



Cinematic Appropriation and Redressing Pakistani Muslim Identity on a Global platform through Pakistani Film *Rahm* (2016)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how redressing Pakistani Muslims' global identity through cinematic appropriation. The representation of Pakistani Muslims in Ahmed Jamal's 2016 rendition of Measure for Measure (1603), *Rahm*, is examined. The movie subverts cultural assumptions of the west by highlighting Islamic-based history and native landmarks. In order to provide context for Shakespeare's play, the research looks into the historical-geographical relationship between *Rahm*'s setting and early modern Mughal architecture. Along with a request for a deeper investigation of gender dynamics and their connections to Measure for Measure, Pakistani Muslim culture is also studied, with a focus on women's empowerment in particular. The study emphasises how cinematic appropriation fights against unfavourable worldwide perceptions of Pakistan's Muslim identity by drawing on Tajfel and Turner's "Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour" (2004). *Rahm* captures Islamic ideas of mercy, justice, gender respect, and multiculturalism via the usage of Persian and Urdu, transcending time and location, and portrays ancient buildings and women's attire in a Pakistani environment. This essay addresses media representations of Muslims through the use of cinematic appropriation, dispelling prejudices and misconceptions. *Rahm* provides a novel viewpoint on Pakistani Muslim identity, which contributes to a more complex and sympathetic vision of the world.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how cinematic appropriation can be used to facilitate a positive reciprocal transformation within Western social groups by incorporating authentic narratives about Muslim characters and stories, guided by Tajfel and Turner's "Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour". Accordingly, the Pakistani film *Rahm* utilizes Shakespeare's play Measure for Measure as an effective means of resisting and redefining Pakistani Islamic identity in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks. As a result of appropriating this universally recognized work, the filmmakers emphasize themes related to gender respect, tolerance, and pluralism in Sufism, as well as bridging the gap between traditional Islamic practices and modern secular values. A wide audience will be able to enjoy the film due to the use of the Urdu and Persian languages.

Through *Rahm*, the cinematic appropriation of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* attempts to resist the prevalent global phenomenon of Pakistani Muslim Identity. A profound message of inclusivity and compassion is conveyed through the film's artistic rendition, regardless of race, religion, or social standing. At the 2017 London Film Festival, the film won the Best Adapted Screenplay award after screening on Channel 4. As a departure from Western Christian teachings, *Rahm* effectively challenges misconceptions about Islam as unjust, violent, and anti-feminist. It is set in Lahore, which serves as a backdrop for the film's themes of mercy,

justice, and compassion. A profound message of love and compassion for humanity is conveyed through the transcendent portrayal of *Rahm*. Through the themes of Puritan hypocrisy, corrupt power dynamics, and issues surrounding sexual honour in Shakespeare's Elizabethan world, the play skillfully presents its interpretation of Islamic values and orientation. It demonstrates how stereotypes can be demystified and timeless values can be emphasized across cultures.

This paper explores how appropriation can be used as a powerful tool for marginalized groups to assert their agency and resist the prevailing norms regarding their identity through the use of Tajfel and Turner's "Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour" (2004). These groups may be able to reclaim their cultural heritage, express their unique perspectives, and foster a more inclusive and diverse understanding of their experiences through acts of appropriation. In order to provide a theoretical framework for this research, it draws upon Henry Tajfel and John C. Turner's Social Identity Theory, which emphasizes the influence of group identity on our perception of ourselves and others. It is intended to illustrate the significance of cinematic appropriation as a means of resistance through the application of this theory. Pakistan, as a marginalized Islamic nation, is provided with a framework to understand how to utilize its collective identity to challenge and resist dominant narratives. Individuals' affiliations with social groups affect their self-esteem and self-concept, leading to discrimination and favouritism as a result. In order to achieve and maintain positive social identities, outgroups must be positively separated from ingroups. Prejudice, discrimination, and conflicts between groups often result from this differentiation between ingroups and outgroups. Using Henri Tajfel's theoretical framework, "The Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict", the analysis examines Ahmed Jamal's Pakistani film *Rahm* (Jamal, 2016), in which Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* is appropriated to explore the experiences of Pakistani Muslims in the modern world. As part of this analysis, the research explores the concept of "appropriation" as a form of resistance to prevailing societal prejudices. Over the course of history, marginalized groups have used appropriation to assert their identity, reclaim cultural elements from dominant groups, and disrupt power dynamics.

