



# Reflection on Globalization and the Changing Times in Adaptations of *Emma*

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## Abstract

This research investigates the global adaptation of Jane Austen's "Emma" in diverse cultural contexts like Hollywood and Bollywood, examining the influence of globalization on the portrayal of manners, fashion, and economic growth. Analyzing how these adaptations bring Austen's world to contemporary audiences, the study explores the semiotics of imagined realities as books transition to the screen in both Western and Indian cinematic landscapes. The contemporary visualizations of the 18<sup>th</sup> century novel is a favorite among all of the Austen books. These videos went on to become some of the most viewed videos and the response to it largely came from 'youngsters' who have read the book and who have never read any of Austen's book ever, but enjoyed it never the less. This influenced the consumption patterns. The paper explores these influences, brought in by the adaptations.

## Keywords

Globalization, adaptations, Emma, Jane Austen, culture, visualization

## Paper-

Globalization marked its way into the world market, economy and culture across borders in various formats with a bang. Be it technology, cloth lines, food chains or language. Both *Clueless* and *Aisha* can be seen as a product of all these changes. In fact, all the adaptations post 1990s can be understood with reference to the influence of these changes. Specifically *Emma* has been adapted and re-adapted by BBC (the British broadcasting Company), and there is a considerable difference between the earlier adaptations and the ones during 1990s and 2000s. The added layers of meaning and the treatment is far different from the earlier word to word adaptations of not only Emma but various other British Literary treasures. The most recent example could be the You Tube chapters of *Pride and Prejudice* called the

*Lizzy Bennet Diaries*. These are 4 to 6 minute long direct to camera video diary entries by a graduate student as a final theses project. It is by far one of the most interesting contemporary takes on the 18<sup>th</sup> century novel that is the favorite among all of the Austen books. These videos went on to become some of the most viewed videos and the response to it largely came from ‘youngsters’ who have read the book and who have never read any of Austen’s book ever, but enjoyed it never the less. The character of Mr. Fitzgerald’s is openly gay and Charlotte never gets married to Mr. Collins but does start working at his ‘collaborative’ firm which Elizabeth disapproves of (metaphoric of Elizabeth’s disapproval of Mr. Collins and Charlotte’s wedding in the original text). There are quite a few things that have been modified according to the period that these videos are set and the names and places have been carefully altered according to the 21<sup>st</sup> century trends. Elizabeth is interested in Internet video culture and wants to pursue a profession in it. Jane is a working woman and Kitty is the carefree and careless youngest sister of the lot (not much changes there). This Video Blogging format introduces us to the extent of its popularity and access to world. First, the Internet as a platform with its wide access in the 21<sup>st</sup> century definitely marks its place. Second, the relevance and wide appeal of the story even today. Finally, the character transformation with changing times. With changing economies and lifestyles, we see a drastic change in the characters within one of the most popular novels of all time. The impact of globalization had been evident in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well. But with liberalization and new technology at the world’s disposal, globalization became a phenomenon in the 1990s.

“Within cultural and communications studies of globalization is regarded as a multi-dimensional process with a much longer history. For Robertson and Tomlinson globalization is bound up with modernity, emerging in the early fifteenth century and accelerating rapidly from the 1880s to the 1920s. For these authors globalization is a process whereby societies become more interconnected and interdependent at a number of levels through the flow of products, people, finance and through the establishment of international agencies, global competition and international law. Appadurai explicitly identifies as part of these flows ‘repertoires of images and information, the flows which are produced and distributed by newspapers, magazines, television and film’. Together these constitute what he terms the global “mediascape”. In short there is a cultural component to be taken into account in considering the globalization process.”. (Kerr and Flynn, 2011)

Post 1990s what we see is the development in technology and brand industry. It is through this wide scale development that we see societies at large coming together. Hollywood had already established itself as the largest film Industry by 1990s. India on the other hand, with all the benefits of globalization (access to foreign lands for shooting, new technology, introduction of cable television, new companies ready to invest in Indian companies, etc) boomed in the 1990s. Appadurai talks in detail about the changes that the Indian economy, and specifically Indian film industry saw in this period. India is one of the largest producers of films. India produces the largest number of films in the world. Bollywood contributes almost 27% to the Indian economy.<sup>1</sup> Bollywood has become a part of Indian family. It is this section of the society that transgresses classes. There has been drastic change in the consumption patterns of ‘cars to butter to entertainment’, and the credit can be given to these middle-class families, that are trying to move up in the society.<sup>2</sup> It is this section of the economy that contributes to the national economy (which constitutes a large chunk of Indian population) and the same

