



Reshaping Oedipal Myth in the Baahubali Series

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Abstract

Myths are a timeless tool for preserving a community's collective past, as they transmit shared beliefs and traditions across generations. Cinema, as a form of popular culture, plays a crucial role in transmitting, transforming, and revitalizing myth for contemporary audiences. In such context, this article aims to analyze how the *Baahubali* Series as a cultural text, reshapes the Oedipal myth. Using an interpretive method of textual analysis, the article focuses on elements such as father-son conflict, maternal attachment, and sibling rivalry framed within the ethical dimensions of duty and morality. It also uses shots from the selected movies for thematic interpretation. This article argues that the *Baahubali* Series reshapes the core tensions- parental authority, sibling rivalry, maternal attachment, and struggle for legitimacy within an ethical context that demands duty, sacrifice, and moral righteousness rather than reproducing the Oedipal complex in conventional Western form. The finding of this article shows that the *Baahubali* Series directed by S. S. Rajamouli, is replete with Oedipal fixation grounded in the cultural context of dharma, duty, legitimacy, and ethics towards the

community rather than the individual psyches of the characters. The significance of this article lies in its analysis of cinema's role in communicating mythologies across generations. This article concludes that the *Baahubali* series reshapes the Oedipal myth within an ethical context that demands duty, sacrifice, and moral righteousness, rather than reproducing the Freudian Oedipal complex in its conventional Western form. Further, the *Baahubali* Series has affirmed cinema's role as a popular medium for reshaping ancient myths and preserving mythology and culture through a cinematic lens.

Keywords: Archetype, cinema, desire, oedipal myth, sibling rivalry, separation

Introduction

The use of myth in Indian cinema began from the very beginning. The first featured film *Raja Harishchandra*, made in 1913, was based on Hindu mythology (Dass 77-78). India's expansive cultural terrain, deeply embedded in mythological narratives and long-standing traditions, finds a dynamic extension in cinema that transcends mere storytelling and draws insight from ancient mythic sources. The integration of mythology into film has

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significantly influenced India's artistic and socio-cultural spheres, emerging as a potent medium for human expression and a reflective mirror of the nation's rich and revered mythological heritage (Sehrawat and Bharti 241). The reimagination and recreation of these mythological elements through the medium of cinema also sheds light on the storytelling techniques and new cinematic trends that have evolved over time (253). The history of Indian cinema started with a mythological base from the first Indian cinema; then, the study of myth in Indian cinema became significant to comprehend the trend in modern movies, too. S.S. Rajamouli directed *Baahubali* Series is one of those modern movies that set the example of reshaping myth for the modern audience.

The *Baahubali* Series explores multiple themes: struggle for power, revenge, quest for knowledge, kinship, friendship and design of destiny performed with cinematic effect by various actors, which remind mythical glimpse from the epics like *The Mahabharata* and *The Ramayana*. The leading characters in the *Baahubali* Series embark on their journey to the mythical world. One of the myths reshaped in this series is the Oedipal myth presented through the heroic story of Amarendra Baahubali and his son Mahendra Baahubali, starring Pravash. The movie is developed into two series namely *Baahubali the Beginning* (2015) and *Baahubali the Conclusion* (2017), which overlap in their characters and theme. In this context, this article explores the restructuring of the Oedipal complex in the *Baahubali Series* focusing on generational rivalry and maternal authority, drawing insights from myths and archetypes. It argues that the *Baahubali* Series offers a culturally grounded reimagining of the Oedipal myth, highlighting cinema's role in transferring myths into contemporary culture.

The main plot of the first series- *Baahubali the Beginning* revolves around

the quest for the identity of the hero whereas the second series- *Baahubali the Conclusion* centers around the royal periphery, politics, conspiracy, and competition for the throne. These issues connect both series with each other and also the three generations of the characters in the movie. In the first series, the unconscious desire for mother destines the prince's journey toward dharma and morality; therefore, motherly presence is marginalized. Unlike the first series, the second series directly presents the mother-son issues onscreen. Both series foreground a parent-child relationship. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the way the Oedipal myth is reshaped in these series guided by the research question that how the Oedipal myth is reshaped in *Baahubali* series. This paper will be significant to analyze adaptation of mythologies in cinema. The paper is limited within the framework of Oedipal myth through the core issues—parental authority, sibling rivalry, maternal attachment and struggle for legitimacy among the characters in the selected series.

