Between Tradition and Transgression: A Feminist Rewriting of Vijaydan Detha's "Duvidha" in the Cinematic Spectacle of Amol Palekar's *Paheli*

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Abstract: This paper attempts to examine how Amol Palekar's *Paheli* adapts Vijaydan Detha's folktale "Duvidha" from a feminist perspective. Detha, while collecting oral narratives from women in rural Rajasthan, often reworked them. Among his most renowned stories, "Duvidha"*,* is a reworking of an original tale that he heard from oral tradition and transformed with his distinctive narrative style. This tale is further reimagined in the cinematic world of Amol Palekar's film *Paheli*, which offers yet another creative reinterpretation of the original folktale. The film retains the original spirit of the tale while giving it a fantastical twist at the end. Through a close reading of both the original story and the film, this paper considers how *Paheli* creates a different kind of resolution, where personal desire and emotional connection are given more weight than social expectations. This will also reflect on how each retelling carries the imprint of its context—whether oral, written, or visual—and how such stories continue to evolve across time and form. In tracing this journey from Detha to Palekar, the paper reflects on the space folktales create for both keeping tradition and stepping beyond it.

Keywords: *Adaptation, Cinema, Folklore, Feminist retelling*.

In the arid landscape of Rajasthan, where water is scarce but stories flow in abundance, folklore has long served as a vital mode of storytelling that carried the voice of people across time, preserving cultural traditions and local wisdom. The land of Rajasthan is renowned for its tales of bravery, romance, and moral dilemmas—tales that have been passed down through generations in the form of songs, riddles, and oral narratives. From this vibrant oral culture emerged Vijaydan Detha, a master chronicler of Rajasthani folklore, who spent his life not just recording tales, but retelling them in ways that emphasized justice and humour, while quietly

challenging the fixed patterns and norms of society. Born in the village of Borunda near Jodhpur, Detha belonged to a Charan family of bards and storytellers. Much of his material came from women in rural communities, including many from marginalized communities. He wrote in Rajasthani and compiled his stories in a 14-volume collection titled *Batan ri Phulwari*. He deliberately chose Rajasthani over other languages as a form of cultural resistance against language hierarchies. One of the most significant efforts to bring Detha's stories into English is Christi A. Merrill's translation project, *Chouboli and Other Stories*, developed in close collaboration with poet and translator Kailash Kabir. In her introduction to the same volume, *"Translating as a Telling Praxis,"* Merrill comments on the political and aesthetic stakes of Detha's language choice: "Detha's decision to write in the daily *bol-chal* of Rajasthani rather than the national language of Hindi was a daring move, both politically as well as aesthetically" (Merrill 2010: 12).

Detha, much like poet-scholar A.K. Ramanujan, was a tireless chronicler of folklore who saw folklore as a living tradition and its continuing significance in contemporary society. Ramanujan describes folktales as "a traveling metaphor that finds a new meaning with each new telling" (Ramanujan 1991), a thought that aligns with how Detha approached storytelling. Detha's work was not just about preservation—he was known for reshaping traditional stories, often questioning the values of patriarchy, feudalism, and religious orthodoxy. He often reshaped the stories he collected, reading them back to their sources, who usually welcomed and appreciated the changes. These retellings reflected his personal vision and spoke to the concerns of the time. His folktales, though rooted in oral culture, carried a strong anti-establishment tone and often gave voice to those who were typically left out of dominant narratives.

One of his most well-known stories, "Duvidha," presents the dilemma of a young bride visited by a ghost who takes the form of her absent husband. What appears to be a simple tale of mistaken identity or supernatural deception, through Detha's pen, becomes a subtle reflection on female agency, desire, and choice. The story has inspired two major film adaptations. The first, Mani Kaul's "Duvidha" (1973), is a minimalist and highly artistic interpretation, which closely follows the structure and mood of Detha's version. However, as a product of parallel cinema, Kaul's film remained limited in reach and mostly circulated within intellectual circles. In contrast, Amol Palekar's *Paheli* (2005) reimagines the story with major changes to tone, characterization, and narrative emphasis. Using the tools of mainstream Hindi

cinema such as colourful visuals, music, and star power, *Paheli* turns the folktale into a fantastical yet feminist retelling. The film gives more voice to the female protagonist, expands her emotional world, and draws attention to the ghost's role as a symbol of understanding and love – an element already central to Detha's original narrative but brought to life more vividly and emotionally through cinematic adaptation. With the release of *Paheli*, Detha "enjoyed a more popular national celebrity," (Merill 2010: 6) – in other words, the film made his name familiar beyond literary and regional circles and brought his story in to the heart of Indian popular culture.

