HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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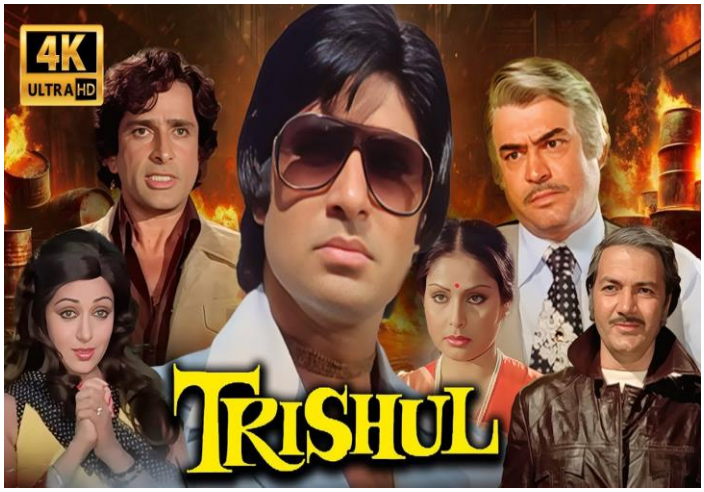
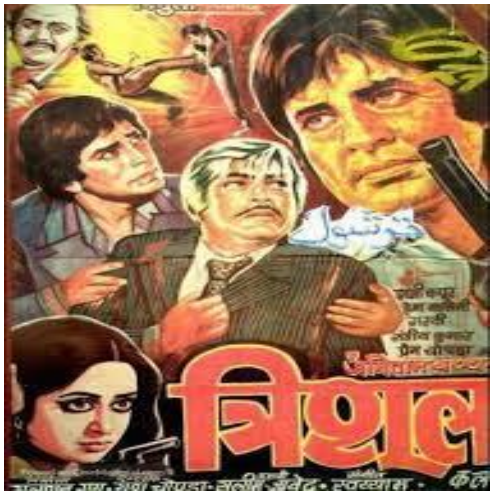
THE TRIDENT / TRISHUL (1978)

Yash Chopra

Hindi language

film link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Q25FMnV-Hw





OVERVIEW

Director Yash Chopra (1932-2012) was one of the most iconic and influential Indian film-makers who worked in the Bollywood film industry based in Mumbai. Chopra initially worked with his elder brother, B.R. Chopra, making hits such as *Dhool Ka Phool* (*Flowers of the Dust*, 1959) and *Waqt* (*Time,* 1965). In 1973, he launched his own production company, Yash Raj Films, which went on to become one of Bollywood's most powerful production houses, with over 80 films to date. Chopra is considered a "King-maker" of Bollywood cinema, having introduced and nurtured the two biggest stars of the industry, Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan. His most impactful films include romances such as *Kabhi Kabhie* (*Sometimes,* 1976), *Silsila* (*The Affair,* 1981), *Chandni* (*Moonlight,* 1989) and *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (*The Brave-Hearted Wins the Bride*, 1995) and action-packed thrillers such as *Deewaar* (*Wall*, 1975) and *Darr* (*Fear*, 1993). Chopra's work is also memorable for featuring visually stunning imagery shot in diverse and exotic locales, such as Switzerland and Kashmir. He is the only filmmaker to have won the Indian National Film Award for best popular film five times— four times as director and once as producer. He also received a number of Filmfare Awards (given by *Filmfare* magazine), including 12 nominations and 4 wins for best director and 15 nominations and 4 wins for best film. The government of India honoured him with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for lifetime achievement in cinema in 2001, and in 2005 he received one of India's highest civilian honours, the Padma Bhushan.