In this context, it is important to consider how individuals define themselves as well as how others define them as members of a group. It is therefore important to examine how Pakistani Muslims are perceived as a separate group, which marginalizes them from the global community and reduces their self-esteem. Tajfel, Turner, Austin, and Worchel (1979) explain social categorization as the process of grouping social objects or events based on an individual's actions, intentions, attitudes, and beliefs (69). According to Tajfel (69), social categorization consists of bringing together social objects or events in groups with the same actions, intentions, attitudes, and beliefs as the individual (Tajfel 69). "The theory emphasizes social categorization as an important factor influencing intergroup behavior. "People form groups and their membership in those groups influences their behavior and attitudes" (Edited by John T. Jost 283). Moreover, they provide a system of self-reference for the individual: they define his or her place within society and create the basis for self-awareness. Thus, the film *Rahm* can be viewed as a positive step towards social change by bridging gaps between various groups and fostering a sense of interconnectedness. A film has the potential to promote a more positive perception of Pakistani Muslims globally by highlighting their shared humanity and common values with non-Muslim groups.

Due to its complex mixture of tones and genre elements, *Measure for Measure* is often referred to as a "problem play" (Gordon) and is rarely performed in contemporary times. The themes of justice, morality, and power abuse are explored in William Shakespeare's play. It takes place in Vienna, where Duke Vincentio temporarily leaves his post to appoint Angelo as his deputy. Due to Angelo's unwavering sense of morality, Claudio is arrested for premarital sex. A soon-to-be nun, Isabella, Claudio's sister, finds herself in a moral dilemma as she pleads for the life of her brother, only to be confronted by Angelo with a compromising proposition. As the characters deal with a web of moral dilemmas, the play explores hypocrisy, mercy, and the true nature of justice. As a result, *Measure for Measure* challenges the delicate balance between rigid adherence to the law and the significance of compassion and forgiveness in society.

In contrast to the original, the cinematic interpretation of *Rahm* reflects a Pakistani Muslim identity that is complex and multifaceted, challenging stereotypes and delivering a more nuanced picture of Pakistani society. In appropriating the original storyline, Sayyid (2014) stimulates reflection on mercy, justice, and human desires, all of which holds profound significance in

Islamic teachings (Sayyid, 2014). A shift in focus occurs between the Governor/Duke Vincentio and Sameena/Isabella, played by Sanam Saeed, who takes on the role of the sister desperately begging for her brother's life from the newly appointed strict deputy governor, Qazi Ahad/Angelo, portrayed by Sunil Shanker (Sayyid, 2014). After confronting Ahad/Angelo's adherence to strict principles, Sameena condemns her brother, Qasim, portrayed by Claudio, for impregnating Ahad/Angelo's fiancée, Marium, portrayed by Mariana (Sayyid, 2014). In a crucial encounter, Sameena seeks mercy from Ahad or Angelo. It is Ahad/Angelo, however, who cannot resist Sameena's charm. He offers her a challenging choice: to compromise her honour to save her brother or to sacrifice her integrity to keep him alive (Sayyid, 2014). A more humanistic and realistic portrayal of Pakistani Muslim identity can be seen in the film's portrayal of flawed characters who struggle with moral dilemmas.

The title, "*Rahm*" establishes a strong emphasis on mercy as a priority in the country's governance and state affairs. As a departure from the original *Measure for Measure*, the film titled "*Rahm*" emphasizes the importance of mercy and compassion, integral teachings of Islam, while also addressing the moral and corrupt challenges facing Pakistani society. Accordingly, *Measure for Measure* takes its title from a biblical reference: "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged, and with the measure you give, you will be measured" (St Matthew's). The phrase may seem to suggest a harsh concept of justice, similar to the Old Testament concept of "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth". Although the title has a religious origin, it seems to invite scepticism regarding the authority of human beings to administer punishments in the name of God. It is derived from St Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, which conveys the message that one should refrain from passing judgment on other people since one's own actions will ultimately be judged similarly (St Matthew's). Even though the play explores themes of justice and mercy, initially presenting them as interconnected, the balance between the two takes a secondary role until the latter part of the play, where mercy is revealed to have its full significance.