While Vijaydan Detha's significant body of work often presents a clear critique of patriarchal and feudal structures, "Duvidha" adopts a gentler tone that resists easy conclusions and invites the reader to engage with its psychological and moral complexities. Rooted in folklore but written with literary intent, the story does not openly break with tradition, but rather unsettles it from within. Detha's "Duvidha" opens in a world governed by duty and decorum, where relationships are bound by social expectations but lack emotional depth. The newlywed bride, journeying to her husband's home, becomes the object of a ghost's fascination while she sits resting beneath a *Khejdi* tree along the way. He marvels at her appearance— *"गुलाब के फूल की कोमलता, सौंदर्य और रस-कस ही जैसे साँचे ढला हो। देखकर भी भरोसा नहीं होता— बादलों का ठीया छोड़कर बिजली तो नहीं उतर आई?"*[1] (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). As she is being carried away, the ghost feels an unbearable sting of separation and eventually loses consciousness. In stark contrast to the ghost's emotional turmoil, the bride's husband shows no trace of emotional connection. Preoccupied with accounts and figures, he dives into his ledger, calculating the expenses of the wedding. For him— *"हिसाब और बिणज का सुख ही असली सुख हैं"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). He is a typical *Baniya* (merchant), more invested in trade and profit than in the woman he has just married. His worldview is coldly pragmatic, and even when the bride asks for something as simple as ढालू (wild berries), he refuses, insisting, *"ढालू तो गंवार खाते हैं… लोग हँसेंगे"* —a remark that belittles both her desire and the rural culture she represents. These early moments of the story reveal how even a woman's smallest needs are sidelined in favour of appearances, social status, and economic priorities.

The bride, still adjusting to her new world, is met with another shock. In a moment that shatters the fragile illusion of companionship, the groom coldly announces— *"ब्याह होना था सो हो गया। पर हिसाब तो अभी बाक़ी है। ब्याह के खर्चे का हिसाब सँभलाकर मुझे तीज के दिन दिसावर जाना है।"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.) A marriage that was supposed to bring closeness now feels like a duty

fulfilled, while the real devotion is directed towards trade and tally. The occasion, he says, is too auspicious for business to miss, and such a *shubh muhurat* (auspicious time), won't return for another seven years. *"बिणज-ब्योपार ही बनिए का धरम है"* he states with pride, valuing business over relationships. The bride, unable to voice her despair, lets the berries slip from her hand in what becomes an unspoken protest. But the husband, blind to the tremors of her heart, quips dismissively: *"मैंने तो पहले ही कहा था। ढालू तो गँवार खाते हैं... नहीं खाए गए तो फेंकने पड़े न! धूप में जली सो नफ़े में!"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). It is a moment of absolute negation—not merely of her gesture, but of her very subjectivity. She turns inward and the silence becomes a quite reckoning that takes the form of a single piercing question: *"आदमी पैसे के लिए है या पैसा आदमी के लिए?"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). It is a question she asks of her husband, of her fate, and perhaps, of the institution she now finds herself trapped in. It is into this emotional hollow, this space where love should have been, that the ghost quietly steps in. The ghost arrives as the manifestation of a longing that the bride herself had not yet articulated. However, he is immediately burdened by the weight of his act. He hesitates, torn between desire and conscience, questioning the act of deceiving someone so innocent. *"इस सेडाऊ दूध में कीचड़ कैसे मिलाए"* (Detha 2025, Hindi translation). He may have intended to keep his identity hidden, but the innocence of the bride turns his deception into an emotional burden he had not anticipated. Eventually, the burden of deception becomes too much for the ghost to carry and in a moment of quiet honesty, he confesses everything to the bride—how he had watched her beneath the *khejdi* tree, how her image haunted him, and how he learned of her husband's long absence. But it's not just a strategic revelation—it is a moment of complete disarming. *"तुम्हारे कारण मेरे हिवड़े का विष इमरत में बदल गया"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). In this single line, Detha captures something profound: that love—unexpected, uninvited and untainted—has the power to undo even the most inhuman of beings. The poison in the heart, the bitterness, the detachment that often defines the ghost, begins to loosen in her presence. In the wake of the ghost's confession, the bride neither resists nor condemns. Instead, she reflects on a life quietly governed by the absence of autonomy, affection, and the freedom to choose. Her thoughts carry a mix of resignation and quiet reasoning: she could not stop the man who abandoned her, so how could she reject the one who came to her unasked yet stayed? *"सपनों पर कोई बस चले तो ऐसी प्रीत पर बस चले"* she wonders. What follows is not a verbal declaration but a wordless, physical surrender—*"वह सुध-बुध बिसराकर उसकी गोद में लुढ़क गई"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). Detha gives her no grand voice, but he gives her interiority, and in that, a subtle, radical agency.