Literature Review

Critics have reviewed the *Baahubali* Series from multiple perspectives such as identity crisis, prince's journey, character comparison, woman leadership, cultural heritage, body perspective, including masculine body and deformed body.

Many scholars have compared the characters from the selected movies with other fictional characters. One of the characters, Shiva from *Baahubali: The Beginning* is compared with the character from the tragedy *Hamlet* and asserts that this movie makes people think of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* regarding it as the Indian version of *Hamlet* (Wang, Jian and et. al. 183). This review focuses only for the comparison between the two characters, Shiva and Hamlet, based on their rivalry with their uncle. In the same way, concerning identity crisis *The New York Times* reviews the first series as "A fiction narrated in a

melodramatic manner with surreal fantasy, songs and epic battle scenes, it [*Baahubali the Beginning*] is a tale of a prince who is unaware of his identity". This review on the movie focuses for the unknown royal identity of the hero. Similarly, critics have praised the female characters of the movie for breaking the traditional gender stereotype. They praise as "S.S. Rajamouli crafted perfect woman leadership traits through Sivagaminidevi's character. The movie portrayed her as the wise ruler of Mahishmati, being clever at strategy making, strong and clear in her views, fair in ensuring success, and also being very strong-headed most of the time. She did not succumb to nepotism or allow her son Bhallaladeva to become the king" (Ali and Gupta 89). Such crafting of female characters enforces women's leadership and ruling skills as leaders.

Some reviewers have analyzed the movie series from a body perspective. It is assumed that "the character Baahubali projects the ideal male body prepared in gym centres and training institutes through cinematic representations of the multiple characters from Hindu mythologies: Bhima, Krishna, Lord Vishnu, and Arjuna" (Thapa 87). The review regards the body as the site to enforce male ideology in the movie series. Therefore, the review focuses on the strong, powerful male body of the lead characters played in this movie. The movie is studied not only for the masculine body but also for the deformed body. Critics opine that "He [Bijjaldev] is portrayed as a selfish evil character, surrounded with negative attitudes and loaded with tons of bad habits. He was a negative influence on the people around him and took his deformity as a reason for people's hatred towards him. He was a person with a dysfunctional brain; drowned in anger and revenge" (Gupta and Anand 94). This analysis has focused on the connection between character traits and a dysfunctional body. It also highlights the people's negative perception of a

deformed body. Finally, another critique of the movie *Baahubali – The Beginning* foregrounds the cultural dimension and claims that it explores the themes of cultural identity and nationalism, subtly representing the kingdom of Mahishmati as a symbol of united and prosperous India, sending a message of cultural pride and rich traditional heritage (Sehrawat and Bharti 259). This comment highlights the movie as the medium of sharing culture and tradition.

In short, multiple comments and views on the *Baahubali Series* include identity crisis, the prince's journey, character comparison, woman leadership, cultural heritage, body perspective, plot of revenge, and medium of cultural transmission. However, none of them are concerned about the reshaping of the Oedipal myth in the movie. Therefore, this paper tries to analyze reshaping of the Oedipal myth in the *Baahubali Series*.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative approach to analyze and interpret the reshaping of the Oedipal myth in the movies *Baahubali: The Beginning* and *Baahubali: The Conclusion*. The content used in this study are taken from the scenes, shots and dialogues from the selected movies. Only the scene, shots and dialogues that support to analyze the reshaping of the Oedipal myth are taken for the study. The useful shots are still analyzed in this article. Since the Hindi-dubbed movies are used, the dialogues are translated into English for the analysis in this paper. Free translation of the dialogues from the film are done by the researcher.