Film *Trishul* is another quintessential Yash Chopra action-drama; it is usually considered part of a loose trilogy with *Deewar* (*The Wall*, 1975) and *Kaala Patthar* (*Black Stone/ Coal*, 1979). It was written by Salim–Javed and produced by Gulshan Rai for Trimurti Films. It features music by Mohammed Zahur Khayyam, with lyrics by Sahir Ludhianvi. The film features again a stellar ensemble cast of Shashi Kapoor, Sanjeev Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Raakhee, Poonam Dhillon, Prem Chopra and Sachin, with Waheeda Rehman in a special appearance as Vijay's mother (all these stars are still much beloved of the Hindi filmgoer). Kapoor, Bachchan, Raakhee and Rehman had earlier starred together in Chopra's previous release, *Kabhi Kabhie*, two years prior. *Trishul* has been remade in Tamil as *Mr. Bharath* and in Telugu as *Mr. Bharath*.

The film was nominated in 5 categories at the annual Filmfare awards (Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor and Best Story) but did not win any awards; though, arguably, Bachchan's performance here is superior to his portrayal of the eponymous Vijay in *Deewar* and Salim-Javed's screenplay is tauter, more thrilling and more plausible here. They make sure the story keeps movie at a brisk pace, and yet there is a surprising level of depth that one wouldn't normally associate with a conventional *masala* movie, not to mention the dialogues that stay with you even after the first viewing.

Background The film was acclaimed by critics and fans alike. Bachchan, then at the peak of his career, actually received 3 nominations in the Best Actor category that year for *Trishul*, *Don* and *Muqaddar Ka Sikandar*, and finally won his second Filmfare award for *Don.* Interestingly, *Trishul* ended up being the second-highest grossing Indian film of 1978, after *Muqaddar Ka Sikandar*, which also paired Bachchan with Raakhee. *Screen* magazine called *Trishul* a "high voltage emotional drama"; their reviewer enjoyed the scenes placing characters, in particular the first shot of Vijay, "showing him walking indifferently in a dynamited quarry, and lighting a cigarette from a live fuse", and "the last party sequences, and the one showing Vijay beside the burning pyre of his mother". All aspects of the film were critically acclaimed. The story is very powerful, the main theme being Vijay's hatred for his father and his determination to ruin him, an Oedipal drama given justification within the film. This conflict between two of Hindi cinema's most powerful actors, Amitabh Bachchan and Sanjeev Kapoor, remains a memorable and skilful blend of dialogue and silence.

LIST OF CHARACTERS

Vijay Gupta	The entrepreneur hero (Amitabh Bachchan)
Raj Kumar "RK" Gupta	Vijay's "illegitimate" father (Sanjeev Kumar)
Shanti	Vijay's unwed mother (Waheeda Rehman in a special appearance)
Kamini Gupta	Raj's wife
Shekhar Gupta	Raj's son (Shashi Kapoor)
Kusum "Babli" Gupta	Raj's daughter (Poonam Dhillon)
Sheetal Verma	Shekhar's sweetheart (Hema Malini)
Geeta	Vijay's secretary and later sweetheart (Raakhee)
Ravi	Kusum's fiancé (Sachin)
Balwant Rai	Businessman and villain (Prem Chopra)
Bhandari	Disloyal employee (Yunus Parvez)
P. L. Verma	An incorruptible officer (Iftekhar)

SYNOPSIS

Raj Gupta is a young engineer, in love with a clerk, Shanti. They plan to marry, but the owner of the company where Raj works proposes to his mother that he should marry his daughter, Kamini, which will ensure Raj takes over the business. His mother pushes for it and Raj marries Kamini for money and position. Shanti tells Raj she is pregnant but refuses his half-hearted support and leaves. She raises Vijay single-handedly with much hardship and dies soon after he reaches adulthood. Vijay's driving force becomes taking revenge on his father. In the meanwhile, Raj has inherited his father-in-law's construction company in Delhi. He has two children, Shekhar and Kusum. Shekhar has studied business in London and is destined to take over the company; he falls is in love with a businesswoman Sheetal Verma. Kusum, a student, is in love with a middle-class boy Ravi against her father's wishes.

