

An Iconographic Analysis of the Animated Film Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

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Abstract

This treatise endeavors to detect the non-technical components of Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor, a Pakistani 3D animated film. It investigates whether a new viewpoint has emerged in the context of social and cultural ideology in Pakistani thought, or if stereotypes continue to persist. For this purpose, an iconographic analysis of the film is conducted through Panofsky's (1972) three-pronged approach. The three steps include: pre-iconographical description, iconographic analysis, and iconographical interpretation. The iconographic analysis revealed that Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor upholds and encourages stereotype indoctrination in its depictions of good and bad in Pakistani culture. Results also highlighted the director's inability or obliviousness to think outside the box or create a novel perspective. Patriarchy, classism, elitism, provincialism, patriotism, and a biased media were all depicted as major themes. These motifs illuminated gender, class, and ethnicity-based inequalities in Pakistan's political, cultural, and social environment. The artists' anxieties and skepticism are justified by factors such as consumerism, overreliance on Eurocentric art and history, lack of familiarity with local art, minimal government support, and financial restraints. Furthermore, the research showed that the film promoted national, political, and gender ideals. The authors argue that to foster creativity in art films and animations, future studies and research should focus on fostering critical thinking, visual literacy, and the development of curricula and new literature in these areas.

Keywords: Animated Movies; Iconographic Analysis; Stereotypes; Ideology, Biased Media**Introduction**

'Like fish, we "swim" in a sea of images, and these images help shape our perceptions of the world and of ourselves' (Berger, 1992). "The power of images projected on screen should not be perceived as dormant or containers of partially obscure meanings; rather, they reflect emotional meanings in the context of culture, evoking both pain and pleasure" (Kress, 2003). Media has been significantly prevalent in the twenty-first century, immersing an ordinary person completely in the global arena through visual exchange.

Visual communication dates back to 3500–2900 BC in the form of pictorial drawings and glyphs used by diverse tribes and civilizations; it was largely used for practical purposes throughout human history (Mitchell, 1986). Distinct styles developed in response to the necessities of the era.

Animation is a subfield of communication art. Although animation studies have gained popularity and evolved into a significant theoretical and historical body of work in recent years (Wells, 1998), very little has been published on Pakistani animated films. This information gap provides an opportunity for study on the historical and theoretical contexts of Pakistani visual culture. Meanwhile, as Bendazzi (1994) acknowledges, 'animation as an expressive form is truly independent' (xvi), necessitating a study distinct from other cultural products and their roles in gender, identity formation, ideology, and media analysis. Contemporary animation continues to offer fascinating instances of cultural output. Considering the researcher's observations as an artist/practitioner, this study aims to understand the non-technological aspects of animation design products, in which culture is categorized, coded, decoded, and examined through historical, socio-cultural, and political perspectives. The researcher will explore whether animation is merely a form of entertainment or a credible mechanism of social change.

As Zipes (2011) suggests, in today's media-driven society, animated storytelling aimed at children may shape a child's view of the world, their position within it, and influence their values and self-identity. Research indicates that the gender schemas and behaviors of children are strongly

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impacted by the gendered material they consume (S. L. O'Bryant, 1978). Subliminally, viewers absorb the realities and ideologies presented by the animation genre, which have become acceptable and normalized for consumers (Knowles, 2006). Additionally, as Paul Wells (2009) argues, 'animation best identifies and illustrates [...] codes and conditions "in-the-making," and best exemplifies the "mixed traffic" of cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary ideas and representational forms' (p. 17); thus, animation is an ideal medium for iconographic analysis. This study examines the alternative and hypothetical social reality created through animation and the ideological content it communicates.

This flourishing genre of animation in Pakistani culture is leading to a rapid expansion in highlighting the country's cultural issues in novel ways. Various studies critiquing oligopolies like Disney and Pixar for shaping the gender roles, identities, and values of children, especially with the advent of globalization, have been published by scholars (B Hine, 2018). However, very few studies have been carried out on smaller production firms and other modes of animation, although much theoretical discussion on this subject has taken place among scholars and local auteurs (Yoon, 2008), as it is relevant to their contributions within cultural contexts; this concept is loosely applied in Pakistan.

Cultural norms are intended to be taught to Pakistani children through storytelling. Stereotypical ideas generated through this and personal agendas may affect children's perceptions. Along these lines, Wells and Hardstaff (2008) state that to reimagine and redefine animation, it is critical to reassess and reevaluate animation through the creator's intentions and the context in which it was made. Furthermore, Ahmed (2014) reinforces that children's television programming is rife with ideological viewpoints that play an important role in developing and disseminating information and views about society. The prevailing ideology of the dominant social group is promoted by the media, notably television, and animated cartoons are a unique medium that allows for the concealment of different ideological positions.

