
Inferno or Kalyuga?
**Reimagining Ron Howard’s Mystery Thriller in Terms of Cahir’s
Adaptation Theory**

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Abstract

Literature and films are two different sides of the same coin. The purpose of both is to entertain and, at the same time, to instruct the audience and the readers. The aim of the research paper is to analyze the film adaptation *Inferno*, directed by Ron Howard, under the principles given by Dr. Linda Costanzo Cahir. She is a twenty-first-century film adaptation theorist famous for her book *Literature into Film: Theory and Practical Approaches*. By applying her given principles to the chosen work, the researcher would be able to mark the applicability of her theory and the relevance of film adaptation studies. The purpose of the paper is also to highlight the problems of population explosion and the fulfillment of moral duty, marking the relevance of not only the film adaptation of *Inferno* but also understanding the true meaning of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Keywords: Film Adaptation, Ron Howard, *Inferno*, *Divine Comedy*, Dante, Overpopulation, Moral Crisis.

Introduction

“We are creating our own version of Dante’s *Inferno* here in the real world... there are places in the world where the environment is Hellacious, and the people are held in slavery, and there are lots of misery that are in fact created by ourselves one way or another". These lines have been rightly said by Tom Hanks, the lead hero of *Inferno*, in an interview about overpopulation. This condition has become alarming, and it is time for us to curb this problem.

Inferno is a popular work by the great medieval poet Dante. He imagines himself traveling to various circles of Hell, finally reaching Paradise. He mentions nine circles of Hell where sinners suffer for their sins committed in the physical world in order to gain salvation. He mentions heretics burning in flaming coffins, the clerical profiteers half buried upside down with their legs in the air. The corrupt politicians in boiling tar, the fraudulent counselors consumed by fire, the swayers of discord hacked apart, etc. Inspired by his concept of Hell, the modern connotation of Dante’s *Inferno* was recreated as a

mystery thriller by Dan Brown in the form of a book and Ron Howard in his film adaptation. The film adaptation has an environmental theme related to the welfare of the world and the society.

The story of the film adaptation goes like this: the famous symbologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) follows a trail of clues tied to Dante, the great medieval poet. When Langdon wakes up in an Italian hospital with amnesia, he teams up with Sienna Brooks (Felicity Jones), a doctor he hopes will help him recover his memories. Together, they race across Europe and against the clock to stop a madman, Zobrist (Ben Foster), from unleashing a virus that could wipe out half of the world's population. Hell is constantly introduced as the background. The message and prophecy that the film adaptation offers to mankind is that due to overpopulation, our earth and environment are on the verge of destruction. Bertrand Zobrist, the villain of the film adaptation, rightly says, **"Dante's Hell isn't fiction anymore. It's prophecy. We have created our own Hell on earth"**. He is an eccentric man who, in order to fulfill his duty towards mankind, admits that he has released a virus named *Inferno*, which will help control the population of the earth. This will wipe off half of the human race. On the other hand, Robert Langdon, Elizabeth Sinskey, the W.H.O. chief, and Hary Sims of the Consortium have to save the earth by curbing the *Inferno* virus and saving the world. The character Sienna says, **"We are an organism that, despite our unmatched intellect, cannot seem to control our own numbers...we keep on having babies"** (*Inferno* 455). This theme of overpopulation is more relatable to the audience, which makes the work remarkable, making it a novel of ideas.

Applying Cahir's Adaptation Theory to the film adaptation of *Inferno*

The above film adaptation can be analyzed using the principles given by Cahir. Dr. Linda Costanzo Cahir is an Associate Professor of English/Education and the Coordinator of the Secondary Education Program at Kean University in Union, New Jersey. Linda Cahir's book *Literature into Film: Theory and Practical Approaches* (2006) was the recipient of the prestigious Literature Association Welsh Award for Excellence in Adaptation Studies. The first mode propounded by Cahir is that the films should be seen as "translations" of the source text. The word "translation" has been alternatively used for the word film adaptation. Cahir proposed three films "translations," namely, "literal," where no changes are made in the film adaptation while adapting the same on-screen; second, "traditional," where little changes are made while translating the text on the screen and third, "radical," in which there are major changes in the characters and setting, but maintaining the theme and meaning of the source text.