Vijay comes to Delhi to destroy his father by ruining both his finances and family. He begins by buying land from Raj which has illegal squatters. Vijay drives them away and begins to steal contracts from Raj, causing Raj to suspect his loyal secretary, Geeta, and fire her. Next, Vijay establishes his own company named after his mother and aggressively starts capturing contracts with Geeta's help. Vijay then drives a wedge into Raj's family first by trying and failing to break up Shekhar and Sheetal, and then proposes that he will arrange Ravi and Kusum's wedding. Shekhar and Kusum learn the truth about their father's past and that Vijay is their older brother. They leave home. As Raj's life hits rock bottom, Vijay reveals his true identity and returns his father's debt bonds. But Raj, who had already taken out a hit on Vijay with Balwant, can only take a bullet for Vijay, and dies in his arms begging forgiveness. The brothers merge the business in both their parents' names- Shanti-Raj Constructions ("Rule of Peace").

SCENES



Opening scene/song To the opening credits, Raj Kumar Gupta is romancing his girlfriend, Shanti, in a beautiful garden to this tuneful song, "*Aap Ki Maheki Hui Zulf Ko*" ("Your beautifully scented locks").

Raj does well at his job At a construction site, Raj supervisors some staff then goes to meet his boss, Seth Deendayal. A colleague, Balwant Rai, advises him to stay away from the boss. Seth Deendayal wants Raj to double-check some plans and praises his work. He invites Raj to dinner with his mother. At the dinner party, Seth tells Raj's mother that he wants to retire and proposes to hand over the business and his daughter (Kamini) to Raj.

Raj's mother refuses to let him marry Shanti Shanti asks Raj when they're getting married and he promises to introduce her to his mother. They get intimate. Soon after, Raj brings Shanti home to meet his mother. Raj's mother agrees with his decision and gives them her blessings. But later she refuses, saying that he is about to destroy her dreams. She wants more and better for him, even though Shanti would be a good wife and daughter-in-law. They argue. Raj's mother says that Seth Deendayal wants him to marry Kamini and take over the business. Raj agrees to marry Kamini after a half-hearted protest.

Raj starts a new life Kamini and Raj get married in a well-attended ceremony and Deendayal proposes to make him an equal partner in the company. At a board meeting, Shanti comes to congratulate Raj with a bouquet. She tells him that it's her responsibility to tell him that she is pregnant with his child. Then she leaves. Raj returns to the meeting and signs the partnership papers.

Shanti refuses Raj's help Raj meets Shanti as she's packing to leave. He apologises to her but she tells him that he made his choice. He is worried how she will survive. She tells him that he must be feeling guilty to bribe her with support; but she must refuse it and raise her child by herself. She gives birth to a boy in a faraway hospital. Shanti sings, "*Tu mere sath rahega*" ("You will remain with me") while we see the baby grow up. She works on construction sites and the boy also works there.



Shanti dies after raising Vijay After 25 years, the boy grows up to be Vijay, the hero. He is fearless playing with dynamite and tells his co-workers that as someone who has seen his mother suffer fearlessly his whole life, dynamite is nothing. Shanti suddenly falls ill. Her last words to him are that she is not ashamed of her life, except that she has never been able to give him anything. She wants to see courage in his eyes, not tears, and hands him a cord necklace as keepsake (which he wears throughout the film). The world never lets the weak survive, so he promises that he will always be strong. She dies. Vijay performs her cremation alone, crying. He vows that he will avenge his mother's suffering and confront Raj, his father.

Raj's business and family Raj is now an irate business tycoon and CEO. Geeta is his secretary/assistant. Kamini calls to say that their son, Shekhar is returning home after 2 years but Raj cannot pick him up from the airport as he has a meeting. Shekhar chats up a pretty stranger at the airport. He meets up with his mother and sister Kusum, who has a basketball tournament at college.



Shekhar visits Raj's office Raj reiterates that he sent Shekhar to London to study business administration and eventually take over the business. Shekhar praises Geeta as being a "computer" who keeps the company running. Raj complains that some goon is giving him trouble and his plot of land is tied up in litigation.

