means to a familial end — a hug-kiss and to hear that three-letter word, 'Mom'.

As believed in Vindictamihi; "Vengeance is mine, sayeth the lord; I will repay." (Rom. xii. 19.) Meaning that, it is God's responsibility to take revenge against the wrongdoers, not of men. The research work brings out with a different opinion of the above by comparing the film and the play.

First, revengers in both stories come from within an intimate circle of family and friends; second, the desire for revenge is maintained, and the act of revenge is later justified, through story-telling within the circle. Crimes ostensibly committed against an individual affect those nearest to the injured party, particularly close friends and family. Consequently, the revenger almost always comes from one of these two groups. While the revenger obviously seeks to punish the wrongdoer, he or she cannot stop there, for punishment is not enough; the wrongdoer must understand that he or she is paying the penalty for a previous misdeed. In order to redeem the reputation of a wrong friend or family member and restore the family honor, the revenger must justify his or her actions by telling the victim's story publically. This account distinguishes the principled revenger from the common criminal. The focus of the paper on the act of revenge is carefully balanced with sympathy and the revengers' plight against the destructive nature.

This paper goes hand in hand with the words of Francis Bacon, "A man that studieth revenge, keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal." I believe that exacting revenge is a form of emotional release and that getting retribution will help us feel better. Movies often portray the act of revenge as a way of gaining closure after a wrong. If the opportunity to get justice ever comes up, gladly take it.

Revenge has the opposite effect too. The mere mention of the word 'Revenge' conjures images of those who have done wrong and have received what, presumably, they deserved in retaliation. The concept of revenge is an abstract idea to which anyone can relate. Revenge is as old as history and has been discussed and illustrated throughout literature, film, and conversation. It's believed that the phrases "an eye for an eye," "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," and "revenge is a dish best served cold" are not unfamiliar notions. As long as the idea of revenge has existed, it remains as popular a motif in today's society as it has always been.

#### *References*

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