<sup>1</sup> “Bollywood, as the Hindi film industry is popularly known, is the largest contributor to the industry’s revenue, followed by the South Indian movie industry and other language cinema industries such as Bengali, Bhojpuri, Marathi and Gujarati. Although the country’s filmed entertainment industry is the largest in the world in terms of the number of films it produces...” (Ernest & Young, 2012)

<sup>2</sup> Clueless is highly symptomatic of profound shifts in the real organization of ‘late’ or ‘post-modern’ economic and cultural capital. In the twentieth century post modernity, cultural (not only material) wealth is measured through consumption, and style is high culture: the new globally disturbed middle and upper classes utilize ‘bodily presentation and lifestyle as indicators of social status’ (Featherstone 1991: 110) (Cartmell & Whelehan, 1999)

section is targeted at large by every industry in the market. Post globalization and liberalization, the new technologies are sitting inside almost every middle-class family. Which is a direct impact of media usage of these technologies in the film industry, that they use for production purposes and distribution.<sup>3</sup> This gave rise to the understanding of the Indian society and also can be seen as a great leap for individual progress. This was also the period of industrialization and urbanization in India. Emergence of new elites and rising number of NRIs is evident during this period. There is a growing sense of alienation and atomization, within families. These were some of the major points that effected the making of Bollywood movies, the story lines, and most of all the consumption of these movies. The effect of Globalization on Bollywood has been of a great one.

Film is a reflection of society, both present and past. Emma in its modified adaptations such as *Clueless* and *Aisha* are some of the finest examples of these changing times within different cultures. So what we see is not only change in the story but how these varied cultures have accepted and adapted to the changes that took the world head on. Also, the varied reading that are possible of the text. Austen's novels have been time and again. *Pride and Prejudice* is one of novels that has been adapted and modifies with continually. Apart from the *Lizzy Bennet diaries* that went viral on internet another recent BBC adaptation called *Lost in Austen* talks about the popularity and the deep-seated nostalgia of the Victorian Era within the readers. The story is about a woman who's favorite book is none other than *Pride and Prejudice* and dreams of living in Austen's constructed world. Interestingly she comes across a portal that transports her into the story and Elizabeth enters today's England. This situation adds more layers to the original text. Elizabeth in today's England is happy and independent. Whereas our protagonist of the mini-series struggles to give explanations to the Bennets about Elizabeth's disappearance and to adapt in an environment where knitting is a hobby. There is a contrast between the times and places. Both have changed. It is interesting to see how the events within the story are altered because Austen's protagonist is replaced by a fan of her work. The story can now be read in a different light that caters to the large fan following. This understanding has been possible because of the awareness of the global popularity of Austen's works and the theories that have evolved over time. Where critiques have argued that Austen's novels are not about merely marriage or romance, ironically it is this very aspect that has become popular among readers/ audiences.

Hence to dismiss these adaptations as simply 'not justifying the original text' would be very simplistic. We need to keep in account these very changes, that are so essential to the times that these films were/ are made in. Taking from Arjun Appadurai's influential ideas about the multiple, overlapping landscapes formed by the global flows of people, capital, technology, information and ideology, we shall adopt a relational approach to the study of globalization<sup>4</sup>, i.e. mutually constitutive rather than mutually exclusive, the local and the global shape each other's character. To study translation/transformation in relation to globalization is to link the object of study not only to its immediate context but also to wider contexts of global flows and interconnections. "Text needs context, and if text travels, we need to connect contexts. Specifically, a system is a site of social interaction where texts are produced and received through specific channels of

<sup>3</sup> "Industry players would do well to update themselves with new technologies and trends, and prepare themselves to ride the wave. Increasingly, we are moving toward a multiple-screen world with each screen having the ability to consume the same mass of IP in different forms. It is also imperative that the industry recognizes the importance of valuable IP to which it has rights and needs to carefully apply itself before making this IP available on the public media for an additional sum of money and focus on the big picture." (Ernest & Young, 2012)

<sup>4</sup> Appadurai discusses this interaction of the global and the local (glocalization)- (Appadurai, 1996), with reference to comodification and it's drawbacks to the society, I propose to use some of his arguments to justify the representation of this interaction on the silver screen.

communication, with reference to codes of cultural representation which are regulated, through the adoption or rejection of specific norms, by institutions. If a cultural community is seen as a system interacting with other systems, then cinema (i.e. involving the art and industry of film-making) can be considered as a sub-system interacting not only with other sub-systems (e.g. literature, politics and economy) but also with other systems (e.g. through importing and exporting talent, capital, texts and media images).” (Yau, 2011) Film studies seem to take a new approach towards adaptations with the emergence of such new ideas. Not only in terms of technology and economies, but the world has been forming new theories in fields of film making, feminism, hegemony or semiotics.