For three years, the ghost assumes the role of the husband with remarkable ease, though his presence is defined less by imitation than by genuine emotional investment. He fulfils the expectations of domestic life – earning respect in the village, showing kindness to those around him, and offering a sense of companionship to the bride that she had never known in her marriage. Gradually, his presence transforms the space she inhabits, turning it into something tender, reciprocal, and meaningful. However, this balance is disrupted when news of the bride's pregnancy reaches the real husband, pulling him back from his trade routes and into the life he had been away from. The real husband's return reorients the narrative around the question of social legitimacy. The focus shifts to questions of lineage and identity, as if the years of shared life and emotional intimacy can be dismissed in favour of name, status, and formal roles. The most poignant moment occurs when the ghost revealing his emotional truth, tells the husband: *"मैं लुगाइयों की ग्राम के भीतर का सूक्ष्म जीव हूँ उनकी प्रीत का स्वामी। बिणज और कमाई की बजाय मुझे हेत-प्रीत की ज़्यादा लालसा है"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). In this declaration, affection is conceived as a presence – residing in memory, in feeling, in the intangible space of the heart.

As the confusion grows, the tension is transformed into a public spectacle. The villagers, *en route* to seek royal judgement, are intercepted by a shepherd whose rustic intelligence and authority steer the course of justice. He proposes a deceptively simple test—asking both men to enter his *mashak* (a leather water bag) under the pretext of delivering the rightful husband to the bride. The ghost, trusting in his emotional bond, complies; the husband refuses to do so. The ghost is locked inside the *mashak* and cast into the river—a symbolic act of restoring social order by drowning transgression. Justice, here, is defined by trickery, and the image of the floating bag becomes a poetic yet violent metaphor for the silencing of emotional truth and the elimination of the woman's agency. The ending of "Duvidha" circles back to the domestic space where control plays out through familiar rituals. As the bride undergoes postpartum rituals, her inner world remains unacknowledged—*"सूनी आँखें, सूना हिवड़ा,"* a heart emptied by loss. The husband's detailed narration of the ghost's entrapment is delivered with triumph, each word searing her heart with a pain greater than childbirth. As she prepares to rejoin her husband, ascending the *merī* (first floor) with her child in her arms, the narrative slips into her inner reflection. Her thoughts echo with bitterness: *"बड़ी होकर लुगाई की ऐसी ज़िंदगी न जीए तो माँ की सारी पीड़ा सार्थक हो जाए। यूँ तो ढोर-डाँगरों को भी उनकी मरजी के खिलाफ़ नहीं बरत सकते... पर लुगाई की अपनी मरज़ी होती ही कहाँ है?"* (Detha 2025, Hindi trans.). In this devastating moment of clarity, she begins to grasp how little space her desires occupy in the life laid out for her. Detha, here, does not depict an open act of rebellion but through this reflection, he exposes the brutal

normalcy of a woman's existence – one that is defined by expectations she did not choose and carried forward through generations without being challenged. In reinstating this patriarchal order, he leaves us not with final resolution but with a subtle critique of how tradition subdues female desire beneath silence and ceremony. The final line— *"मसान न पहुँचे तब तक मेड़ी और मेड़ी से सीधे मसान"*—draws a straight line between marriage and death and collapsing her life into a cycle with no space for selfhood. Amol Palekar's *Paheli* doesn't just adapt this emotional uncertainty, this lingering *duvidha*; it reimagines the story in a way that brings the woman's experience to the forefront and rethinks where power and freedom truly lies.