Vijay meets Raj and makes him an offer Vijay badgers Geeta for a meeting with Raj, saying that he will save Raj 5 lakh in losses. Then he barges into Raj's office. Vijay proposes that he will buy the problem plot regardless and get rid of the goons. Raj says that Vijay seemed liked a sensible man but he must be deluded and have too much of his father's money to waste. This infuriates Vijay who rudely replies that he wanted nothing from his father and his mother's blessings are enough. He bets that he will return 5 lakh to Raj in 15 days in exchange for the plot. They sign the contract. Vijay then goes and talks to Balwant, who is now a financier, for a loan of 5 lakhs. Balwant agrees.

Vijay clears out goons Vijay visits the goon, who had set up a gambling and alcohol den on Raj's plot. Vijay tells him to shut shop and leave by 11am the next day but the goons hit him and laugh. The next morning at 11am, the goons are obviously still there. Vijay arrives with an ambulance, magnificently beats them all up in an exciting fight sequence and loads them in the ambulance. He then bulldozes their shanty buildings to the ground and clears the land.

Vijay meets Shekhar At the office, Shekhar and Vijay run into each other. Shekhar says he's very impressed with Vijay clearing out the plot. Vijay returns the 500,000-rupee cheque to Shekhar to return to Raj, then leaves. Geeta tells Raj and Shekhar that Vijay only took a couple of days to return the money. Raj says that neither the money nor clearing the land was important--only Vijay's self-confidence. Vijay has Raj's banners razed down on the cleared plot and puts up his new banner, "Shanti Constructions", while Shanti's song plays in the background.



Shekhar meets Sheetal Shekhar interviews a bright young candidate, Ravi, and gives him the job precisely because he has no recommendations. Ravi is Kusum's (Shekhar's sister's) boyfriend. Shekhar indiscriminately flirts with all the women he meets, including the head of a company with whom they have business dealings- the stunning Ms. Sheetal Verma. Shekhar butters her up saying that women can do anything they like and not be confined to the household, and takes the chance to touch her by shaking her hand twice! He then sweet-talks her to have lunch with him. Over lunch, Sheetal says that she does yoga, golf and tennis regularly. Shekhar says he enjoys those hobbies too. They get in a relationship and go golfing, do yoga and play tennis. They sing the duet, "*Janeman Tum Kamal Karte Ho*" ("Darling, you're fantastic").

Vijay tries to bribe his way into getting a big contract Vijay gives Geeta a lift in his car and asks her for help getting a tender underbidding Raj's tender. She gets furious when he tries to bribe her and gets off the car in a huff- "every person is not for sale". Foiled, he approaches another employee, Bhandari Seth, who agrees to show him Raj's bid in exchange for taking care of a gangster who was blackmailing Bhandari. Vijay ambushes the goon with his ambulance as usual and beats up the goon and his henchmen, in another spectacular action sequence. The gangster gets scared off and Bhandari presumably delivers his deal.



Raj's competitive spirit is whetted Raj is furious to have lost his first contract in over 20 years and yells at Shekhar, Geeta, Bhandari and all his staff. Shekhar says to let it go. Raj has found out that Vijay's tender was just 1 rupee less than theirs. Bhandari tries to throw suspicion on Geeta. Raj later tells his wife Kamini that he has always been ruthless in winning no matter the circumstance; this small defeat is only a challenge.

Vijay reaffirms his promise Vijay tells his mother's (angry- looking) framed photo that he had sworn to never let the man who betrayed her have any peace. This is his first win, but the war is still to come. He prays for her blessings.



Raj sees Vijay and Geeta together Vijay again approaches Geeta while she's shopping with Kusum at a clothes store. He apologizes to him and she forgives him for his earlier overreach. Vijay's interest piques when introduced to Kusum. Raj, who was waiting in the car, sees Geeta chat and laugh with Vijay, making him suspicious.

Vijay has another win at Geeta's expense Bhandari brings Vijay another business opportunity to underbid on Raj's tender for a massive hospital construction. Bhandari says it was a huge risk for him to leak the information. Vijay just throws him a bundle of notes and tells him to leave. He then finalizes his original tender underbidding Raj by 1 rupee again.

Raj fires Geeta Raj learns of the stolen contract and accosts Geeta for betraying him, asking her how much she had taken in bribes from Vijay. She is surprised and shocked at the allegation. She tries to defend herself but he fires her anyway. Before leaving, she apologies for raising her voice and tells Raj that the person who cannot recognize trustworthiness and loyalty deserves pity.