Theoretical Perspective

A study of myth in a movie helps the reader understand the universal theme and structure of myth. Myth theory in film is a captivating approach to understate the stories that deeply resonate with audiences worldwide across generations. Myth theory suggests that cinematic narratives often

contain universal themes, archetypes, and symbols rooted in shared human history and cultural myths. By exploring myth theory in film, viewers and critics alike gain a richer appreciation of storytelling and insight into how filmmakers shape emotional and intellectual experiences through timeless motifs. Among several types of myth Oedipal myth is the one recurring frequently in the cinematic canvas. Referring to the example from classical tragedy *Oedipus Rex*, Freud opines that “we were all destined to direct our first sexual impulses towards our mothers and our first impulses of hatred and violence towards our fathers” (Freud 568). This argument from him helps to analyze these films on the basis of characters’ behaviors towards opposite sex parents. Freudian usage of the Oedipal myth is further discussed as the generic term for both Oedipal and Electra complexes. In the Freudian analogy, children aged between 3-5, whether the male or the female, develop sexual desire for the opposite sex parent, which results in their love for the one and jealousy towards the other (Macleod n.p.). In that sense, the male child develops hatred for his father while developing a strong sensuous feeling toward his mother, and the female child, in her innate desire for her father, develops hatred of her mother.

Freud’s concern for repressed sexual desires is termed the Oedipus complex. Connected with the Oedipus complex, Freud says, “the male infant conceives the desire to eliminate the father and become the sexual partner of the mother” (Barry 93). For Freud, this is the reflection of a process in infant development, in which the male child must disassociate himself from his father and claim his own place as an individual in his association with his mother. Freud’s concept of mother son attachment is solely based on the nuclear family structure of the West. Furthermore, his Oedipal theory has ignored the cultural context of a child. In this regard, this paper unfolds the way the Oedipal myth is reshaped in the cultural

context of dharma, justice, and moral righteousness in the *Baahubali* series.

***Baahubali* Series and The Oedipal Myth: Critical Analysis**

This paper attempts to explore reshaping of the Oedipal myth in the *Baahubali* series. The Oedipal myth reoccurs in the *Baahubali* series within three throne holder generations of the Mahismati kingdom. The first series entertains the audience with mother son bond where fatherly presence is less remarkable. The second series values for the fatherly presence with flash back technique. The continuation and subversion of the Oedipal relationship in these series are discussed below:

Baahubali the Beginning: Maternal Attachment and Separation

Baahubali the Beginning begins with the tragic separation of the newly born baby, Mahendra Baahubali with his grandmother, Shivagaminidevi, while saving him from his enemies in the river. However, the baby is rescued by Sanga and her husband from the river, where water represents energy and vitality reflecting the Jungian archetype. Later, the child grows into a handsome and almighty Shiva possessing more undefeatable courage and power than normal mortal being. He has attempted to climb a waterfall since childhood and succeeds following the mask fallen from above, which leads him to meet Avantika, his beloved, for whom he is determined to rescue Devsena. After joining Avantika’s war force, he is attacked by Katappa and recognized as Mahendra Baahubali, son of Amarendra Baahubali, by Katappa. Then the movie flashes back introducing the Mahismati kingdom ruled by Shivagaminidevi instead of her physically impaired husband Bijjaladeva. Shivagaminidevi as the royal mother declares the future king will be made based on the capability between two children Amarendra Baahubali and her own biological son Bhallaladeva. Their test is

done during the invasion by Kalakeya, a new threat to their kingdom. Though Bhallala Deva manipulatively manages to kill the enemy, Amarendra Baahubali is declared to be the king for being kind to the citizens. The movie ends when Katappa confesses that he killed Mahendra Baahubali (Shiva)'s father, Amarendra Baahubali with the unresolved question "Why?" for the audience. Within the periphery of this plot, the researcher has analyzed the movie from a mythical perspective in this section.

The first in the series, *Baahubali the Beginning*, starts with the scene of a waterfall. Then the camera moves towards the scene of an injured woman fleeing away holding a newborn baby to protect it; she fights with some soldiers, kills them and runs into the water raising her hand upright without letting the baby drown in the river.

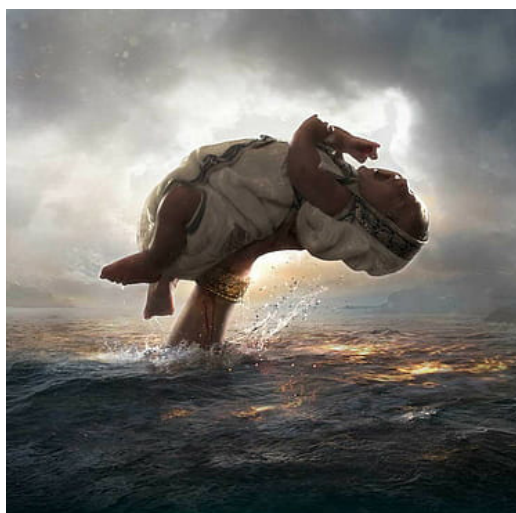


Fig. 1. Rajmata Shivagami holding up Mahendra Baahubali to save him from drowning, still from *Baahubali the Beginning* (00:07:35). Screenshot by the author.