Across cultures and histories, stories, much like living beings, survive not through rigid preservation but through their capacity to adapt. In changing social, cultural, and artistic environments, narratives find new expressions and rebuild themselves to fit the needs, imaginations, and values of new audiences. Linda Hutcheon, in *A Theory of Adaptation*, challenges the traditional view that adaptations are inferior copies of original works. She argues that adaptations are acts of "repetition without replication"—creative processes that reinterpret and recreate stories across new cultural and aesthetic contexts (Hutcheon 2006: xvi). She further asserts that "an adaptation is a derivation that is not derivative—a work that is second without being secondary," and that it functions as "its own palimpsestic thing" (Hutcheon 2006: 9). In doing so, adaptation becomes a way to revisit the past and move beyond it. Some narratives disappear over time, while others adapt and survive, carrying traces of their original spirit even as they take on new meanings. An adaptation often unfolds through subtle shifts, as stories are told again in ways that reflect changing times and concerns. These shifts help stories remain alive and relevant across generations. In this spirit of renewal, Amol Palekar's *Paheli* does not merely reproduce Vijaydan Detha's "Duvidha," but transforms its emotional and narrative centre. What was once a tale of muted longing and resigned fate, becomes in Palekar's hands, a vibrant celebration of choice, and self-expression. Drawing from the rich aesthetic language of Rajasthani folklore, with its vibrant colours, haunting music, and textured desert landscapes, *Paheli* reimagines the fate of its heroine while simultaneously reshaping the very traditions that once sought to confine her.

Set against the backdrop of Navalgarh, a small town in Rajasthan, *Paheli* opens within a world shaped by tradition yet filled with everyday warmth and colour. Departing from the anonymity often found in oral folktales, the film gives its characters names—Lachchi and Kishanlal—immediately bringing them closer to real human emotions, instead of leaving them

as distant, symbolic figures. In the cinematic context, where connection with characters is central to storytelling, this naming allows the audience to step closer to Lachchi's inner world and witness her journey with greater intimacy. The narrative begins with the news of Lachchi's marriage proposal, setting off a wave of celebration, singing, and affectionate teasing among her family and friends. In these early scenes, the film quietly signals a shift in how female desire is portrayed. When teased about the anticipated consummation of her marriage, Lachchi responds without coyness, openly expressing her excitement by singing: *"Jagne ki raat aayi hai, dekha karti thi sapna, sapne ko aakhir apna, kehne ki raat aayi hai"*[2] (Palekar 2005). Her words reveal not just excitement but a sense of agency; she dreams of love and embraces it without hesitation. In this early moment, small yet significant, the film begins to reimagine a world where a woman's emotions are not suppressed into silence but allowed to be spoken, celebrated, and lived. The difference between Lachchi's emotional readiness and Kishanlal's emotional detachment becomes even more visible on their wedding night. Tradition may expect the husband to approach the bride, but here, it is Lachchi who takes the first step, asking Kishanlal to lift her veil and acknowledge their union. Yet Kishanlal, distracted by accounts and wedding expenses, remains caught in the mechanical world of accounting. He hesitates, saying— "Why ignite passion…for only one night?"[3] knowing that he must leave for business the very next morning.

In sharp contrast to Kishanlal's detachment, the ghost's first encounter with Lachchi is marked by attentive wonder and quiet pursuit. Unlike traditional portrayals of ghosts that rely on fear and suspense, the film introduces the ghost with tenderness and attentive observation. This moment occurs at a *baori* (stepwell), one of the most visually striking spaces in *Paheli*, where the bride, Lachchi, briefly steps away from her wedding procession to refresh herself. It sets the tone for the film's deep, sensory engagement with feminine presence, emotion, and subjectivity. The ghost's pursuit through animal forms— crow, squirrel, then bird—evokes the shape-shifting trickster figures found in folklore, but in *Paheli,* this shapeshifting takes on a more tender, almost poetic quality. The stepwell, with its descending curves of stone steps, becomes a space that stands apart from the conventional world of home and marriage, a space where something new may begin. Hovering around her in the form of a blue bird, the ghost makes soft, musical sounds, which Lachchi first notices with innocent wonder. She moves through this setting with an undefined awareness, sensing an invisible presence that neither threatens nor claims her. But as the presence lingers and remains unseen, fear begins to replace her wonder. The ghost's gaze, lit with awe, rather than indifference, stands in sharp contrast to