Throughout the film, *Rahm* emphasizes mercy as a central theme. The repetition of the words in the dialogues through various scenes in *Rahm*, the theme of mercy is woven throughout the film. People protest when Ahad/Angelo orders a culprit to be flogged forty times for breaking the law, believing that it is a severe punishment for such a minor infraction. Ahad/Angelo, however, reiterates that anyone who violates the law will face severe punishment. As Ahad/Angelo learns that Qasim/Claudio is married to his fiancée, he dismisses it as a feeble excuse to hide his adultery, since the marriage certificate is lost. Therefore, he sentences Qasim/Claudio's fiancée to death for adultery and imprisons her for extramarital relations (Jamal, 2016). Ahad/Angelo is urged to reconsider the punishment by the constable and the onlookers who are dissatisfied with the severity of the punishment. Samina/Isabella implores Ahad/Angelo to show mercy and sleep with him in return for the freedom of her brother. Ahad/Angelo is consistently urged to forgive by the Qazi sahib/Escalus. This film challenges the perception that severe whippings align with Islamic justice, which has been implemented by both Western and Islamic societies because justice and mercy are interconnected, as emphasized by the film's title. These misinterpretations of Islamic ideology illustrate how true Islamic teachings oppose the imprisonment of women and the restriction of their rights. In Surah Nuh highlights that If someone accuses chaste ladies and then fails to provide four witnesses, they will get 80 lashes and their evidence will no longer be accepted. And they are the resolutely disobedient (24:4 in An-Noor). Other than this reference, whipping or flogging as a punishment is not mentioned in the Holy Quran. Muslims believe in Allah's (God's) abundant mercy, a fundamental concept in Islam. Mercy and compassion are consistently emphasized in Islamic teachings, both within and outside of communities. As it explores themes of mercy, compassion, and forgiveness, *Rahm* is rooted in the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

The cinematic adaptation of *Measure for Measure* features the transsexual/transgender character Gulzar in place of Shakespeare's clownish pimp Pompey. Gulzar/Pompey provides more compelling and subversive comic relief in the film than Pompey's brief and underdeveloped role in the play. As the film depicts Gulzar's interactions with the law enforcement system, he is repeatedly arrested for operating as a pimp. He shows compassion and mercy by advocating on behalf of Gulzar's community. Since Gulzar belongs to the marginalized transgender community seeking employment and survival, he protests each time and raises his voice, and Qazi

Sahib/Escalus acquits him. Qazi Sahib/Escalus sends Gulzar to prison the last time he is caught red-handed.

In comparison to Shakespeare's original play, Ahad's corrupt legislators, along with individuals such as Qazi Sahib/Escalus and the governor who strive for justice, add layers of intrigue and complexity. As a result, Ahad/Angelo is contrasted with corrupt individuals such as Qazi Sahib/Escalus and the governor. There are several instances in the film in which Gulzar is accused of acting as a pimp but the emphasis always falls on justice, mercy, and equality as highlighted in Islam. In the Islamic faith, the Quran repeatedly emphasizes the importance of integrating justice with mercy. For instances "O you who have believed, stand steadfastly in the face of justice, bearing evidence for Allah, even if it is against you or your parents or close family members. Allah is more deserving of both wealth and poverty (Quran, 4:135). The verses explain that even if it may be against our own parents, Allah reminds us that we must maintain our commitment to establishing and believing in justice. This may be extremely difficult, but it is still a responsibility that falls on all of us. "O you who believe, walk uprightly before God and bear witnesses in truth!" (Quran, 5:8). Samina, being a practising Muslim entails actively promoting and defending principles like justice and equality. Which says that even though certain actions may be permissible, mercy takes precedence over strict retribution. In Suran Al Anas Allah commands "fairness, compassion, and doing good deeds for one's fellow human beings" (Quran 88) and forbids anything that is vile, bad, and tyrannical. He admonishes you to stay alert in verse and must create the necessary provisions so that everyone can get their full rights without restriction. However, justice does not imply the allocation of rights equally, as that would be utterly unnatural. Justice really refers to the fair distribution of rights, which in some circumstances may imply equality. It is because of this concept of mercy, Islam is an encompassing and inclusive religion that extends beyond Islamic communities. In addition to providing a foreground to the implied message conveyed, the title manifests a timely reminder regarding the importance of mercy in Islam to both Muslims and West as social groups.