In Pakistan's case, animation is regarded as innocuous and juvenile in contemporary media. This perception is perhaps influenced and exacerbated by the significantly large amount of animation content in Pakistan's mass media broadcast and gaming industry that targets young audiences. Various studies criticizing animation, its roles, and its effects have been published by scholars (Shumaila Ahmad, 2014; Hassan and Daniyal, 2013; Islam and Biswas, 2012; Sarwat Rahman, 2018; Ahmed, 2014).

Artist & Animation

John Dewey explains that there is no single word to describe "artistic" and "aesthetic"; rather, "artistic" refers to production, and "aesthetic" to appreciating, perceiving, and enjoying the product. For a work to be art, it must have both qualities. The work of the artist is to build an experience that will be experienced aesthetically.

Visual and Ideology

From the 20th century onwards, photographs have shaped people's ideas about the world. We are only now beginning to understand how new ways of transmitting images have changed popular culture. For the most part, we don't think about their implicit ideological meaning and significance.

Ideology is in all imagery, and all imagery is ideological. People must review the social context and relationships implied in the image. In fact, this argument should not be new to those who study labor history. Over 100 years ago, Karl Marx introduced the term "fetishism of commodities" to show how people focused only on the physical properties of things, ignoring the social relationships behind their creation. One must also look beyond the images to learn more about the people within them

Animation and Ideology

Film has immense power, to the point that it can even spark a revolution. Political leaders benefit from it, using cinema to shape and change people's perceptions and ideologies. They employ this medium for their own agendas through audio-video translations, making it easy for the populace to understand the movie in any language (Fleer, 2018). Dominant ideologies oppress less powerful ones through film.

After a period of stagnation in the 1990s and 2000s, animated propaganda seems to have entered a phase of renaissance in the following decade. In popular animated films, Disney movies set the standard for gender representation in children's cinema (Saladino, 2014). After the success of

Snow White (1937), Disney set the standard not just for the style of cartoons but also for the messages they were to deliver, especially regarding gender representation.

In films, Graeme Turner defines ideology as a “theory of reality,” implicit in every culture, which motivates our binary perception of good/evil, right/wrong, us/them, among other concepts (133). Cultural alienation, misrepresentation, dualism, and uncertainty are often felt within Pakistan, especially in the younger generation. One should also consider the economic element in perpetuating ideological stereotypes constructed by these animations.

Iconography

In the contemporary era, the visual is the most fundamental of all senses. Paul Virilio argues that new visualizing technologies have created “the vision machine” in which we are all trapped. A theory by art historian Erwin Panofsky, called Iconographic Analysis (three levels of meaning), has been used by librarians and information scientists to catalog and index images (Choi et al., 2005). It has been helpful to understand how Panofsky's levels of meaning have helped us think about how art and culture are linked in a hierarchy of representation and interpretation (D. Bartmanski, 2012). One of the problems in establishing critical models for the analysis of the icon has been the traditional rooting of the study of the visual image in art history, privileging historicism over structuralism or semiotics (Crary, 1990). The icon behaves like a “repressed memory” that keeps returning to the surface of our consciousness, and it might even be suggested that the ultimate reference in the mind is the image (Mitchell, 1994).

Method and Framework of Analysis

Iconography analysis is a technique for reconsidering the circumstances the prevailing infrastructure under which these cultural contexts were created. The researcher's viewpoint for observing animated cultural activities will be social and cultural factors.

Framework for analysis

Erwin Panofsky's has a three-pronged approach (Panofsky, 1970)

1. Pre-Iconographical Description

The first level is a description of the factual (or expressional) context, termed the "pre-iconographic description," in which uninterrupted subjects are enumerated. The formal analysis would begin with asking questions about the kind of visual art, formal elements or constituents, and its color and presentation.

2. Iconographic Analysis

The second level, i.e., iconographical analysis, involves one step ahead understanding of the subject matter. This explains more than what meets the eye. It "constitutes the world of images, stories and allegories" (Panofsky, 1939, p. 14) and requires an analysis of the pre-iconographic material.

3. Iconographical Interpretation

The third or iconographical level is the most detailed comprehension of the natural significance or substance, establishing the universe of "symbolical qualities." It seeks to find the symbolic meaning of the objects (in Panofsky's wordings) and figures of art in political, poetic, religious, philosophical and social terms.

Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor is written and directed by Uzair Zaheer Khan, who has also been associated with the production team of the Burka Avenger. This movie has been rendered entirely on Unreal Game Engine by Epic Games. Released in early 2018, by the sponsorship of Gluco Biscuits by EBM and WWF, it depicts the endangered wildlife in Pakistan. The Third World Studios also received the Unreal Dev Grant for this project totalling over \$200,000.