Bhandari's duplicity outed Bhandari boasts to Vijay that he was able to divert Raj's suspicions on to Geeta which got her fired, shocking him. Vijay grabs Bhandari by the collar and drags him to Raj, telling him the truth. Raj doesn't apologize but Shekhar does. Raj asks why Vijay revealed

Bhandari's duplicity. Vijay replies that not everything in life is for profit. Later, Balwant (the villain) gives Bhandari a job.

Vijay teams up with Geeta Vijay then meets Geeta and offers her a job to help make Shanti Constructions bigger and better. He can find no better and trustworthy worker than her. Geeta joins the very next day. She tells him to rest a little but he says he has no time at all. He needs to do 25 years' worth of work in one. Shanti Constructions soon becomes an established, big name.



Vijay throws a party and invites Raj On Shanti Constructions' second anniversary, Vijay wants to have a party and asks Geeta to invite Raj and family. At the party, Shekar, Sheetal and Sheetal's father arrive first. Vijay gets interested in Shekhar's relationship with Sheetal. Vijay asks Sheetal for a dance. Sheetal says that her father is all praises for Vijay's success. Vijay replies that he always gets what he wants. Geeta gets jealous and so does Shekhar. Raj arrives later and tells Vijay that he usually doesn't attend parties but came as Geeta invited him personally. He also has a small hand in Vijay's success with the two early tenders that he stole. Vijay drops a heavy hint about replaying a deep debt to Raj. Shekhar chimes in and guarantees that Vijay always keeps his word.

Kusum and Ravi's romance Kusum and her boyfriend Ravi go on a date and sing a cute song with made-up words.

Raj makes a calculated business decision Raj goes to an auction to buy some land but Vijay outbids him. His manager asks him why he let Vijay outbid him and he replies that business is done with a calm head, not emotions; it would be foolish to overspend on that bid just to take Vijay down a notch. He suspects that Vijay has something else up his sleeve.



Vijay tries to separate Sheetal and Shekhar Vijay looks at pictures from the party. He tells Geeta that he plans to break up Shekhar and Sheetal. He wants to snatch away everything from Raj and his family, including their happiness. Geeta gets angry and tells him that was not fair but Vijay ignores her. Vijay tells her to call Sheetal for an informal meeting. He meets her with the pictures and they have tea together. Vijay wants her to set the foundation stone for a new site, but she is hesitant. Shekhar arrives there and Sheetal tells him about Vijay's proposal. Shekhar tells her to do it and even brings her to the site inauguration. Vijay tries very hard to flirt with Sheetal but doesn't get anywhere.

At another party At the party celebrating the new building, Shekhar sings a catchy, romantic song and Sheetal joins in, "*Mohabbat Bade Kaam Ki Cheez Hai*" ("Love is a very useful thing"). Sheetal makes it very clear that they are couple, but Vijay jumps into singing the song with words that love is a useless thing. Geeta continues getting frustrated. Shekhar and Sheetal sing that Vijay should find someone to love.



Vijay pursues Sheetal Vijay continues pursuing Sheetal by taking her out to coffee. Shekhar arrives when they are leaving and Vijay tells him to join them later, but steals Vijay's car keys from the car. Vijay gives her an expensive diamond bracelet, which she first refuses to accept. He continues to sweet talk her and she replies that he's making her arrogant with praises.

Shekhar proposes to Sheetal Just as Vijay is about to "tell (her) a secret", Shekhar arrives. He says he rushed there in a taxi when he couldn't find his car keys. Sheetal spills some coffee and when Vijay tries to help her, the keys fall out of Vijay's pocket in front of Shekhar! But Shekhar makes up a story excusing Vijay. Vijay abruptly leaves, leaving the bracelet. Shekhar tells Sheetal seriously that he wants to marry her and she agrees.