The film also draws inspiration from Rumi's Masnavi, a compilation of introspective tales exploring themes of virtue and vice. The Masnavi is a collection of mystical poems that explore themes of love, spirituality, and human nature. In the opening scenes of the film, Imam Sahib instructs Samina/Isabella to read the first four verses of Rumi's "Masnavi," a well-known work by the Persian poet.

“می‌کند حکایت چون نی از بشنو
می‌کند شکایت جدایی‌ها از
ببریده‌اند مرا تا نیستان کز
تالیده‌اند زن و مرد نفیرم در
(Free Islamic & Education Books)

The verses translate as "Listen to the reed how it tells a tale/complaining of separations— Saying, Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament, has caused man and woman to moan". And another translation explains "Listen to the reed flute, how it tells a tale Complaining of separations, saying "Ever since I was cut off from the reed bed..." (Free Islamic & Education Books). The first five couplets of the Masnavi introduce the theme of separation and longing for the divine, which is a central theme throughout the work. It is therefore possible to interpret Rumi's Masnavi as a commentary on contemporary injustice and intolerance, as well as a call for increased empathy, understanding, and connection in the first two couplets.

Rumi's Masnavi is firmly rooted in an Islamic perspective, while Shakespeare's play draws on Christian and Puritan themes. Throughout Rumi's Masnavi and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, themes of morality, justice, and human complexity are explored. There are a variety of possible interpretations of these couplets, but the theme of separation and disconnection has a potential connection to today's injustices and intolerance. The reed-flute in Rumi's poem represents the human soul, which longs for reunification with its source. There is a clear connection between the character of Ahad/Angelo and the themes in Rumi's Masnavi. It can be compared to the empty vessel referenced in Masnavi as Ahad/Angelo takes on a tyrannical role, mirroring Kamal/Lucio. When he confronts his inner self, he finds solace as he becomes disconnected from the world of divine souls that instructs man to the path of love for humanity, justice and tolerance. In order to fill this hollowness, they must recognize that humans and their individual selves serve as the locus of Allah's revelation. Perceiving Allah's presence requires an understanding of one's own existence and their relationship with fellow human beings.

Additionally, the poem's use of the reed-flute as a metaphor for the human soul serves to remind us that all people are fundamentally human, regardless of race, religion, or nationality. The governor's attempted molestation of Samina/Isabella has caused her to flee and walk alongside the Qawwali, echoing the resonant couplets of Rumi mentioned earlier in the discussion. There is a parallel between Samina/Isabella and the reed in Rumi's *Masnavi*, in that both grapple with a sense of displacement and a void within. In the same way that the reed seeks solace in the moral teachings of Islam, Samina/Isabella valiantly resists her oppressor. This film makes extensive use of Rumi's *Masnavi* to connect with Islamic ideologies and Pakistani Muslim identity.

In the opening title of the film, it is explicitly stated that the setting of the story takes place in "Lahore at an imaginary time" (Rahm). And the film begins with a rising sun, suggesting hope and the beginning of an era. Through the intentional evasion of a fixed temporal context, *Rahm* adheres to Islam's broader principles, emphasizing the enduring significance of mercy, justice, and compassion, extending beyond temporal and spatial boundaries. It means that the film's story does not take place in a specific historical period. The events and circumstances may not align with any specific period in Lahore. This intentional ambiguity exalts Lahore as a dynamic cultural capital and spiritual centre, while also embodying an inherent "Muslim spiritual and cultural message" of magnanimity in Islam. The film challenges prevailing Western narratives by defying cultural hegemony and offering an alternative perspective that counters oversimplified stereotypes. Incorporating elements of Western culture, such as Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, the filmmakers assert and celebrate Lahore's cultural identity.