Film Analysis

This animated film starts with the storytelling of a Dervish, Markhor and a snake. The protagonist character of the dervish is a symbol of virtue, knowledge and strength and spirituality. The markhor is a symbol of friendship, protection and transformation, steadfastness, whereas the snake is a symbol of evil. Here, friendship and goodness defeat the evil.

In this scene, a prehistoric era is in focus where a cave, mountain top and foggy environment is evident. The prologue begins with a reflection of a full moon in a small-circled body of water that hints at JehanNuma or the Cup of Jamshid (Jam-e Jam) which is a cup of divination. In Persian mythology, it had been inherited by the rulers of ancient Iran. Its name is associated with Jamshid

(Jam in the new Persian language), a mythological figure of Greater Iranian culture and traditions. The chalice (cup) was also called Jam-e Jahan nama, Jam-e Jahan Ara, Jam-e Gitinama and Jam-e Kei-khosrov. The latter refers to KaeiHusravah in the Avesta and Sushrava in the Vedas (Hindu scriptures). The bowl/cup has been the subject of many Persian poems and stories. Many authors attributed the success of the Persian Empire to the possession of this artefact. It appears widely in Persian literature. It was believed that all seven heavens of the universe can be observed by looking into it which can be translated in Persian as, “(از هفت فلک در او مشاهده و معاینه کردی)”. It is said that the whole world was reflected in it, and fortune-telling in a bowl revealed deep truths. Sometimes, especially in popular images such as The Heroic Legend of Arslan, the bowl is visualized as a crystal ball. Helen Zimmern's English translation of the Shahnameh uses the term "crystal globe".

The tree at the edge of a huge extended rock marks the meditative spot of the sage. The tree branches intertwine upward like the sway of Sufi dancers and the branches' ends are composed in the form of Kathak's (Indian classical dance) “Hasta Mudras (hand gestures)”. The dervish is an old, bearded man with long hair dreadlocks. He is sitting in an easy pose (sukhasana) holding his long staff in his right hand and wearing a colourful jampala (rosary) around his neck. The bright white butterfly hovering around him represents the transformation, spiritual rebirth, a mystical change, a transcendental journey. He is a seasoned soothsayer. The snake bears the resemblance to a dragon with fangs, big nostrils, small white horns around his head, and big fiery eyes. The dragon style eyebrows also look like horns of an ibex or a wild goat. The markhor has a big beard which is a common indication of male gender in goats. It is also a symbol of wisdom or bazurgi (wisdom/ old age) here.

The elements of the prologue form a larger paradigm e.g. The Protector (Muhafiz), Knowledge (Ilm), Innocence, Snake, Pure Heart, and the visual element of a Khaki environment. The Markhor appears as a logo/ symbol of Pakistani spy agency ‘Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)’. The word ‘markhor’ has a Persian origin, which literally means ‘snake-eater’. The motto of the ISI is the defense of Pakistan and therefore, it can be assumed as a protector/defender (muhafiz) of Pakistan. The Pure Heart signifies Pakistan or the Land of the Pure. Dervish unravels the mysteries of the universe and grants his accumulated knowledge as a gift to the markhor. The snake is the cunning and crafty enemy that approaches silently to attack behind the back, which is commonly taken as an act of cowardice. The textbooks are replete (full) with Indo-Pak war narratives that describe India as an atrocious and coward beguiler that attacked Pakistan in the darkness of night.. The markhor bears the secret knowledge since he can decode the language of animals. The paradigm is concluded here but a question is generated: who are the animals analogous of?

Pakistani-centric patriotism is more enhanced with the dialogues uttered by Allahyar's father who is a forest ranger, who says, “Himmat-e-mardaa, madad-e-Khuda” which means that if you have the will, Allah will help you. Moreover, “Markhor bechna, mulk bechne ke burabar hai” which means that selling a markhor equals selling one's country. The representation of Pakistani official symbols and elements like the badge of the national flag, the photo of father of the nation determined an idea of a patriotic culture in the entire film. The name of the protagonist “Allahyar” and his perseverance in the times of crisis is also a pre-perceived notion to convey the message within the ideological establishment under Two Nation Theory. A point to note is that the director has not used female characters, (even within animal or the humans). In a scene there are dialogues between Allahyar and his father where Allahyar says, “ub mey bacha nahi ruha”(I am not a child anymore), in response his father, Baa says, “kiya tum bachi bun gaey ho?”(have you become a girl then?) In the whole film all the characters are males. In this animated film the female gender is ignored, and this has created gender discrimination (Bayeh 2016). In advance level of research, it is found that markhor has been projected as a biological/ natural protector and associated with male gender. Thus, what is reinforced is, patriarchy, chauvinism, male dominance and male superiority as opposed to what a female character's potential portray. Similarly, Mard-e-momin and mard-e-haq (virtuous man and righteous man) is the central theme of film.