Having a different theme of a biological threat, most of the film adaptation is faithful to the book. According to Brown, there are all sorts of changes while adapting a novel on screen, and the same is seen in the film adaptation *Inferno*. The film adaptation, like the book, begins with the narration, in the voice of Ben Foster, who jumps from Badia Fiorentina and kills himself. The scene then shifts to a hospital room, where the audience watches Langdon gaining consciousness after being shot and suffering a head wound. Doctor Sienna tries to confront him by asking questions about his family and education, but Langdon fails to recall, as he has amnesia. An unknown woman then enters the hospital

and shoots at Langdon. Due to this, Langdon is forced to run with Sienna Brooks. He again has visions of Hell, where people are suffering for their sins. Howard, with the help of the camera, makes the audience watch Langdon's personal belongings. Sienna and Langdon find a Faraday pointer. The Faraday pointer had a miniature image projector with a modified version of Sandro Botticelli's Map of Hell, based on Dante's *Inferno*. Langdon explains in the film adaptation that "**Dante had created the modern conception of Hell seven hundred years ago. Botticelli drew it, but Dante created it**". (*Inferno*, 22:57-23:07). Everybody was after Langdon for the pointer, and Agent Bouchard, from the W.H.O. Command Unit, traces Langdon's call and is now about to reach the place.

Meanwhile, Langdon informs that the circles of Hell have been rearranged, and Zobrist has created an anagram. He discovers the Italian words *cercatrova* ("seek and shall find"), which are inscribed in Vasari's famous fresco named The Battle of Marciano at the Hall of Five Hundred in Palazzo Vecchio, which is the next clue to the virus created by Zobrist. Sienna watches Vayentha, the woman from the hospital, and Bouchard reaches the place. Hiding from them, they proceed towards the Palazzo Vecchio. Similar to the novel, the audience watches Vayentha work for the Consortium, a secret agency that provides services to their clients on global issues, bioethics, and controlling information. One such client is Bertrand Zobrist.

The first transformation or change in the film adaptation is in the character Laurence Knowlton, who is replaced by Harry Sims. Irrfan Khan, the Indian actor, plays the role of Harry Sims. He is the provost and the head of the Consortium. He is working on the project given by their client Bertrand Zobrist and hence needs the Faraday pointer from Langdon in order to complete Bertrand's task. In the film adaptation, the Consortium is more dangerous and powerful as they do not hesitate to kill Langdon. Langdon is thus chased by the assassin, named Vayentha, who was working for the Consortium; Agent Bouchard, the head of the W.H.O. team (Surveillance and Response Support) of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and Elizabeth Sinskey, the Head of the W. H. O. They locate Langdon and Sienna's location with the help of the drone and hence chase them.

Similar to the novel, as they reach the Palazzo, they locate Vasari's fresco. They analyze it, and the camera focuses on the intricate details of the painting written in the book. They even locate the word *cercatrova* in the painting. They are interrupted by a voice from the person in charge of the museum, Martha. She takes them to show the Dante mask. As Langdon has amnesia, he is unable to recognize her. As soon as they reach the room where the Dante mask is kept, they find that the *andito* ("corridor") is empty. Rushing to the security room, they find that Ignazio and Langdon had stolen the mask two days earlier. Unable to remember the events of the past two days, he locks Martha in the recording room and promises her to bring back the Dante mask and escape from the police and the museum's security. Vayentha, who was chasing Langdon and Sienna, meets her end after she falls off the attic. Langdon and Sienna escape the Palazzo.

The second change or transformation made by Howard in his film adaptation is

that the virus is more dangerous than in the book. He did this in order to show the urgency of preventing the virus from spreading, as it would kill half of the population. In the next scene, a video is played by Harry Sims, in which the audience watches Zobrist explaining the negative implications of the virus if it spreads all over the world. Zobrist says, “**current population will become half cold, and the remaining will witness horrors.**” (*Inferno*, 1:00:28). Harry Sims, in the film adaptation, realizes that Zobrist is a madman who has planned for a mass murder that will spread all over the world within twelve hours. Hence, Sims decides to travel to Florence, meet Langdon and Elizabeth, and save the world.

Langdon, being a master of great classics, remembers that his friend Ignazio works in the Baptistery of San Giovanni. It was a place where Dante was baptized. Langdon and Sienna are interrupted by Agent Bouchard, who had deceived his own people and was trying to misguide Langdon by lying that he was the one who had visited him at Harvard University. Langdon realizes that Bouchard is lying, and he ditches him and moves toward the St. Mark Basilica in Venice. Through the clue discovered in the Basilica, Langdon figures out that the attack is in Hagia Sophia, Istanbul. Here, they are interrupted by Agent Bouchard, who is following them.