Vijay helps his half-sister Kusum Kusum has a minor car accident and coincidentally Vijay was nearby, so helps her home. Raj says that she won't be allowed to drive any more. Vijay also has a bad cut on his hand and the blood gets on Raj's hand when they shake hands. Raj and Kamini insist that Vijay get first aid immediately. Vijay snidely comments about washing off bloody hands (double-edged Macbeth reference) but Raj unknowingly turns it around by saying he mistook it for his own blood.

Vijay has an altercation with Balwant Vijay returns to the office where Balwant is waiting for him. Balwant gloats about how Vijay did a great thing by putting Raj down at the auction. Vijay, angered, slaps him hard and tells him to get out. Balwant threatens that he has a long memory. Geeta, also shocked, asks Vijay what was wrong. She is confused why Vijay reacted so strongly to Balwant badmouthing Raj, while he himself had a lot of enmity in his heart towards Raj. Vijay says that his enmity will always remain but Raj doesn't deserve disrespect from riff-raff.



Vijay promises to help Kusum marry Ravi Raj, after sacking Ravi, shouts at Kamini about Kusum's relationship with her (middle-class) boyfriend and orders her to find a good match for his daughter. Kusum comes to Geeta for advice, where Vijay proposes that she should leave her father's house and he will get them married immediately. Geeta chastises him for taking his enmity with Raj too far.

Vijay vs Raj on another tender At a meeting, P. L. Verma offers up a risky but massive housing colony tender, which Raj is determined to get. But Vijay, who was also at the meeting, challenges him. They have another snide argument about loyalty and betrayal. Vijay tells Raj to look into his own past for when he may have discarded his integrity for riches and social standing, which infuriates Raj. Raj shouts that he got where he was with his smarts and hard work. Vijay keeps goading him, but doesn't reveal the secret. Raj and Vijay both decide, separately, that they must get the contract for themselves.

Vijay tells Geeta some of his life story Geeta tells Vijay not to try and bribe Verma as he was famous for his integrity. She asks why he needed so much money. He finally tells her the story of his life and Shanti's pain and sacrifice; as his mother's son, he must make her betrayer pay the price of her tears. Geeta guesses that she knows the person, but Vijay says no one but him knows who it is.

Raj wins the contract by subterfuge Raj makes a ruse of bribing Verma, telling his secretary that the money was from Vijay. Verma gets furious and threatens Vijay with jail, sending the secretary away. Verma then calls Raj and gives him the contract. Raj says the motto of his company is "Integrity". Vijay comes to the office and accosts Verma why he was not giving Shanti Constructions the contract. Verma tells him about the bribery attempt. Vijay is surprised and shocked.



Vijay's determination Geeta tells Vijay that he shouldn't get so bothered about losing one contract. Vijay angrily tells her that he has already purchased all the land across from Raj's upcoming site and will build a bigger and better housing colony there, but sell the houses there at half price. Geeta warns that it will bring heavy losses, but Vijay counters that he came with only his mother's name and won't stand to see it put down.

Raj on the way to ruin Shekhar brings the news to Raj, who is worried and tries to fathom Vijay's true intentions. Raj's business associates refuse to fund him and he agrees to return their money. Raj says that when a ship sinks, the rats run first. He instructs his secretary to take on huge debts, keeping his personal home as collateral if needed. Raj gives Balwant 100,000 rupees to ensure that Vijay is not able to build the colony.

Vijay paves his victory Vijay orders his associate to buy all of Raj's debts. Geeta tells Vijay that Balwant has bought up all the cement and is selling it on the black market, but refuses to sell to Shanti Constructions. Vijay calls the anti-corruption squad and they seize Balwant's hoarded cement. Balwant decides to take his revenge against Vijay.

Shekhar stops Kusum from leaving Vijay assures Ravi that he will make all arrangements for his wedding with Kusum. Shekhar accidentally runs into Kusum as she's leaving home. Kusum blames her brother for not supporting her and tells him that Vijay is helping them. Shekhar slaps her angrily and asks why she would share her private life with a stranger who was an enemy to the family. He drags her to her room and prevents her from leaving.