Fig. 1 is an extreme close-up shot to highlight the closeness of the child to the mother's hand holding it. The hand seems very protective, but immediately disappears, showing the child's dependency upon the mother's body for survival, followed by an immediate separation. The child is rescued by the indigenous people, and

taken into the care of Sanga. This event has multiple mythical associations. It reminds birth of Lord Krishna, who was born to Devaki and raised by Yasodha. In the same way, the scene of the baby floating in the river resembles the myth of Karna in the *Mahabharata*, who was flown in the river by his mother Kunti. Karna was raised by Adhiratha and Radha after being brought up from the river (Bashishtha 42). Similarly, the goddess Ganga gives her seven children to the river except Devabrata, who is also known as Bhismapitamaha (36). In this movie, the child is separated from his biological mother, who is immediately adopted by a caring woman, Sanga. In this scene, Sanga seems very bold when her husband intends to search for the child's relative by saying:

Sanga: Now it's my child given by Ganga mata (the river Ganga) in my lap. If anyone goes against it, I will kill him/her (*Baahubali the Beginning* 00:09:10)

In this scene, the child's body incorporates three motherly figures i.e., biological, adoptive, and Ganga Mata, the river. This scene is the start of the mother-son bond; however, the mother who claims the child is her foster mother.

Visual symbol like water symbolizes renewal of life in cinemas and used recurrently in the movie. As a child, Shiva spends most of the time in the waterfall trying to climb upward from it. Water is the place of separation from his biological connection. To get into the water is the child's unconscious desire to be reunited with the mother. The anxiety of separation hits him hard unconsciously, so most of the time, Shiva tries to go upward through water where his mother is. His childhood naughtiness is like the naughtiness of Lord Krishna to his mother Yasoda. Both of these mothers are worried about their child's activities, unaware of their supernatural power. Shiva's first glance at Avantika is the first encounter with his mother in the sense that Avantika is fighting with

enemies with the purpose of releasing their princess Devsena, who is the biological mother of Shiva. In this scene, Avantika encompasses the qualities of warrior and rebel, which are the true characteristics of his mother. Therefore, Shiva perceives the motherly body through her deed and the purpose of the deed. He immediately falls in love with Avantika, being attracted to her beauty and bravery. It justifies the Lacanian notion of the mirror stage in which a child perceives himself in his mother as the same personality. After knowing the aim of Avantika's rebellion, he says:

Shiva: You are mine Avantika; everything belongs to you are mine. And your aim also is mine. (*Baahubali the Beginning* 00:54:20).



Fig. 2. Siva assuring Avantika's problems as his own, still from *Baahubali the Beginning* (00:54:20). Screenshot by the author.

While uttering this dialogue in the shot given in Fig. 2, Shiva holds Avantika's hand and with bold voice claims she along with everything related to her are his belongings just like a child claims the mother is his possession not others. In this scene only these two bodies are there with mountain background metaphorically symbolizing the mother son bond would be as tall as the mountain but simultaneously frozen atmosphere of mountain hints the upcoming hardships and disaster to be faced in the journey to be reunited with motherly body. Still there is the hope projected by the sun's

rays on the mountain.

Shiva's erotic desire for Avantika projects the search for a mother-like life partner: warrior from his biological mother and civilian background from adoptive mother to fill the gap of separation. In support of Avantika, he fights with the soldiers of Bhallaladeva, which reminds his rivalry with his father's forces. In a scene, Shiva is fighting with Katappa. His fight with Katappa is also the fight with his father, where Katappa's sword attracts the attention of the audience in the image of Amarendra Baahubali. There is a night scene and the fight where the camera focuses on the sword symbolizing fatherly presence. In this scene, Katappa catching the man, Shiva takes out the sword, flying over the horse and beheading Bhallaladeva's son, Bhadra (1:14:20), is a powerful image of rivalry with father.