Results and Discussion

The iconographic analysis of different characters and places is done following three steps as discussed in the method section.

Analysis of the images of Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor



Figure 5.18 Meditation of the Dervish in Allahyar and The Legend of Markhor

Level I: The picture makes use of triangles and sharp edges to depict the form of the Dervish. He is sitting with his legs folded beneath him. The staff he is holding is in his right hand, which is lit at the top, whose power source seems to be coming from the dervish himself. On his right is a huge trunk of a tree, which is a part of the divinity in Asian culture. He looks like a seasoned soothsayer and may have been a learned man in his young age.

The dervish has his eyes closed with wrinkles on his forehead due to old age and is shown concentrating in meditation. His bushy eyebrows, moustache and beard covers most of his face. His hair is long, unkempt, tangled and matted over time. He is wearing a bangle in his right hand, and a loose garb, which seems to be tied at the waist. He is also wearing a maala (beaded necklace), typically worn by sages in the Sub-continent. It's also a sign that these items have been accumulated over time as the time passed and he gained more wisdom and learned the power of these elements

The artist has used a sepia colour palette for this image, using different shades to illustrate the dark and sallow skin tone of the dervish. Light is seen falling on his left side and reflecting in his white hair, creating shadow on his bangle. His posture is against a pale and light background.

Level II: It seems that the dervish has been meditating for quite a while now, judging from his posture, as he seems to have invested a long time in prayers and meditation, which is evident by the colour of his hair, and the wrinkles in his skin. He looks comfortable in this position as if he has been doing it all his life.

Level III: Across all cultures, access to Divinity is sought through prayers and meditation. This imagery is reflective of the same. The practice of mysticism is found in various cultures including the Sub-continent. It requires extreme concentration and detachment from the world. The overall composition of his body posture is like a triangle facing upwards which indicates his pursuit to reach the Divine. The beard and matted hair of the dervish is inspired from the Hindu mythology wherein his costume which covers his body is symbolic of Sufism (A 1997). The use of maala is similar across faiths, but the bangle in the right hand is commonly worn by Hindus and Sikhs. By using multiple elements from different cultures, perhaps the artist is also trying to communicate that this dervish does not belong to any one faith and endorses religious harmony and pluralism.



Figure 5.19 Valour of the Markhor in Allahyar and The Legend of Markhor

Level I: Drawn in sepia colour template, a fully mature markhor is standing with head raised high, his cork-screw horns above his head. A male depicted by long hair around chin, throat, and neck, brown fur coat with hind limbs paced apart. The classic cork-screw appearance of the horns shows the strength of the markhor, and his beard and mane depicting his sex and age.

His face and hooves are lighter in shade, or perhaps receiving light and giving a faux appearance of being light-coloured.

Level II: The posture of the markhor makes it appear arrogant and self-assured, while the positioning of the hind limbs makes it look very assertive, sure and ready for action while the forelimbs are placed firmly on ground.

Level III: Worldwide markhors are endangered and therefore, protected species. Their connotation within Pakistan is that of national pride, right and justice. Markhor is the national animal of Pakistan. Markhor has therefore been appropriately used as a 'hero', a protagonist.



Figure 5.20 Viciousness of Serpents in Allahyar and The Legend of Markhor

Level I: Using the same sepia palette, the artist has shown a sinister-looking serpent with eyes shining with evilness. It has multiple horns, large nostrils and deep fangs. Its body is smooth-looking with scales, and the length undeterminable. Its eyes are bright, narrowed like slits. Despite the sepia colour tone, the observer can visualize the red hues of its eyes. The shot is centralized which puts the snake in the centre of attention leaving no place for any other distraction.

Level II: The huge head of the serpent has vibrant eyes that seem to be burning with anger and are ready to hypnotize the prey. The flared-up nostrils and pointed fangs also create a terror in the opponent. The curled uplifted eyebrows further intensify its stare which does not allow the prey to be distracted from its treacherous hypnotic vibes.

Level III: The mystical figure of serpent is well known for its cunning and wicked nature. Symbolically, the serpent is referred to as a negative and evil character which is evident in its posture and eyes.



Figure 5.21 Portrayal of Good Versus Evil in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Level I: In a wide shot, this screen depicts what appears to be a confrontation between the dervish and the serpent. The dervish looks like he is walking towards the serpent with his legs placed one before the other, and his left arm extended towards the front challenging the serpent. In his right hand he holds his staff which is still lit. He is also barefoot, and his overall appearance portrays those worldly luxurious ornaments don't matter to him, what matters is the Divine. A bangle is visible in his right foot. His dress is tattered and ends at mid-calves. The movement of the dress is shown by the lighter hues given in the overall sepia colour palette. The serpent stands twice as tall as the dervish, its gaze locked on him.