Rahm uses aerial views as a tool to portray Lahore's Old Walled City as a symbol of Islamic pluralism and inclusivity in a Pakistani setting (Jamal, 2016). The plot of Shakespeare's play *Measure for Measure* is set in Venice; however, Rahm relocates the action to the Inner Walled City of Lahore, also known as Androon Lahore, which is considered the cultural centre of the city (Jamal, 2016). In this aerial scene, narrow alleys represent the interconnectedness of Lahore's streets, symbolizing the diversity of communities that have coexisted historically (Rahm, 2016). As a result of their coexistence, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, and Christians have significantly contributed to the cultural tapestry of the city. Lahore's past was characterized by multiculturalism and tolerance, as reflected in the architecture and historical context of the old havelis (Jamal, 2016). Through its depiction of winding streets, colonial architecture, and the red-light district called Hira Mandi, the film captivates the audience with the charm of old Lahore. Historically, Hira Mandi served as a red-light district known for its courtesans, music, dance, and cultural activities (Jamal, 2016). Hira Mandi's residents show inclusivity and acceptance, despite its association with the red-light district (Jamal, 2016). In addition to its numerous Sufi shrines, the city boasts a rich Islamic heritage, such as the shrine of Madhu Lal Hussain, where Urs is celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion in the form of the 'Mela Chiraghan' or the festival of lights. It is observed that mosques are situated in the same neighbourhood as the residents, illustrating the coexistence of different aspects of life in the area (Jamal, 2016). In this analysis, the relocation of Lahore serves as a method of cinematic appropriation of resistance to Shakespeare's Vienna portrayed in the original play as corrupt and decadent. In contrast to the original setting for *Measure for Measure*, Pakistani film *Rahm* showcases the vibrance and culturally rich portrayal of Lahore.

Additionally, the Quaid-e-Azam Library, while not directly embodying the concepts of justice in its physical architecture, is fundamentally connected to them (Jamal, 2016). The library serves as a centre for information and education, which are fundamental to promoting justice in society (Jamal, 2016). Most of the scenes between Ahad/Angelo and Qazi Sahib/Escalus are filmed in the Quaid-e-Azam Library, suggesting that Islamic teachings place great emphasis on knowledge and understanding. According to Islamic teachings, knowledge and understanding are highly valued, as evidenced by the majority of scenes in the Quaid-e-Azam Library between Ahad/Angelo and Qazi Sahib/Escalus. By harassing Samina/Isabella in the library, Ahad/Angelo symbolically satirizes the perceived failure of the library to disseminate knowledge, foster intellectual growth, and facilitate dialogue, challenging Islamic principles of tolerance and justice (Jamal, 2016). By preserving and valuing these historical landmarks, Lahore pays homage to its cultural diversity and pluralism, integral to the Islamic principle of tolerance (Jamal, 2016). As a demonstration of timelessness in a country, architectural elements and historical religious

associations can be analyzed through the lens of social identity theory in order to reveal how they influence collective identity and intergroup dynamics. The religious adherence to historical buildings elevates them beyond mere physical structures, imbuing them with a profound and enduring sense of timelessness.

There are also significant differences between the dispositions of female characters in *Measure for Measure* and the female lead in *Rahm*, portrayal and characterization. One similarity between the female characters in *Measure for Measure* and the female lead in *Rahm* is their struggle against oppressive systems of power. Isabella and Juliet are both victims of a corrupt and oppressive legal system, while Samina is similarly oppressed by a system that is stacked against her. In Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, the female characters include Isabella, who is a novice in a convent, and her brother's lover, Juliet. On a micro, specific level, Isabella is a Puritanical character. Her devout repudiation of sexual intercourse and her choice to remain chaste in the name of God to preserve her immortal soul exemplifies Puritan values. Isabella is a virtuous and pious character who is torn between her loyalty to her brother and her commitment to her religious beliefs. Juliet, on the other hand, is depicted as a more sexually promiscuous character who has become pregnant out of wedlock. Moreover, while the female characters in *Measure for Measure* are primarily defined by their relationships with men, Isabella and Juliet are both depicted as more passive characters who are subject to the actions of male characters. Isabella, who stands as Angelo's opposite, is also perceived by many as his mirror image – a staunch absolutist (Gordon). Similar to Angelo, she possesses strong convictions regarding punishment. Her depiction of the penalty she would choose rather than sacrificing her virginity is disconcertingly enthusiastic. She describes it as follows: "I would wear the marks of harsh whips as if they were precious rubies, and I would willingly strip myself to death, longing for the punishment I have yearned for, rather than surrender my body to shame". Isabella, in her imagination, identifies with the role of a Christian martyr and finds a peculiar satisfaction in the idea of being disciplined. In a heartfelt soliloquy, she declares, "More than our brother is our chastity" (Shakespeare, 2019). She has upheld her chastity, but now she must confront the true implications of remaining steadfast to her virtuous principles. One might argue that she, too, faces a form of punishment. In a bitter twist that thoroughly tests her capacity for mercy, she is compelled to join Mariana in pleading for Angelo's life, firmly convinced that he is responsible for her brother's demise. Naturally, she passes the test, yet even her ultimate reward has been interpreted by some as a form of an imposed sentence. She is to be married to the Duke. While her fate represents a kind of justice—given what she has learned, she cannot embrace the life of a nun—it is a decision imposed upon her. The Duke requests, "Give me your hand," and asks her to be his (Shakespeare, 2019). She offers no verbal reply, and in live performances, directors and actors continue to grapple with how she should wordlessly respond to the proposition.