Fig. 3. Shiva fighting with Katappa, still from *Baahubali the Beginning* (1:14:20). Screenshot by the author.

The darkness in the scene in Fig. 3 symbolizes Shiva's unconsciousness and mystery. Katappa refers to the confusion about what is truth and what is not. Shiva's taking out the sword from the man confirms the victory over the confusion, as his

position is above the sword and Katappa, and the beheading of Bhallaladeva's son is the start of the journey towards the mother destroying the fatherly presence. After the recognition of Shiva as Mahendra Baahubali, all maternal images, namely Devsena, Sanga, and Avantika, gather together, Shiva's rivalry shifts towards an unknown paternal force who has captivated his biological mother for twenty-five years.

In short, *Baahubali: The Beginning* makes the audience rethink of oedipal myth through its plot, scenes, characters, and cinematic effects. The movie plot begins with a child's separation from their mother and develops on the basis of the child's desire to be united with their mother, which is symbolically presented through the unconscious desire to climb up the waterfall. The female lead Avantika, Sanga, the river itself, functions as the motherly figure, whereas Kattappa, the sword of Amarendra Baahubali and Shiva's real cousin, Bhadra, belong to the fatherly presence. Therefore, the first series takes the audience very close to the Freudian notion of Oedipal desire.

Baahubali the Conclusion: Revenge with Father

Baahubali: The Conclusion revolves around familial relationships, moral conflicts, generational struggles, and sibling rivalry, making them a natural fit for psychoanalytic interpretation. Intergenerational relationships, parental authority, and emotional dependence are the factors that resonate strongly with Freudian concepts. Emotional closeness and parental authority create psychological dynamics that often align with Freud's theories but manifest differently in this movie. Unlike *Baahubali the Beginning*, this series reshaped the Oedipal myth that is presented through a subverted mother-son relationship. The Freudian concept of the passive mother is transformed in this movie, which is proved by the characters of Shivagaminidevi and

Devsena. "[Shivagaminidevi's] character embodies the protective and nurturing qualities typically associated with royal motherhood but breaks the conventional mother stereotypes" (Raj and Suresh 102-103). Likewise, "Devasena is depicted as a strong-willed and courageous queen who is separated from her son due to political turmoil" (103). These views set the context for the subversion of the Oedipal relationship in which passive motherhood is replaced with royal politics and bravery. With the help of these two motherly characters, the movie has tried to avoid the taboo of the Oedipus complex and create a cultural context of duty and morality.

Baahubali: the Conclusion begins with the declaration of Baahubali as the emperor of the Mahismati Empire by the state Queen Sivagaminidevi, which itself signifies the strong bond between mother and son. Similarly, Baahubali's facilitation for his mother during thirty miles long barefoot trek on the occasion of the Rakshasa Dohan Celebration proves such a strong bond. In that celebration, Baahubali blazes the idol of Akal Rakshasa, which symbolically signifies the killing of the monstrous uncle by Mahendra Baahubali at the end of the movie.



Fig. 4 and 5 respectively, Shiva pointing

the arrow to kill Akala Rakshasa and Idol of Akala Rakshasa, still from *Baahubali the Conclusion* (00:10:02 and 00:10:05)

These shots of Baahubali pointing the burning arrow to kill the Akal Rakshasa and the burning of the Akal Rakshasa are captured in two shots. These separate shots in Fig 4 and Fig 5 signify that only one can survive, and death to the monstrous character is obviously parallel to the Freudian idea that a child wants to replace his father by himself. But it is created in a cultural context in the movie by backgrounding Oedipal fixation and by foregrounding the killing of Rakshasa as an act of duty and morality.

Shivagaminidevi seems to have moral and dutiful bond with Baahubali whereas emotional bond with her biological son Bhallaladeva. Her every decision for Baahubali is influential not as his mother but as the queen of the state, *Rajmata*. The royal mother and the biological mother of Bhallaladeva conflict with each other in their actions. Baahubali seems very ideal and loyal towards her. The dialogue between him and Shivagaminidevi regarding the matter of marriage with Devsena proves such loyalty as:

Shivagaminidevi: Amarendra Baahubali! You have two choices. Do you want the throne of the Mahismati empire which has its golden history or this manipulative Devsena?