Level II: The scene depicts a confrontation, possibly a battle between the two where the dervish exhibits no fear as he walks confidently towards the serpent. The serpent is pushed towards the darker

hues in the background. The red in the serpent's eyes depicts the vice and ungodliness that the serpent itself symbolizes.

Level III: Dervish symbolizes mysticism, truth beyond intellect, depth of wisdom, purity of heart, guidance, divine love while the serpent stands for the opposite. This looks like a battle of all that is light, and all that is dark, a plot common to most of the stories and folklore known. Standing against the serpent implies standing for what is right. Specially in the Sub-continent's context, where snakes and serpents are symbolized as enemies ready to attack, and any goodness towards them is a wasted effort, as often shown in Urdu idioms and proverbs as well (saanp ko doodh pilana¹, aasteen main saanp paalna²).



Fig 5.22 Portrayal of Patriotism in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Level I: Allahyar, the protagonist is a young boy, with stocky frame, is dressed in a blue-coloured shalwar kameez³, standing in what appears to be a backyard of a house, since the place is enclosed in walls with a large wooden floor, and has a charpai (bed) next to water well/ pump inside surrounded by grass typically seen in household lawns. The tree with pink flowers is right outside the walls of the enclosure, the colour of the leaves indicating that this place is somewhere up north and not in the plains. The season appears to be winter-ish or colder as north is, since Allahyar is wearing a dark blue pullover as well as a red-blue jacket.

Allahyar is placed in the centre in order to capture the main attention/focus in the frame. There is a badge of Pakistani flag on Allahyar's sweater. His face is round (as expected of children of his age) with messy, thick hair. The environment is rendered with bright and fresh colours but blurred in the background to draw all attention towards Allahyar's face. Allahyar appears to be angry with his eyebrows scrunched up and his right hand raised in a salute position.

Level II: Allahyar appears to be furious about something, while also exhibiting passionate patriotism as he stands tall, saluting. This depicts his strong unwavering stance, that come what may, he shall not back down and shall confront whatever it is that worries him, and that Pakistan means the most to him.

Level III: His name Allahyar itself has a positive connotation. His body language indicates that he is a wise, intelligent and strong headed personality. He is wearing the colour blue, which indicates purity, while the red of his jacket stands for passion and energy.



Fig 5.23 Baa, portrayal of fatherhood in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

¹ Urdu proverb translation and meaning: Even if you feed milk to a snake, it will only yield poison in return

² Urdu proverb translation and meaning: Nurturing a snake in one's bosom

³ Knee-length shirt with side slits and loose trousers that are baggy from the top that are commonly worn in Pakistan.

Level I: Figure 5.26 shows the backyard from a different point of view, closer to the well and the charpai now, with the vines and plants climbing the walls in the background, and the outline of mountains in blue outside of the walls clearly visible. In the foreground is a man appearing to be in late twenties-early thirties, with thick dark hair and beard typically seen in the north region, bent on his right knee before the well. He is wearing a mud/ khaki coloured jacket and what appears to be parachute pants, that look like a uniform and the texture is indicative of the cold weather. There is a red emblem on his right jacket sleeve, showing the logo of the forest rangers' department that he works for. Also next to the charpai is his gun resting. He has a pensive look on his face. His left hand is flexed downwards on his left knee.

Level II: From the man's posture and angle of face looking towards his right, it seems that he was conversing with someone, probably Allahyar, and who left the conversation and therefore the man's gaze followed the child.

Level III: The sub-continent in general and Pakistan in specific is not known for very friendly or communicative fathers. However, Baa here does not fit the stereotype. He looks caring and concerned, as well as attuned to children's fears as he tries to sit down to fit the eye level of the child to share his concerns while also appearing equal.



Figure 5.24 Portrayal of trust (feminism) in Allahyar

Level I: This picture shows Bambi-like baby markhor (Mehru), evident by her cork-screw horns, in the middle of what appears to be a forest. In the background we can see lush green trees and further background we can see treetops and the sky giving the impression that this baby markhor is standing on top of an elevated, perhaps hilly area. The baby markhor has a camel-coloured fur coat and innocent looking. Her ears are spread out wide, indicating that she is not standing cautiously with upturned ears. It appears that she's looking at someone right in front of her, from across the large tree on her left. She is in the centre of the frame in order to emphasize her character. The entire environment is rendered in cool and warm colours to depict the northern topography.