We certainly cannot apply the same approach of feminist theories to the adaptations that we had applied to written text. In the sense that we need to keep in mind that these changing times do require us to try and understand the situation with reference to the culture and time that it belongs to. This needs to be dealt with sensitivity. So even though Emma and Cher are ‘essentially’ the same character, they still need to be contextualized in their times, culture and geographical spaces. Contextualizing, hence, becomes an integral part of this research.

*Clueless* is a modern (and by modern I mean in terms of new technology, new revolutions and globalization) adaptation of *Emma* in every which way. It is the story of Cher who is a good-natured but superficial girl who is attractive, popular, and extremely wealthy. ‘She lives in a Beverly Hills mansion with her father Mel (Dan Hedaya), a ferocious \$500-an-hour litigator; her mother has long since died, having succumbed to complications while undergoing liposuction surgery. Cher's best friend is Dionne Davenport (Stacey Dash), who is also rich, pretty, and hip, and understands what it's like to be envied.’ In this very short description of Cher’s character we see the impact of the changing times. In the film Cher/Emma is a wealthy mobile phone-toting sixteen year old, with a wealthy, cantankerous litigator father. Her life revolves around fashion and designer culture which include a computerized wardrobe that allows her to model clothes on the screen. In language, attitude and social behavior, Cher’s life is humorously depicted as an intellectually vacant and trivialized existence in the economically over-privileged and socially exclusive Beverley Hills elite of style. Enters Tai, a transfer student, Heckerling subtly gives us an insight American ‘elite’ schools. So Cher takes upon herself to show Tai the social life in Los Angeles. She transforms Tai into this self defined version of the kind of people that live in that place. So what we see is that a transfer student is more worried about ‘fitting’ in then probably her education, which sort of also became the theme for a lot of teenage film. Also what becomes the highlight of all these changes is what Cher does to bring about these changes and how she then deals with it. Tai simply falls into Cher’s footsteps. Cher introduces Tai to these ‘new’ fashion tips which makes us believe that Tai probably dint know about MTV before this. While Cher is shown the ‘know it all’ person about who, how and what of the life in their locality, Tai is blinded by the limelight that she so attracts by merely hanging out with Cher and Dionne. What is interesting is how different and similar even Dionne and Cher’s choices are. Dionne is in love with a boy who she says is considerate of her. Her style is lot different that Cher, which is especially pointed out in the opening sequence, Cher is critical of Dionne’s obsession with hats/ experimental hats.<sup>5</sup> But she also hints that since Dionne is her best friend and well she belongs to the same social stature as herself, it give Dionne the right to experiment to some extent.

<sup>5</sup> “...For French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984), all forms of cultural production (cloths, films books, furniture art, music) are intricately enmeshed in ‘systems of distinction’ through which social and economic class inequalities are produced and perpetuated... Cinema is itself enmeshed in organizing value distinction which draw upon a singular vocabulary of ‘taste hierarchy’.” (Cartmell & Whelehan, 1999) p. 54

Critics continually argue that 'a movie need not be 'just like the book' in order to be good, there is a crucial problem in translating Austen's novels to film: what happens to the ironic, third-person narrative voice when Austen's novels are made into movies? As we look at the three large-budget, non-BBC movies illustrates, the loss of the ironic third-person narrator requires-some form of compensation. Amy Heckerling's updated Emma, entitled *Clueless* (1995) employed strategies that make the movie 'work' in and for itself, the solution achieved by *Clueless* – a solution which foregrounds the incongruity between the film's visual and verbal elements is the solution that comes closest to replicating Austen's ironic narrator. The first-person narration is extremely important to this endeavor because it makes Cher immensely appealing. It lets us know that a good heart beats within that shell of self-involved ignorance. The fact that Cher finally understands her own heart is – importantly – signaled by a newfound harmony between what she says and what we see on the screen. We see this on screen with a prominent comic effect when Cher asks herself if she loves Josh and as soon as she gets the answer the fountain floods with lights, almost like a light bulb appearing on a cartoon character. "Cher's new perspective is more than a realization about her feelings for Josh. She sees her old behavior as shallow, and this gives her the power to alter her world. There is no question that *Emma* is a less 'silly' book than *Clueless* a movie. But, in its own charming way, *Clueless* encourages its viewers to 'makeover their souls.'" (Troost & Greenfield, 1998) Now all this has been possible to do due to the aesthetics of the film and the new brands and technologies at disposal. The life in Cher's Beverly house is defined in one moment when everyone is sitting down for dinner and just one ringing phone turns the events around. Everyone (including a fifteen year old included) had a mobile phone of her own. Cher's life is loaded with these 'new world' technologies, be it the computerized cloths selection machine, or aerobics on television or a mobile phone.