Amarendra Baahubali: Breaking the promise for the throne is defame of your nurturing, mother. (*Baahubali the Conclusion* 1:00:20-40)

This dialogue between mother and son shows Baahubali's deep respect towards his mother since she has taught him that one can go against God for the sake of justice and Dharma. That's why Baahubali chooses Devsena over the throne of the Mahismati. On the one hand, he is obedient to his mother's command, and on the other, he is against his mother's will. The movie presents her actions and decisions on the basis of the politics of the kingdom rather

than the Western notion of Oedipal fixation.



Fig. 6. Bhallaladeva as the king and Baahubali as the commander in chief, still from *Baahubali the Conclusion* (01:24:53)

This shot, which reminds Shivagaminidevi's decision to make Bhallaladeva as the King and Baahubali as the Commander-in-Chief by reversing the situation, justifies her preference for a biological son like Kaikeyi's demand to crown Bharata, replacing Rama (Aiyar and Kampan 18) in the Hindu epic *the Ramayana*. On the one hand, while taking the decision to make Baahubali the king, her mother-self reminds us of Kausalya, biological mother of Lord Rama; on the other hand, the manipulative self to dethrone him reminds us of Kaikai. Besides the mother's preference, this shot portrays sibling rivalry. The expression of Bhallaladeva towards Baahubali is full of hatred and anger, whereas Baahubali's expression inculcates a dutiful and confident posture towards his king, as demonstrated in Fig 6.

This reshaping of the Oedipal myth is further uttered through:

Shivagaminidevi: Both of you get out from this royal premise right now!

Amarendra Baahubali: On the one side lies your legislative; on the other, dharma taught by you. On the struggle between these two, my sword is leaning towards dharma, mother! (*Baahubali the Conclusion* 1:20:25-50)

Baahubali easily accepts his demotion as commander-in-chief from the king and banishment from the kingdom because of duty and loyalty. He chooses his mother's word rather than the throne. He is shown to be the favourite and most trustworthy child of Rajmata. Rajmata's preference

for Baahubali always makes Bhallaladeva jealous and hurt. Baahubali's loyalty is comparable to Bhismapitamaha, who took the oath of celibacy and renunciation of the throne for the sake of his stepmother, Satyawati (Basishtha 37). Baahubali's comparison to Bhismapitamaha signifies his loyalty towards his oath to his mother. But motherly affection blinds Shivagaminidevi to the truth of the manipulative move of Bhallaladeva. She would rather try to search for reality than blindly believe her son. She immediately agrees to kill Baahubali after listening to her husband and Bhallaladeva's manipulative words. Here, her blindness is comparable to that of Gandhari, mother of Duryodhan, who never saw flaw in her son in the epic *The Mahabharata*. Dhuryodhana was overambitious for the throne of Hastinapur just like Bhallaladeva for Mahismati Empire. Many forms of inter-generational conflicts are seen by Freudians as having oedipal overtones, such as professional rivalries, often viewed in Freudian terms as reproducing the competition between siblings for parental favour (Barry 93). Competition for parental favour is reflected through Bhallaladeva either in his fight with Kalkeya or his marriage with Devsena.

Bhallaladeva's hatred towards his cousin resulted in the conspiracy to banish Baahubali and Devsena, making Rajmata believe that Baahubali is going to kill him. He brainwashes his mother and makes her kill Baahubali. Being tricked by Bhallaladeva, she banishes Baahubali from the kingdom, which reminds the audience to compare Rama's fourteen years of exile in *The Ramayana*. Obeying his mother's order happily by Baahubali is not only the attachment to mother, but also following the path of dharma, duty, and morality in the context of the movie. Furthermore, such a mythological incident is revived through Shivagaminidevi's order to kill Baahubali to protect her biological son. It is delivered through the dialogue of Shivagaminidevi

with Katappa as:

Shivagaminidevi: The death of Baahubali is ultimate, but Bhallaladeva should not be framed for it. Our history will not expect Bhallaladeva as the murderer of own brother (*Baahubali the Conclusion* 1:26:27-50)

This dialogue by Shivagaminidevi proves the favor for her biological son ignoring the reality of manipulative move of her own biological son, Bhallaladeva and husband to show Baahubali as a traitor. At the same time, Rajmata's decision functions as the rule of law in the political context that goes beyond the Freudian notion of the Oedipal myth.