the practical, detached attention she receives from her husband, whose concerns remain tied to business. Lachchi's initial encounter with the ghost passes without full understanding. This brief encounter with the invisible gaze remains suspended in mystery until much later, when the ghost confesses his identity and the depth of his feelings. Speaking of that brief exchange at the stepwell, he recalls, "When you felt someone's presence at *baori* and your lips started tremble just like this, I lost myself in that moment. I was totally transformed. I felt a deep longing to spend every moment with you…to dissolve into you…a longing to become one with your breath" (Palekar 2005). What had initially unsettled her now appears as a moment of being genuinely seen, outside the traditional roles of marriage and duty. In retrospect, this simple encounter plants the deeper seed of connection between them. Within this reworked memory, the stepwell no longer serves merely as a mysterious setting for supernatural events. Instead, it becomes a space where feminine presence is seen and valued without being questioned or contained. The visual grandeur of the stepwell frames this moment as an opening into another emotional reality, where desire, wonder, and recognition of the self, begin to surface.

The emotional reality that begins to surface at the stepwell finds its fuller expression when Lachchi is faced with a choice. For a moment she retreats into herself as if shrinking from the weight of a reality she cannot fully process. But as she begins to recognize the difference between the abandonment she experienced and the presence she now encounters, she no longer remains a passive figure within the institution of marriage. Her response reflects a soft but deliberate assertion of agency. As she puts it, "I could not stop the one who went away... how can I stop the one who wants to come?" (Palekar 2005). In framing her acceptance in these terms, *Paheli* preserves the emotional ambiguity of Detha's original story and reshapes it into a moment where desire and consent are allowed articulation. By externalizing what remained internal in the original story, the film transforms the bride's emotional truth into something seen and heard, rather than silently endured. As Linda Hutcheon explains, the literary mode belongs to the "realm of imagination," where meaning is shaped "by the selected, directing words of the text" and where "emotion is controlled by words and shaped by what remains unsaid" (Hutcheon 2006: 23). This difference speaks to what Hutcheon describes as the shift in adaptation from imagination to presence, where narrative moves "from the imagination to the realm of direct perception," allowing emotions to be conveyed through "visual and gestural representations" that make inner experience visible to the viewer. Lachchi's voiced response thus moves away from silent endurance to open articulation,

disrupting the limited spaces traditionally available to feminine subjectivity in folklore narratives.

As Detha's "Duvidha" remains tightly focused on the bride's internal conflict, *Paheli* expands the emotional and social world of the story. The addition of characters like Gajrobai, who has been left behind by her husband, after he abandoned the household in shame following a lost camel race, introduces another feminine perspective on endurance and resilience. Gajrobai's quiet refusal to pray for the return of a man who left by choice— "What's the need to ask God to compel someone to return who has left of his own free will?"— subtly challenges the idea of women's lives revolving around male presence. (Palekar 2005). Her strength stands in contrast to the emotional uncertainty faced by Lachchi, and offers a distinct example of silent resistance within the narrative. This expansion of female voices deepens the film's engagement with inner strength of women and suggests survival and dignity are possible even when male authority fails or withdraws. Moreover, the film portrays women supporting one another through solidarity and shared resilience, which strengthens its feminist retelling by presenting female bonds as a source of strength in the absence of male validation.

The expansion of emotional perspectives shapes the fundamental structure of film's storytelling. The wise puppets, Maharaj and Rani Sa, suspended from the ancient tree, provide a running commentary that narrates the ghost's journey using the language of folk wisdom. Their witty remarks— "Deception and betrayal are second nature to men" and "I have seen ghosts possessing human beings, but how is it that a human has possessed a ghost?" (Palekar 2005) —introduce a light scepticism about human nature and traditional social roles. Through their voice, *Paheli* maintains its connection to oral storytelling traditions while also weaving a subtle layer of social critique into its cinematic narrative. Amid these moments, *Paheli* also extends an unusual sympathy towards the lawful husband, a character largely sidelined in Detha's story. Rather than presenting him as cruel or indifferent, the film portrays him as a figure shaped by social conditioning and family obligations. His isolation is poignantly captured through intercepted letters, where his tentative attempts to write to Lachchi eventually give way to formal addresses to his father instead. A small moment, where the sight of a woman eating *ber* (berries) brings back a memory of Lachchi, and with it, a tenderness he once failed to recognize. *Paheli* unveils a unique glimpse into male grief through its lyrical sequence where *"Khaali hai, tere bina dono ankhiyaan"* expresses his loneliness and depicts a gradual acknowledgment of emotions and feelings of guilt. This more layered portrayal of the husband