The film opens with a declaration that these are 'Kids in America' but the image gives us a very particular kind of 'America' and particular kind of kids. Cher is truly a child of Hollywood, her mother having died in 'a fluke accident during a routine liposuction', and her conception of the Beverly Center as the center of the world serves as an index of Hollywood's imperialism, its promulgation of a universalizing insularity, its relentless celebration of consumer culture and ready-to-go false consciousness. Cher thinks that Bosnia is in the Middle East and hazards a guess that Kuwait is in the Valley. The Valley itself, as far as these kids are concerned, is literally off the map, they get lost going to a party there. Cher can't figure out why Lucy the maid, who comes from El Salvador, is angered when Cher assumes that Mexican is her language.

It is my contention that it is through certain remaking strategies, a consciousness of inter-textuality if you like, that Los Angeles materializes as a particularly interesting configuration of spatial and cultural tropes. Just as Cher and her friends take particular delight in the make-over, so the film exercises a make-over on both the city and the book, throws the place itself into relief as a patterning of repetition and difference. In thus giving prominence to the remake as an explanatory device a question inevitably arises and the question is this: is it necessary to have read *Emma* in order to make sense of and truly enjoy *Clueless*?

Clearly *Clueless* appeals to different audiences who bring to the movie different knowledges and expectations, but what makes it particularly fascinating is that it actually assumes, through the heterogeneity of its references and allusions, that quotidian knowledge is informed by and woven out of a diversity of cultural practices, not distinguishable according to 'high' and 'low' markers. In this context Los Angeles is figured not simply as an imitation of and/or deviation from

Highbury, but rather as an inter textual site spun by the movies, television series, MTV, and a variety of remakes and adaptations. Whilst it certainly isn't necessary to be familiar with Emma in order to enjoy *Clueless*, it is the spirit and operation of remaking that serves to generate and sustain the movie's intricate network of relations -- between different texts, different media, different cultural signs and temporalities. A film needs to be studied as a singular character as well (even though it is loaded with intertextuality of the book, we need to give the adaptation credit for what it is).

In the movie updating the modernization is manifested in a process of Los Angelisation, and teenification. Los Angeles and the teenage phenomenon are connected through the motif of modernity, of updating, of contemporaneity. Configured by the generic imperatives of a teen movie LA comes itself to signify the 'modern', the contemporary, the new, the stylish, the fashionable. Simultaneously, however, the consciousness of modernity is satirized, and it is satirized precisely by invoking the spurious sense of originality that provides a basis for updating, witness Cher's notion of the classic, 'Isn't my house classic? The columns date all the way back to 1972.' The kind of image of LA that is summonsed up here is framed by the postmodern.

The concept of teenager and a teenage life is itself very new/ contemporary and did not exist in Austen's time, and moreover the teen movie is a genre often concerned with what is hip and of the moment. By setting the film in Beverly Hills and by concentrating on a group of people who are obsessed with style, with fashion, with being up to date about fashion, who talk in an arcane and localized argot, Heckerling undertakes a potentially hazardous project, runs the risk of creating a film that is precariously of the moment. But *Clueless* actually performs a complex maneuver whereby the cliché of LA as postmodern city supreme, city without memory, all surface pastiche, a giant shopping mall, is simultaneously invoked and undercut. The teen movie might be very modern (coming into prominence in the eighties) but it has a pre-history, both in the movies and in other forms such as the novel. *Clueless* not only remakes and comments on *Emma* but remakes the teen movies that precede it and also the twentieth century apparatus of modernity that provides the preconditions of the genre; the film is alert to and permeated by the myriad influences which shape the very experience and notion of the contemporary.