Shekhar learns the truth Shekhar goes and confronts Vijay. They beat each other up without even trying to have a conversation. After a long time, Geeta comes between them and stops them. Geeta finally tells Shekhar the truth that they are brothers.

Shekhar and Kusum leave Raj Raj tries to stop Shekhar and Kusum from leaving the house, but Shekhar says that they must and Kusum has a right to marry Ravi, whom she loves. Raj warns them that if they leave then they can never return. Shekhar replies that he hadn't earned all this wealth and they are leaving for good.



Vijay proposes to Geeta Vijay asks Geeta to stay with him as he was feeling unsettled. Geeta replies that no one can go through life alone, without friends or love. Vijay asks her for "a little friendship, a little love". She is shocked and happy, but before she can reply, Shekhar arrives at the door.

Shekhar tells Vijay to perform the father's ritual He tells Vijay to perform the *kanyadaan* ("gifting the bride" Hindu wedding ritual) as their oldest brother since their father (Raj) won't be attending. Vijay is moved and both of them get teary-eyed.

Raj takes out a hit on Vijay Balwant sarcastically congratulates Raj for not knowing his whole family was with Vijay for Kusum's wedding the next morning, and that Vijay will be performing the ritual that he was entitled to. Raj gets furious and agrees to Balwant's suggestion to get rid of the thorn in his side. Balwant agrees to stop the wedding and have Vijay killed for 500,000 rupees.

Raj learns the truth Vijay gets his hands on all of Raj's debts and could now make him bankrupt overnight. He comes to meet Raj. Raj screams at him and blames him for his ruin. Vijay finally tells Raj about this mother and his past and that he is his "illegitimate father". Raj is shocked and ashamed. One day he had left his mother for wealth, Vijay says, but now his wealth has left him. Vijay returns all his debt bonds to Raj and says that there is no one as poor as him, even with all this wealth.



Raj tries to stop Balwant Raj calls Balwant's den to withdraw the kill order but he has already left; Bhandari (who's now working for Balwant) tells Raj to meet them at an abandoned warehouse. In the meanwhile, Balwant, swinging his gun around, kidnaps Ravi. Balwant then calls Kusum to give Vijay the message to meet alone at the warehouse. Vijay assures Kusum that he wouldn't let any harm come to Ravi. Raj goes looking for Vijay in his house and sees Shanti's framed picture. He cries and apologizes to her, regretting that he'd taken out a hit on Vijay.



Balwant has kidnapped Ravi Vijay goes alone to the plot where Balwant's goons are holding a gun to Ravi's head. He slaps Vijay repeatedly and continues goading him and punching him, but Vijay can't do anything as Ravi had a gun to his head. Suddenly, Shekhar drives in and there is a long and exciting fight sequence, with our heroes beating up about a couple dozen goons. Balwant tries to run them over but the they throw him off the car. But finally they are captured and tied up.

Raj arrives to free his sons Raj arrives and is stunned to see Shekhar tied up next to Vijay. Balwant gives him a knife to free Shekhar and he cuts his ropes, but throws away the knife without freeing Vijay. Raj tells Balwant that he had bought Vijay's life for 500,000 rupees and Balwant gives him a gun. Balwant cannot understand why Shekhar, now restrained by goons, keeps struggling. Raj finally points the gun at Balwant and reveals that Vijay is his son.



Raj is fatally wounded Raj says he's finally come to his senses. Balwant is surprised but refuses to take it lying down and grabs the gun from Raj. He shoots at Vijay, but Raj jumps in front and takes the bullet. Shekhar punches Balwant who sets his goons on them again. Suddenly, Ravi arrives with the police! Balwant and his goons are arrested. Vijay and Shekhar try to take Raj to the hospital but he refuses. With is dying breaths, Raj says that maybe his blood will be able to wash away his sins; he is guilty towards Vijay, but pleads to not let that come between the brothers. He begs forgiveness and passes away.





Closing scene At Raj's cremation, Vijay lights the pyre as his oldest son. Vijay's company merges with Raj's as Shanti-Raj Constructions and the brothers hug.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Vijay Vijay, *Trishul*'s hero, is the quintessential "angry young man" of Bollywood, raging against the injustice that his father meted out to his mother. He is a passionate, hard-working man, with his wits about him and steadfast in reaching his goal.