Level II: The baby markhor's wide-open eyes show her friendly curiosity, while her spread-out ears indicate that she is not very attentive of the surroundings and therefore is very trusting of everything around her. Her youth signifies her innocence. She also appears in a bright and colourful background, which is indicative of how she sees the world, in colours and in light. The way her mane is curled around the front of her forehead also implies that she is a female.

Level III: Mehru the baby markhor here resembles Bambi, with her trusting, attentive eyes, giving away her soft and innocent nature. This resemblance illustrates her innocence, purity and state of vulnerability as the viewer is aware that she is only a child and alone in a jungle.



Figure 5.25 Portrayal of living in the moment in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Level I: The picture shows a partridge bird, a chakor (Hero) standing on top of a rock in the middle of a jungle. The chakor is white with black stripes on its wings and a brown demarcation across his eyes. He seems to be in a conversation with his right being raised as if he is explaining something and his left wing extended as if he is caught in the middle of his monologue. In the background the blue skies are visible as is the immense greenness of the area around the chakor while light falls on his right side. The chakor is very well-fed with a round belly. Chakor is standing firmly on his small feet. The contours of his face and his eyes are very much like that of a typical partridge bird.

Level II: The chakor seems to be a knowledgeable, wise and talkative bird as evident by his wings. He also is aptly named as Hero, as the coloured mark around his eyes seem like an eye mask normally worn by super-heroes so that masses cannot recognize them. His round shape is meant give him an overall cute look.

Level III: In local culture, chakors are known as birds in love with the moon, and connotate love and trust in general. The masked eyes are associated with both robbers and super-heroes, but most of his body and right side is lit, depicting that he is righteous.



Figure 5.28 Portrayals of Evil and Good in Allahyar and The Legend of Markhor

Level I: This image is quite a picturesque one with a row of pine trees covering the background divided by a large tree surrounded by purple flowering shrubs and milky grey smooth rocks with patches of grass. There are two men in this scenery. One of them is lean with a bald cut and has an intricately carved devil may care beard. He has a clear-cut face with eyebrows drawn upwards. The other man in the scene is shorter than the first described and is cowering behind the first man described, his shadow covering almost half of him. The second guy has softer rounder features with a strand coming down the middle of his forehead.

Level II: The serene beauty of the image is in sharp contrast with something dark and heinous. There are tell-tale signs of a crime committed in the dark night.

Level III: In this case the men did something wrong in the deceptive darkness of the night to make sure this crime doesn't see the light of the day.



Figure 5.29 Portrayal of patriarchy in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Level I: The picture shows a stocky middle-aged Pathan man, wearing typical pakhtun/chitrali cap, shalwar kameez and a sleeveless cardigan, standing in the middle of a lush green valley. He has large protruding eyes and thick moustache.

Level II: The man does not look very happy and has a very unkind outlook as he looks over the greenery, walking forwards. The colours of his clothes depict an overall dull persona.

Level III: Dull colours and sallow complexions are often used to depict a dull character with unwarranted behavior.



Figure 5.34 Portrayal of illegality in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Level I: The picture shows a forest in a background with grass all around, a red jeep with two men standing behind it. The man hidden partially by the jeep appears to be large, wearing a blue shirt with a brown/ mud-coloured sleeveless jacket.

Level II: The men seem to be engaged in frenzied conversation. The fit man appears like a hunter and looks furious as he stands gazing at the rear end of the jeep. The large man appears to be reluctant while talking to the hunter. The horned skull prop attached to the screen, also depicts that they hunt animals with horns (like the markhor)

Level III: Appearance of horned skull lends sinister meaning to the overall scene, clearly depicting something evil. The overall dark hues also imply the dark nature of the issue, while the background busy with pine trees give the appearance of confusion as well.



Figure 5.38 Fury and darkness in the Donkey King

Level I: The wolf depicted in Figure 5.3 is a Tibetan/Himalayan wolf. His posture and his physical attributes show masculinity and power, the sort that is common to a leader of a pack. He is in a ready-to-fight stance.

Level II: The expression of the wolf oozes anger and looks blood thirsty with his semi-human facial expressions. On the other hand, the environment shows a dark forest with cool blue hues which depicts a hostile and cold environment at night-time when woods are the most dangerous and lurking with beasts. The dry trees, a classic symbol of death

Level III: This figure denotes the certainty of death against all odds, the blood thirsty ferociousness of the wolf, the deathly blue of the night, the barbed wire of the life less trees that completely surround the predator and its prey whom the wolf already seems to have marked.