Ron Howard is of the view that, some small changes were simply done to save time. In an interview he says about Dan Brown’s books that, “**If you adapted them literally, they’d be five to six hours long. Hence some substantial changes had to be done in the movie.**”¹⁴The biggest change in the film adaptation is the character of Sienna, played by Felicity Jones. In the book, Brown dedicates many pages to her past and her character. Sienna, in the book, is an intelligent, sympathetic, and humanitarian who realizes Zobrist’s wrongdoings and saves the world. On the other hand, in the film adaptation, Felicity Jones, as Sienna Brooks, was another antagonist who used Langdon for herself. She was a cunning, ruthless, and blind follower of Zobrist who had lost her rational thinking. At the beginning of the film adaptation, she seems to be a companion to Langdon, but her real motives are revealed at the St. Marks Basilica, Venice, where after gaining information about the last clue to the trail, she ditches Langdon by leaving him in the hands of Bouchard. Hence, the character of Sienna in the film adaptation is completely different from the book. After deceiving Langdon, she seems to be the real villain of the film adaptation.

As the film adaptation is reaching its climax and resolution, many significant revelations can be seen unfolding on screen. Howard makes use of the flashback technique in order to juxtapose two major events simultaneously. Sims informs Langdon that all the incidents that had happened with Langdon at the hospital were pre-planned. Sims also discloses that it was Elizabeth Sinskey, from the W.H.O., who had visited him at Harvard and asked him to assist with the Faraday pointer as Langdon had lectured on Dante. Langdon informs them that the virus is in Istanbul, and Elizabeth, Langdon, and Sims fly to the place.

The most important event of the film adaptation is the last scene. In the novel, the

bag that held the plague had already been broken, spreading to the world. At the St. Mark Basilica, Ferris is already infected with the virus as he has rashes on his hand. The tourists had also become the carriers of the plague. Later in the novel, Brooks comes back and informs everyone that the bag had already broken a week ago. Zobrist's video had a date that was calculated mathematically to indicate when the world would become infected with the plague. According to Brooks, she was attempting to stop the virus on her own because she did not trust the W.H.O. and thought it would be weaponized if it was discovered. As Brooks is well-versed in Zobrist's work and study, she is granted amnesty in exchange for cooperating with the W.H.O. to resolve the situation.

Howard has crucially transformed this event in the book by showing the dangerous impact of the virus. In contrast to the book, in the film adaptation, the virus is lethal, and there is a big fight scene at the end where it is prevented from being released. The nature of the virus is dramatically changed in the film adaptation. In the film adaptation, Sienna meets the associates related to Zobrist's plan to release the virus. They help her by giving them a bomb, which she activates and throws into the waters of the Basilica Cistern or the Sunken Palace, situated in Istanbul. The scene was an event filled with action. In the film adaptation, the audience finds the place filled with people who had come from all over the world to visit it. Elizabeth immediately orders them to evacuate that place. Medusa column was the hiding place of the virus. They locate the virus and try to contain it. But Sienna releases the virus by infusing the bomb, which creates a devastating effect. The audience can watch the actors in trouble inside the waters of the Sunken. The light action scene between Sims and the villain is interesting, where the villain stabs Sims and kills him. During the struggle between Robert and Sienna, she says, "**... but I can make sure it breaks, people will die but the crisis will be averted... if you love humanity...you had done anything to save it**" (*Inferno*, 106:54-107:33). Blind in love Sienna loses her life while diffusing the bomb. Robert, like a hero, saves the world from the deadly virus.

In the end, Langdon returns to Florence and covertly returns the Dante Death Mask. Ron Howard's idea was to change the ending of the book because he thought that half of the world would be infected with the virus and that making them sterile would not be satisfactory. In order to make the film adaptation stand-alone, a happy ending was necessary. Howard says, "**The ending of a modern film adaptation thriller needs to be quite a bit different than what was a terrific resolution on a literary level for the novel.**"ⁱⁱ Thus, the film adaptation is a "traditional film translation" of the literary text.