'*Clueless* belongs to a fine lineage, it belongs not only to a group of films that feature girls coming of age, but more specifically to a group of such films set in LA, all of which involve the concept of a bimbo or ditz with a credit card who turns out to be a sassy, smart-talking, inventive young woman who takes control of her destiny through the conquering of space and time.'<sup>6</sup> The conquering of time entails a utopian rather than nostalgic and dystrophic vision, and the conquering of space (and this is where LA becomes a crucial location) involves taking control of the freeways and of that cinematically revered masculine object, the motor car. Cher and Dionne do not love their cars in the sense that they love driving and the control that driving promises, but not so much the car. Learning how to drive for women came to be understood as attaining a sense of power and confidence among women, but here it is the idea of knowing how to drive and owning a car that comes under the spot light. The big joke here is that in fact they can't drive, they are learning, and none too successfully, but to great comic effect. Interestingly, in the transforming of *Emma* into *Clueless*, the conversion of carriages into cars and the replacement of endless walking by continuous driving both indicates a very neat series of substitutions and also suggests that the process of updating does more than simply find contemporary signifiers for old

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<sup>6</sup>Australian Humanities Review, Emma in Los Angeles, a remake of the book and the city.

<http://www.australianhumanitiesreview.org/archive/Issue-August-1997/stern.html>, ctd. On 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013

fashioned modes of communication. The process actually effects certain transformations so that we get a sense of what it's like to be young and female today. Where *Clueless* differs from the boys-and-cars-and-sex genre of movies is that it links the car not primarily with sex but with fashion. There is no simple inversion here - for these girls the car is not a substitute for a man, but rather a means of autonomy and a link in the great chain of fashion. For many women it seems that in this movie one of the most exhilarating and hilarious moments is Cher driving in platforms - it is an emblematic and enduring moment in the feminisation of the movie image of Los Angeles.

*Clueless* is a narrative of knowing, deliciously intertextual and definitely post-modern in its 'conversations' with other texts. 'The charm of *Clueless* lies in its cheek, its transformation of high culture into low, its gleefully transgressive disestablishmentarianism, its cast of young and culturally hybrid actors reflecting the ethnic makeup of Los Angeles, its thorough-going re-location and dislocation of Jane Austen to the New World and the end of the twentieth century.'<sup>7</sup> It draws its essential elements from Jane Austen, but renews them completely, deliberately, within and by means of their new context. Of all the cinematic versions, *Clueless* proclaims its own most comprehensive and self-contained life. It stands on its own feet as imitations were meant to do. *Emma* is certainly alive and well in *Clueless*, but if we want to read Jane Austen, we can always read Jane Austen. Her aura and authenticity remain intact, however often she appears on-screen. Variations on a theme are acknowledged to be creative in music or art, so why not in cinematic texts? Jane Austen, who transported the English classics into her own age and country, has now become that oxymoron a 'modern classic' upon whom movie directors stamp their markers of modernity. To define the on-screen versions of Jane Austen as imitations rather than as translations allows us to appreciate moments of genuinely creative divergence from her texts.

Viewed in this light, Douglas McGrath's *Emma* is a vexed piece of work. Although the film ultimately refuses to knock *Emma* off her pedestal, it occasionally succeeds in exposing the delusions of its principal characters. One illustration of *Emma*'s ignorance of her own heart, for instance, is accomplished through the casting. Gwyneth Paltrow's *Emma* and Jeremy Northam's Mr. Knightley are extremely good-looking. Moreover, the sixteen-year age gap that exists between *Emma* and Mr. Knightley is, here, invisible. Their union is so aesthetically pleasing that *Emma*'s inability to see Knightley as anything other than a brother-in-law is called into question within the movie's first five minutes. The camera also insists that the two be viewed as a pair. Whenever the two share a scene, the camera either frames them within a single shot or shows us that they are aware of each other. We see Mr. Knightley watch *Emma* with more than brotherly interest at a piano recital. Later, at a ball, we observe Mr. Knightley rescue Harriet Smith from *Emma*'s point of view. When their eyes meet, *Emma* and Mr. Knightley are inevitably drawn to each other. At the recital, Knightley joins *Emma* on the sofa and a close-up shuts out the rest of the room. At the ball, the two turn away from the camera and the camera pulls back, dramatizing their intimacy by shutting us out. Subtly, the casting, the blocking, and the camera work all expose *Emma*'s lack of self-knowledge (Very evidently highlighting the romance that Austen herself was not much interested in.) This dramatic irony is what helps us see *Emma*'s mistakes. We are aware of *Emma*'s delusions and suspect the plot's outcome before she has a clue. So why, with her faults, is Paltrow as *Emma* is so appealing? Austen herself wrote that *Emma* was a heroine that 'no one but myself will much like', and to all intents, she should have been right. In her review of the movie, Janet Maslin remarks 'what makes the hauteur of *Emma* so forgivable are the facts that the heroine will know better by the time the story is over and that her instincts are so reliably wrong'. The movie's ability to depict *Emma* ironically,