Summary of Iconography: Analysis of Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

In the film, Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor several icons are identified, and specific cultural values and connotations are attached to these icons. For example, icons of Mehru (markhor), dervish, Allahyar, Baa, chakor all denote positivity. Whereas the icons of serpent symbolize cunningness and negativity. Icon of hen is associated with women and with domesticity whereas the icon of cow signifies as a nurturer and is considered holy especially in Hindu mythology, whereas monkey represents mischievousness. Thus, we see that the attribution given to these icons are socially constructed and represent various ideologies. Some of the themes that emerge from this film are nationalism, patriotism, mysticism, security forces, which are in built in the society.

One of the constants of animal expression is that it lacks a personal narrative. In other words, they exist as auxiliaries to a human hero or heroine (Jia may, 2014). These gender concepts (which

stay constant with the animal characters in this movie as well) create identity problems, truth distortions, and plenty of obstacles (complexity, lack of self-confidence, ridicule, or exclusion).

Themes

After iconographic analysis of **Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor**, different themes were identified that emerged from the connotations of descriptions and idiosyncrasies of icons in this TV series (see Table 1).

Table 5.2 Icons Representing Themes in Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor

Sr. No.	ICONS	Level I Description and idiosyncrasies of Icons	Level 2 Connotations	Level 3 Themes
1	Chakor Fig 5.28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Soft and positive description - 'static character' wearing a mask, with two identifiable shapes i.e. circles and triangles There are infinite possibilities of renewal, eternity, and the transition between life and death through symbolism 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The circle portrays the friendly nature of the character whereas the triangles tell us that he is also sharp and cunning. The chakor in native cultures is referred to as 'a bird in love with the moon'. Chakor is a bird which depicts romanticism 	Positive Affirmation
2	Portrayal of Spirituality Fig 5.21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Wisdom and Divine Dervish is spiritual and is meditating, while holding a staff that is lit at the top At the right side of the image is a huge trunk of a tree The composition is conceived on triangular shapes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Divinity, passion, wisdom, mysticism, indigenous scholar. The figure is floating in the space which suggest that the dervish has spiritual power, which is a part of the divinity in Asian culture The character of dervish is a mixture of different cultures which determines harmony The glow on the top of staff is incorporated from Zoroastrian theology. The beard of the darvish is inspired from the Hindu mythology and the costume is inspired from sufism 	
3	Baa, father of Allahyar Fig 5.26	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Compassionate and patriot Has medium length beard The rifle is besides <i>Charpai</i> and the closed wooden door a badge of <i>Markhor</i> is on upper portion of his jacket 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Religious personality Protector of his home Loves his duty patriot, custodian, forest ranger A typical mard-e-momin of Allama Iqbal having sense of sacrifice and responsible towards his duties 	
4	Hen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Domesticity - Hen commonly refers to a female animal: a chicken, or a lobster. Households with hens rear low-cost backyard poultry to supplement and enhance their livelihoods. The hen is the bird which depicts domesticity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hen symbolizes domesticity The eggs produced by rural poultry helps the masses in self-employment, though income in monetary terms. They are also also "Walking bank" for poor and marginal farmers It is also a slang term used for a woman. 	Household Employment
5	Makhor-Portrayal of	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Steadfastness and arrogance - Markhor is in a 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The character has prepared himself for action 	Stereotype: Male strength

	male dominance Fig 5.22	standing position with an arrogant stance, 2. Tangled-up big beard 3. The environment is rendered in sepia tone with fog behind the character.	2) Masculinity and wild nature 3) Mythological character of Hindu-nanga or Christian knight 4) Overall impression of the character is masculine with explicit arrogance	and alertness
6	Cow Fig 5.33	1. Sustenance - The cow is considered a sacred animal, as it provides life through sustenance of milk	1) In Hinduism cow has the status of Mother, the status of Goddess. 2) The cow is seen as a maternal figure, a caretaker of her people 3) Food, Dairy, Fossil fuel supply are the basic needs supplied by cows.	Divine bounty
	Allahyar's pet cow, named Rani standing in courtyard Fig 23	1. a typical pet with a bell around its neck, white in color 2. loves by food and is only interested in eating	1) Cattle are considered sacred in the religions such as <u>Hinduism</u> , <u>Jainism</u> , <u>Buddhism</u> , and others 2) Regarded as a source of prosperity	Stereotype of sacred cow
7	Antagonist character of snake Fig 5.23	1. Evil beguiler – It has large fiery eyes and fangs on triangular face with sharp features, and long body 2. background of the image is sepia toned and foggy 3. The mystical figure is at its prime to attack the opponent	1. cunning and wicked nature 2. creating a mysterious atmosphere 3. hidden venomous intentions	Stereotype: Mischievousness Selfish determination
8	Two hunters are trying to take away a Markhor Fig 5.37	1. Miscreants - thin person has a gun 2. There are two men vis a vis a healthy and silly one 3. Their vehicle has a skull with horns	1. One is commanding 2. One is submissive 3. Depiction of cruelty and hunting	
9	Allahyar is standing in an attentive and stiff position with an ambitious look on his face Fig 5.25	1. Steadfastness and perseverance - Allahyar has a round shape and pointed hair. His eyebrows are scrunched down and there is glare in his eyes. 2. There is a badge of Pakistani flag on his sweater	1. His stance and shape is associated with innocence. He has an intelligent and sharp mind, and is tough and quite trustworthy 2. He is wise, aggressive. His alertness is visible through body language and face, and is prepared for the action and commitment 1. extreme patriotism and love for his country	Stereotype: Patriotic determination dogmatism; rigidity
10	Old sage (Dervish) confronts the giant Snake Fig 5.24	1. Good versus Evil - Dervish is steadfast in his position braced against the serpent 2. Dervish's posture in the scene suggests he's worried, but he's courageous enough to tackle the serpent 3. the snake is in an anticipating pose i.e., attacking posture with a pompous attitude	1. wooden stick (staff) that illustrates his vulnerability and the need for support, but also his association with divinity 2. indicating that he seeks assistance 3. it reveals his simplicity and also shows that he doesn't want to do with anything superficial 4. Dervish symbolizes	