Cahir further states the four essential "aesthetic rubrics" or principles to be analyzed in any film adaptation. She says that "the films must communicate ideas concerning the integral meaning of the text" ("An Aesthetic Rubric for Film Translations," 99). The film adaptation should have a close resemblance with the integral meaning as reinterpreted by the director to be shown on screen. The integral meaning of the above film adaptation, *Inferno*, is inspired by Dante's concept of Hell, which is beyond human imagination. Ron Howard juxtaposes the concept with opposing ideas. With the help of sixteenth-century art and the European Renaissance, like Vasari's fresco and Botticelli's

Map of Hell, Langdon located the virus present in the modern age and saved the world.

The integral meaning of the text and the film adaptation lies in the dialogue, “**The darkest places in Hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of moral crisis. In dangerous times, there is no sin greater than inaction**” (*Inferno*,1). Both Langdon and Zobrist fulfill their moral duties in the film adaptation. Zobrist fulfills it by releasing the virus so that the earth's population is under control. Langdon, Elizabeth, and Sims save the world by containing the virus and saving the lives of many innocent people from being killed. **"Killing billions to save lives?!" Langdon gasps. "That's pretty terrible."** (*Inferno*, 25:00). It seems to be an irony, and hence, they are determined to stop this unimaginable catastrophe. While sometimes their methods can be questioned, the goal is laudable. Thus, the film adaptation preserves the integral meaning of duty and inactivity at the time of moral crisis and sustains the value of the literary text.

The theme of overpopulation is central to the plot and is presented via Zobrist. He has chosen the same plague that occurred in the fourteenth century at the time of Dante, famously known as the Black Death. It was because of it that almost half of the population of Europe had been affected and killed by it. Zobrist is of the view that only “pain can save us” (*Inferno*, 1:25:00), and this pain can give rise to new and better generations. It will cleanse all the extra population and will pave the way for new. He gives reference to the Renaissance age, "rebirth," which preceded immediately after the Black Death. Thus, the integral meaning of the literary work *Inferno* revolves around two themes: first, the sin of remaining inactive at the time of moral crisis, and second, the ever-increasing threat of population explosion.

The second principle, according to Cahir, is that "the film must exhibit a collaboration of filmmaking skills" ("An Aesthetic Rubric for Film Translations", 99) in order to create an aesthetic whole. These filmmaking skills are employed by the cinematographer so that the audience can enjoy the words on screen. The integral meaning of the film adaptation is well preserved with the use of cinematic techniques. It was a great challenge for director Ron Howard to create such mysterious books written by Dan Brown into a film adaptation that works and fulfills the potential of the story for film audiences. The screenwriter David Koepp had taken up the task of turning this challenging novel into a film adaptation.

The first cinematic element is the use of live locations. The film adaptation *Inferno* takes its filmic cues from the architectural locations of Venice, Budapest, and Italy. It makes its audience travel to Badia Fiorentina, the Palazzo Vecchio, St. Marks Basilica, Venice, the Cistern, and Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. Istanbul is the final place and the gateway between the East and the West to release the virus. All the places mentioned as shown in the film adaptation not only help in disclosing the mystery but also add to the knowledge of the audience. It has become a popular tourist attraction that shares its own history and significance.

Camera angles and shots used in the film adaptation *Inferno* have made the film

adaptation most visually stylistic, with a series of cryptic dream sequences. The cinematographer has made use of various camera angles and shots. In the beginning, the audience can watch the mental condition of Langdon, who has Hellish visions from the beginning of the film adaptation; the description is as follows, "**People walk with their heads twisted backward (a punishment for those who sought to divine the future). Others are shoved into the ground head first, their legs and feet sticking out and ablaze (a punishment for those who sold church offices)**" (*Inferno* 29). He even watches a black mask with a long beak, symbolizing the black death, which could strike terror at once, and a female figure saying, "Seek and Shall Find" (*Inferno* 29) shown on screen by the camera.

The zoom-in and zoom-out shots are used to capture the character's expressions. Langdon, from the beginning of the film adaptation, is in constant pain and misery. His expressions of grief and torment are clearly shown by the camera on screen. The audience can watch him feel uncomfortable when he's unable to connect with his past memories, leaving him puzzled. Various inanimate objects are also brought to life by the camera on screen. For instance, the Map of Hell, created by Botticelli, the first clue to the trial, highlights the nine circles of Hell as created by the artist shown on screen. Hence, Langdon and Brooks try to reorder and find the next path. In this, the words *cercatrova* were hidden. These words lead the actors to the next clue, which is the famous painting by Vasari in Palazzo Vecchio. The famous painting made by Vasari comes alive, which closely aligns with Dante's poetry, taken from "Purgatory" of the *DivineComedy*, helping the characters complete the trail.