In contrast, *Rahm* challenges the narrow definition of Pakistani Muslim womanhood through the portrayal of the female protagonist, Samina or Isabella. In the film, Samina/Isabella's character is overtly emphasized in contrast to Qazi/Sahib/Duke's character, a clear departure from the original version. The female lead in *Rahm* is Samina, a young woman who is wrongfully accused of a crime and ends up caught up in Pakistan's corrupt and oppressive legal system. In addition to taking centre stage, she is gentle and pious and lives with her naive brother, Qasim/Claudio (played by Rohail Pirzada). A corrupt and hypocritical Qazi Ahad/Angelo becomes Governor of Lahore after the Governor (played by Sajid Hasan) suffers a heart attack. After arresting Samina's brother, Qazi demands his chaste sister, Samina, trade her honour for her brother's life. Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* describes such a situation by stating that "to have a giant's strength is excellent, but to use it like a giant is tyrannical" (Shakespeare, 2019). Despite this, Samina/Isabella does not let the situation burden her for too long. In contrast to her oppressors, Samina/Isabella becomes a more active character. During a time when powerful men challenge Samina's religious duty as a Muslim woman, Samina's character shines through. Throughout the narrative, Samina is depicted as a strong and resilient character who fights against injustice and corruption. The application of social identity theory helps to understand Samina's fight for marginalized women within a Muslim community. The theory recognizes how factors such as gender, class, and power intersect to shape individuals' experiences and identities. In this case, Samina's struggle for social change can be seen as a positive representation of a Muslim community at the intergroup level, as she challenges the authority of corrupt and powerful men and asserts her own identity as a woman. By engaging in social comparison, she actively questions the existing power dynamics and works towards creating a more equitable society. This interpretation aligns with the principles of social identity

theory, which examines how group identities and intergroup dynamics influence individual behaviour and social change. In addition, we understand the complex interplay between social identities and belief systems within the context of Pakistani Muslim identity.

In contrast to the female characters in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, whose primary characteristics are their relationships with men according to societal norms of the time (Shakespeare, 2019), Samina's character embodies resistance and empowerment, disobeying conventional society's expectations through her restrained yet powerful portrayal. A more contemporary perspective on Pakistan is reflected in her feminist and contemporary perspectives. The voice and story of this woman demand our attention. The performance of this individual should be carefully observed. The struggle she undertakes for justice and mercy extends beyond herself; it encompasses all oppressed women. It is her courage that allows her to express her opposition to abusive and unjust power without fear.

Hence, *Rahm* sheds light on such myths about Islamic practices misconceived by non-muslim countries and its cinematic rendition stimulates them to study the "other". Using Henry Tajfel, & J. C. Turner, Social identity theory, this analysis interprets the consequences of identification, and the magnitude of Islamic ideologies that existed for ages have been downplayed in the contemporary age. Social identity theory can be used to understand how the themes of group identity and resistance are portrayed in Pakistani film *Rahm*, an appropriated version of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. *Rahm* acts as an intermediary and a resisting presentation in demystifying the plethora of Pakistani cultural, religious, gender empowerment and artistic divisiveness projected in the global panorama of digital media.

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