reflects the film's interest in exploring emotional spaces for both women and men outside rigid traditional codes. This attention to emotional nuance continues in a tender exchange between Lachchi and the ghost during the early months of her pregnancy. The ghost, moved by happiness, says, "Only a woman makes a man complete," to which Lachchi replies, "You are saying this because you are a ghost. Had you been human, you would never have said such a thing" (Palekar 2005). Her words suggest that such tenderness seems possible only in spaces that lie slightly outside the constructs of ordinary human society. In these moments, the film quietly suggests that recognizing emotions without the weight of patriarchal expectations requires moving beyond traditional norms.

Paheli presents an ending that reinterprets how the resolution of the folktale was imagined. While Detha's "Duvidha" confines the bride's dilemma to an internalized struggle, *Paheli* transforms this emotional truth into open verbal expression. Lachchi's final confrontation with the returning husband makes her stance clear. She rejects the possibility that she was deceived or tricked by the events that unfolded. She declares that her decision was made with full understanding and was driven by love and respect which brought her emotional satisfaction that remains unmatched. Her words— "Neither did he cast a spell nor did he try to deceive me. He told me everything, the whole truth. I faced that dilemma. I trusted his love and truthfulness and consented to the relationship" (Palekar 2005)— reflect a significant turning point in her journey as she moves from silent endurance to confidently taking control over her own choices. This ending, where the ghost merges with the husband's body and the two are united, creates a resolution suited to the expectations of a mainstream cinematic audience. The desire for emotional closure and the appeal of a hopeful fantasy guides the revised conclusion. Whereas Detha leaves the story with deliberate ambiguity surrounding complex human choices, *Paheli* presents a gentler alternative. It acknowledges the unresolved dilemmas yet imagines a world where emotional honesty leads to fulfilment and recognition.

This shift goes beyond simply appealing to popular taste. It hints towards a deeper wish to see women's choices validated, even if within the softened mode of fantasy. Lachchi's earlier response to the ghost where she says that she prefers a husband who can recognize her worth over one lost in worldly calculations— lays the foundation for this altered ending. In this reimagined world, emotional ties have higher standing, higher claims to legitimacy, than socially legitimate roles; and true belonging is rooted in mutual recognition and affection rather than formal ties.

In conclusion, *Paheli* creates a connection between tradition and transgression by reimagining the central dilemmas of "Duvidha" for the broader audience of cinema. The evolution of "Duvidha" from an oral story through Detha's literary adaptation to Palekar's film adaptation demonstrates how narratives transform between contexts while preserving their essential themes. The ghost story transforms from its original purpose as a healing ritual into Detha's complex psychological portrayal of a woman which *Paheli* later presents it as a story that centres and enhances her voice. As Ramanujan points out, a folktale is never fixed—it takes on new meanings as it is retold by different tellers to different audiences. Detha, already known for reworking his material with an eye on contemporary questions, does not preserve the original; he makes it speak differently. Palekar continues this movement and expands on Detha's subtle critiques by making female agency visible, central and visually spectacular. Through its narrative framework, *Paheli* enables its heroine to express her internal conflicts while opening up emotional spaces for both women and men, and ultimately arriving at a fantastical yet emotionally affirming resolution. It moves from a riddle of psychological dilemma and identity to a romantic fantasy, transforming traditional paradigms to meet the essential requirements of recognition, dignity and emotional fulfilment which remain central to both stories even though their conclusions differ.

Notes

1. The Hindi quotes from "Duvidha" are taken from the version available on the Hindwi website.

2. The Hindi song lyrics, written in Roman script, are quoted as heard in the film *Paheli* to retain their cultural tone and poetic rhythm.

3. The English translations of the Hindi dialogues are taken from the official subtitles available on Netflix's version of *Paheli*.

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