With the help of close-up and zoom-in, we come to know how the virus looked. There were thousands of small red-coloured pathogens conserved in a plastic bag. If the plastic breaks, it could spread all over the world. Thus, this small object could cause harm and danger to the entire community. All these inanimate objects create curiosity in the minds of the spectators to know more about the history and the places mentioned above, making the audience visit such places.

Lighting is another important technique used in the film adaptation of *Inferno*. The cinematographer has made use of both natural and soft light. The former is used when the shooting is done in live locations. Most of the film adaptations are shot in open spaces and locations. Meanwhile, soft light is used to eliminate harsh shadows and replicate refined lighting from surrounding areas, creating a dramatic effect. When the Dante mask went missing from a small *andito* from the Palazzo Vecchio, this type of lighting was used. It creates and adds a dramatic impact. Another type of lighting, the low key lighting with the blend of the music titled "Cistern," amplifies the last scene shot near the blood-red waters of the Cistern Palace.

Music, accompanied by lighting, is also incorporated in the film adaptation. Zimmer again contributed his talent by creating a soundtrack for the film adaptation *Inferno*. The famous soundtracks "The Cistern," "Vayentha," and "Only Pain Can Save Us"

make use of instrumental synths to turn these soundtracks into musical storytelling. "Seek and Find," or "*CercaTrova*," is a four-note action motif with a nice trance-like vibe. This vibe can be seen when Langdon has Hellish visions. The hammering and loud sounds depicting people burning, their heads twisted, etc., resonate with the mental condition of Langdon. Zimmer has thus contributed his best to the film adaptation *Inferno*. He has manipulated various instruments into a synthetic whole to fit into the film adaptation.

The film adaptation *Inferno* manages to control the attention of the audience with an ensemble cast and crew from various parts of the world. Tom Hanks is the protagonist of the film adaptation. He plays the role of Robert Langdon, who is involved in solving the quest and saving the world from the dangerous virus. Despite suffering from amnesia, he has a strong memory to identify the clues that he discovers in the trail. In this film adaptation, his expertise in the great classics, like Dante, helps him solve the trial. He again gives his role an easy-going charm and effortless authority, which makes him a watchable character. In the film adaptation, he not only has to put the pieces of the mystery together but also has to recollect his shattered memory of amnesia. He is told to be "humanity's last hope" who can save the world from misery. The film adaptation also stars Felicity Jones (as Sienna), Omar Sy from France, Sidse Babette Knudsen from Sweden, and Irrfan Khan from India. Thus, with the help of this diverse casting, the film adaptation is a mystery thriller worth watching. It is a competent film adaptation and offers mild entertainment that manages to engage the audience.

The third "aesthetic rubric" is that "the film must demonstrate an audacity to create a work apart that exploits the literary text in such a way that a self-reliant, but a related offspring is born" ("An Aesthetic Rubric for Film Translations," 99). In such a case, the film adaptation will utilize what is beautiful from the cinematic language and, at the same time, would retain what is essential from the book.

The film adaptation *Inferno* is a "traditional translation" of the text on screen, not giving a visual recap of the story. In the novel *Inferno*, the central conflict is the theme of overpopulation. This problem can lead to ecological degradation, increased conflicts, and a higher risk of large-scale disasters like pandemics. The novel and the film adaptation both adapt to the same issue and portray it in words and on-screen, respectively. The most important "traditional translation" is the last scene of the film adaptation. The film adaptation, in which the virus is not released, was the idea of the director in order to give a happy ending. This ending is preferable to the book's ending, where Langdon saves the world from being infected by the virus. Langdon not only saves the world but also understands the true meaning of Dante's *DivineComedy*, where he thinks, "**It was not so much about the misery of Hell as it was about the power of the human spirit to endure any challenge, no matter how daunting.**" (*Inferno* 476) This dialogue becomes the ethos, which makes it the best part of the film adaptation.

The nature of the virus is also different from the book. In the book, the virus is less dangerous as it only makes the population sterile. Elizabeth Sinskey, in the book, says that

the virus is less dangerous and does not kill the people of the world. Hence, it is no use preventing it, and a cure needs to be discovered. But in the film adaptation, the virus is much more lethal as it can kill half of the population. The prevention of the virus is action-packed, where characters are seen fighting and struggling not to release it. The scene is of chaos and destruction, where the audience can watch disturbing images of the actors stabbing each other and dying for their selfish cause.