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|--|--|
| 1. The mountains are at the back with the foggy surroundings | mysticism, truth beyond intellect, depth of wisdom, purity of heart, guidance, divine love |
| | 5. Serpents are associated with evil, danger, death and destruction |
| | 6. the environment depicts of== the northern region |

Patriarchy

The wolf in the woodland symbolizes patriarchy, authority and male supremacy. Patriarchy is a social structure in which men dominate responsibilities such as political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and property ownership (M. Undheim 2020)

Patriarchy is linked with a collection of views, a patriarchal ideology, that aims to explain and justify male domination by emphasizing on fundamental male-female differences. Whether patriarchy is a social product, or the result of intrinsic gender inequalities is a point of contention among sociologists.

Status of Education

The teacher, who stands with a book in his hand (**scene 11**: Allahyar & the Legend of Markhor, 2018), depicts the stereotyped rigidity of education in Pakistan's tribal areas. Since dogmatism affects the operation of a whole belief framework, it can influence how people see and respond to each other. Stereotyping and reluctance to change are common characteristics of dogma.

Portrayal of Patriotism

Allahyar (Allahyar & the Legend of Markhor, 2018) is a figure that embodies national determination. He (**scene 17**: Allahyar & the Legend of Markhor, 2018) demonstrates how patriotism and wisdom work together to defeat evil forces. Allahyar has a serious expression on his face (**scene 5**: Allahyar & the Legend of Markhor, 2018) which symbolizes patriotism and vigilance. As a result, patriotism is thought to be a fundamental component of both individual and community life, and it is considered to satisfy basic needs such as security, a positive identity, efficacy and control, a positive connection to others, and understanding of reality (Staub, 1997).

Conclusion

The study concludes that the animated film Allahyar & the Legend of Markhor, do contain stereotypes. They are typical in the form of good versus evil, justice versus wrong, selflessness versus selfishness. Working together against bad powers is a prevalent cliché in this film. Allahyar & the Legend of Markhor is portraying Pakistan's security force in a lighter and positive note.

Women are not ideologically necessary characters in Pakistani animated films such as this one. The State and its male Head of State are the only figures that matter, and they serve as symbols of male power and gendered ideology. Furthermore, ‘Masculinity strives to blend in by posing as normal and universal. If masculinity can sell itself as normal, the feminine is inevitably portrayed as aberrant and unusual and unnecessary. Allahyar & The Legend of Markhor is an example of this.

It concludes that a complicated or purposely altered message communicates an incorrect interpretation, information, and knowledge to the audience because of lack of information or ill-informative art piece. “The art industry has deprived the individual of his or her ability to assess what constitutes art,” Adorno and Horkheimer (1972) argue, and this is proving to be true.

For at least two reasons, uneven representations encourage masculine dominance. On the one hand, they perpetuate gender binary by creating the idea that there is a fundamental, irreversible physical difference between men and women.

We must acknowledge that artistic expression is an articulation of a point of view, an idea, or a taste. As a result, artists don't operate in a vacuum, regardless of how averse they are to discussing their beliefs or ideological convictions. Furthermore, everything that is produced and classified as art is done so within a certain economic, social, and political context. The character of markhor and its development in this film is likewise linked to a similar ideological standpoint, notion, and knowledge. In terms of the next generation, the film aims to provide insightful propaganda models in order to establish a positive picture of secret agencies in the media.

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