<sup>7</sup> The Jane Austen Society of Australia Inc. (JASA) <http://www.jasa.net.au/study/harris.htm>, ctd. 27<sup>th</sup> February 27, 2013

Maslin suggests, releases us from the burden of judging Emma for ourselves.<sup>8</sup> We can like Emma (both the movie and the character) because we are certain that the movie, which espouses our values, will chastise Emma for us. So the director's understanding of Emma in the in the world that has changed technically, and the newest theoretical understanding of Austen's times are now at hand.

*Aisha* is not very different from *Clueless* in these matters. *Aisha* has been continuously criticized for the chic, cosmopolitan and consumption behaviors of women in India (South Delhi women in particular), which is a huge statement. Austen's statement that Emma is a heroine whom no one but she herself will like comes to focus. In the sense that *Aisha* became popular among many and was criticized and rebuked by many. *Aisha* can be seen as a epitome of the consumption culture in India. *Aisha*'s heavy shopping sprees, specifically of brands such a Chanel and Dior and wearing western outfits most of the time, actually all the time except the rare occasion of a wedding or Diwali (where she happily chooses to wear a saree or a lehenga), this very soon establishes the kind of life that *Aisha* leads. Whereas parallel to all of *Aisha*'s 'makeover projects' and 'charities', it is Arjun's character (Mr. Knightley's parallel in the film) who is the voice of reason and progressive Indian youth ideology. He consistently points out *Aisha*'s shallowness (only she only realizes it when Arjun actually says it out loud), by which he means her life in the material world and not so much trying to understand people whose life she decides to interfere in. What I mean by saying that Arjun voices the Indian youth Ideology is that he consistently tells off *Aisha* about here luxurious life that she is able to enjoy because her father has that money to spare. The little jokes he makes as passing comments, for example at one of her art galleries- '*Iss rate par kaam kiya toh ek din artist zaroor ban jaogi*'. Such little instances voice out what people in India were and are working towards, to make a mark in this world. Arjun himself is a product and promoter of the globalizing trend. His entrance in the film is when he returns from America where he'd gone for business. While films like *Dilwale Dulhania le Jayenge* (1995) showed the opening of cross culture and cross country gates due to globalization and liberalization it is films like *Aisha* that show us the extent that that event has brought our country. The wider argument is well put by Appadurai, who argues that 'as rapidly as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies, they tend to become indigenized in one way or another.' (Appadurai, 1996) It is this indignation that is very evident in *Aisha*. While twenty years ago no one was thinking about who is wearing what brand (especially if its international or not), it was hardly ever a concern. They were more concerned about the new technologies and getting used to them, that were being introduced such as the microwaves, televisions and cable television. Now getting familiar with new technologies is much easier because not only people (at a large scale)are aware of them and are more open about it.

"Appadurai and Breckenridge's 'public culture' project represents an intervention in debates about globalization in general and about India's 'modernization' in particular. In terms of the former, they sought to challenge those who believe that 'Americanization or commodification or McDonald's (or some variation of all these) is seducing the world into sameness and creating a world of little Americas' (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1995, 1). Regarding the latter, they sought to emphasize the local meanings of modernity in terms of specific forms of subjectivity, agency, pleasure and embodied experience. Their work demonstrates the active role that consumers play in shaping this experience, with public culture emerging as a key site of cultural contestation. The 'public culture' tradition is still very much alive, as can be seen from the journal that bears the initiative's name, and in new studies of public theatre, story-telling, cinema and magazine culture in India (Dwyer and Pinney 2001)."(Jackson, 2004)

<sup>8</sup> Troost and Greenfield, in *Jane Austen in Hollywood* (1998) compare all the adaptations of Emma to look at the the level at which are are different from the written text and one another.



Fashion has had a similar story. But what needs to be pointed out is all these new luxurious entities are still a very class factor.

The structures of consumptions and availability of commodities has changed and so has people's perception of it. While Aisha simply enjoys her life, her father is worried about the amount of money spent by her on clubs and shopping. Aisha portrays this change. Sonam Kapoor post Aisha became a fashion icon in India, endorsing international brands. The film became a landmark in Sonam Kapoor's life, which defined her image in the glamour industry. Aisha's story though essentially the same as Emma's, but as a adaptation and the due modifications made due to the geographical, cultural and periodical change the film makes a statement.

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