The fourth principle is that “the film cannot be so self-governing as to be completely independent of or antithetical to the source material” (“An Aesthetic Rubric for Film Translations, 99). The novel based films must strike the right balance. Though the film adaptation could be a “literal”, “traditional” or “radical translation” it should preserve the integral meaning and at the same time will be independent cinematic work of art.

Since the publication of the *DivineComedy* in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, writers, composers, and painters have found inspiration in it. Works that have been characterized by academics as having a strong structural connection to the *DivineComedy* have gained significance in popular culture as well. Brown, at the beginning of the novel, states, “**All artworks, literature, science and historical references in this novel are real**” (*Inferno* 3). Each death in the novel and film adaptation is considered a punishment, as described in Dante’s *Inferno*.

The main theme of the film adaptation is that “**the darkest places of Hell are reserved for those who at the time of moral crisis remain neutral**” (*Inferno* 1). In the film adaptation, both Zobrist and Langdon want to save the world in their own ways. For both teams, it is a time of crisis, and this crisis gives rise to a moral duty that both have to fulfill. The fulfillment of duty at the time of moral crisis is done by Zobrist by releasing the virus, as he deemed it to be the appropriate way to save the world, and Langdon, by containing it. Hence, both have fulfilled their duties to save the world from overpopulation and threats.

The 2016 mystery thriller *Inferno*, makes many references to *TheDivine* Comedy and to the illustration by Botticelli, a word puzzle in a version of the painting of the Map of Hell. These levels of Hell are rearranged. There’s a clue in an email that refers to a passage from *Paradiso* twenty five of *DivineComedy*. The virus that serves as the catalyst for the film’s plot is also named.ⁱⁱⁱIn the film adaptation’s final showdown, the Dante mask reaches its final place highlighting the significance of the poet to Florence. Thus, *TheDivineComedy* by Dante still has its importance in the modern world and the popular culture.

***Inferno* or *Kalyuga*?**

The film adaptation thus has an environmental theme related to the welfare of the world and the society. The film adaptation *Inferno* ends with the promise that human beings, having left sin behind, may experience divine truth and peace again.^{iv} With the help of various filmmaking techniques, like the use of natural locations and light; various

cam

era angles, shots and CGI, the meaning of the text is well persevered. This intriguing narrative continues through the film adaptation *Inferno*. Thus, the film adaptation is a stand alone interpretation of the written work of the author which captures viewers attention.

In the present age of *Kalyuga*, American filmmaker Ron Howard's *Inferno* has great significance. The age of *Kalyuga*, according to Hindu tradition, is one of decline and moral darkness. *Kalyuga* is the last phase in the cycle of time (after *Satyug*, *Treta* and *Dwapar*) and is full of conflict and lack of spirituality. During this era, good qualities like honesty and kindness start to fade. Howard's film adaptation *Inferno*, relates itself to the characteristics of the current age. It gives importance to the theme of overpopulation, where people will be in constant struggle to survive in this physical world and will do wrong deeds in order to survive. Lack of human empathy and moral values where, people are losing their ethics and are abandoning righteous living is witnessed in the present time. For example, in the film adaptation Zobrist releases the virus unnecessarily harming billions to save the unknown future. Omar Sy, as Agent Bouchard, too befools Langdon and wants the virus for himself to be sold to the highest bidder. Sienna, too cheats Langdon and tries to release the virus, loosing her moral consciousness. The age and the film adaptation also lay stress on the concept of individualism, which keep humans in a constant state of survival.

Natural disasters are a great feature of the age of *Kalyuga*, it is said that the world will end with a plague, famine or a war, which is evident in the present time. The Covid-19 Pandemic, can be closely related with *Inferno*, where almost half of the world has lost its life in this deadly plague; the Ukraine-Russia and Israel-Palestine wars are other attributes which we are witnessing in this age of *Kalyuga*. The Italian poet Dante and his *Divine Comedy* and the American writer and filmmaker Brown and Howard's works, have great significance in the present. They serve as a warning to humanity that, "Dante's hell isn't fiction anymore", and if we do not rectify ourselves we will soon submerge in the dark abyss.

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