The death of Bhallaladeva by Mahendra Baahubali is the unconscious desire to be reunited with his mother, Devsena. The parricide occurs at the end of the movie, where Bhallaladeva incorporates a fatherly image for Baahubali. This shot of killing Bhallaladeva by Baahubali reminds of Oedipus becoming king by killing his own father, Laius, when Baahubali becomes the king after Bhallaladeva's death and reunites with his mother. However, the killing of Bhallaladeva by Baahubali is desirable by the audience since it is not presented as the universal oedipal myth rather perceived as the duty and dharma or victory over evil and tyranny.



Fig. 8 Mahendra Baahubali in throne with his mother and beloved, still from *Baahubali the Conclusion* (02:39:53)

This shot of Mahendra Baahubali getting back his father's legacy with the throne, along with Avantika and Devsena by his side in Fig. 8, signifies the fulfillment of suppressed desire in his unconscious. The act of killing his own uncle, Bhallaladeva, by Baahubali and releasing his own mother

from his twenty-five years long captive reminds us of Hamlet. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, is challenged by the ghost of his father to avenge his murder at the hands of Hamlet's uncle. Psychoanalytic criticism argues that Hamlet's delay in decision is because he subconsciously wishes himself in his uncle's place: he wants to kill his father so that he might enter sexual relations with his mother (Upstone 91-92). For Baahubali, killing Bhallaladeva is, on the one hand, the revenge for his father's murder, and on the other, the gateway toward his mother. Finally, his coronation in the Mahismati empire makes him reach to the position of his uncle as well as his father, just like Hamlet's desire to be in the position of his uncle. Although Baahubali's journey centers around a motherly figure, he follows the path of dharma, duty, and justice. His coronation is not just the goal of reunion with mother; larger than this, it is the reestablishment of dharma and right man in the right place. In this sense, the movie is successful in delivering the message of struggle for dharma, justice, and duty, unlike the narrow dimension of the individual psyche.

In short, *Baahubali: The Conclusion* is replete with the context of desire to reunite with the mother after separation. The character Bhallaladeva strongly represents rivalry with his father, who almost kills his own nephew, Baahubali, and snatches the throne of the Mahismati Empire. His conflict with Baahubali is equal to Hamlet's inner tension with his uncle Claudius. Hamlet is being deprived of a share in the Queen's affection both by his uncle and father (Jones 140). In the movie, Mahendra Baahubali is deprived of motherly affection due to his uncle. In this sense, his rivalry with his father seems desirable to be close to his mother. Beyond the quest for reunion with mother, Bhallaladeva's death is the death of a tyrant, monarch and an unjust. In this regard, this movie reshapes the classical dimension of the Oedipal myth to

the contemporary demand of morality.

Conclusion

The *Baahubali Series* reshapes the Oedipal myth through the cinematic canvas. The first Series *Baahubali: The Beginning* reworks on the universal theme of mythical tradition by portraying the quest for the biological mother by Shiva. Whereas the second series, *Baahubali: The Conclusion* reshapes the universal Oedipal myth by portraying it through the triangular familial relationship among Shivagaminidevi, Baahubali, and Bhallaladeva. These series have demonstrated how classical psychoanalytical paradigms can be culturally re-inscribed within cinematic frameworks. Rather than reproducing the Freudian Oedipal complex in conventional Western form, the films reshape its core tensions—parental authority, sibling rivalry, maternal attachment, and struggle for legitimacy within an ethical context that demands duty, sacrifice, and moral righteousness. These series transform father-son conflict into a symbolic struggle between tyranny and justice performed by Baahubali and Bhallaladeva, and mother-son relation into the politics of the kingdom. In the same way, going beyond the Freudian assumption of passive motherhood, maternal figures assume a powerful, ethical, and nurturing role performed by Rajmata and Devsena. Through its mythological psychoanalytical depth, the *Baahubali Series* assures cinema's role as a popular medium for reshaping ancient myths to preserve mythology and culture simultaneously through a cinematic lens.

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