Angry The figure of the angry young man carries a significant critical weight in Bollywood cinema, with a flawed hero with questionable morals, motivated to seek some sort of personal justice against betrayal (by an individual or society), and resonating with the audience to a great degree. Here, Vijay commits himself fully to his chosen path of revenge; Shanti's suffering and eventual death harden him, turning his pain into a cold, calculated fury. His desire for justice is mixed with a complex and sometimes questionable sense of morality, such as when he bribes Bhandari to do insider trading for him or when he tries to drive a wedge into Shekhar and Sheetal's happy relationship.

Strong No Bollywood hero is complete without the strength and grit to beat up gangsters, and Vijay is no exception. In fact, he is able to take his first step into the construction business by cleaning out a goon-infested plot of land for Raj! Then he beats up some more goons for Bhandari, and finally at the climactic scene, takes on about 20 of Balwant's goons to save himself and Shekhar. In the first two instances, he gives the goons plenty of notice and even rides in on an ambulance, so that they can be rushed to the hospital after they get beaten up by him! Those ambulances arriving with their flashing lights and blaring sirens are comical, to say the least, but it also shows that Vijay isn't a heartless sociopath who enjoys hurting others, unlike the true "villain" Balwant. This is not a sophisticated, elite hero, but a rough and tumble one, who isn't afraid to get a little blood on his hands!

Restrained intensity Vijay is extremely passionate about his work, but that's only the means to an end for him. He seethes with an intensity that stays just beneath the surface in most of his public dealings with Raj, Shekhar and other business associates. Only in private with Geeta does he show his true emotions, and also in a couple rare instances when he drags Bhandari to Raj after his betrayal of Geeta and later when confronts Verma about giving the contract to Raj.

Vulnerable Despite his tough and cunning exterior, Vijay has a quiet vulnerability to him that he reveals only to his closest confidante, Geeta. The scene where he almost breaks down in front of Shanti's angry- looking photo after and tells her the story of his life and Shanti's pain and sacrifice is one of the film's most emotionally charged scenes; in his usual reticent manner, he tells her that as his mother's son, he must make her betrayer pay the price of her tears. Geeta finally connects the dots and guesses that she knows the person (Raj) who was the cause of Vijay's suffering, but Vijay chooses not to commit.

Raj Pitted against Vijay as his "illegitimate father", Raj is an ambitious and canny businessman who has very conveniently forgotten about his past abandonment of his pregnant fiancée. He is mostly shown handling his business dealings up until the end when Vijay reveals the truth and then he performs the ultimate sacrifice.

Ambitious From the very beginning, Raj is portrayed as ambitious, selfish even, when he easily accepts his mother and Seth Deendayal's proposal to marry Kamini and take over the company. After Deendayal's (presumed) retirement and when we see him after a gap of 25 years, he has already established his construction business as the biggest in town; the speed at which he transforms from a mild-mannered and soft-spoken middle-class youth to an authoritative business tycoon is interesting to watch. He is always on the lookout for bigger and better opportunities and tenders on projects, showing that success had only whetted his ambition. Raj's ambition is for ambition's sake, ultimately nothing but an ego boost, as he already has more than enough wealth and status and does not seem to want to use the money for anything other than improving his business.

Cunning While (perhaps justifiably) annoyed by Vijay's sudden and meteoric rise, Raj doesn't forget his years of experience or let his ego overshadow his business sense up until the end. For instance, he lets Vijay outbid him on a plot of land because it was getting overpriced, or when he pretends to send the bribe to the infamously incorruptible officer Verma from Vijay, thus thwarting his bid, or at the climax, when he convinces Balwant that he only wants to kill Vijay with the gun as he has bought his life for 500,000 rupees and takes the gun from him, saving Vijay's life.

Repentant While Raj walked away from Shanti with a barely guilty heart and no qualms, for some unclear reason he finds himself repentant for his past when Vijay presents himself as his long-lost bastard son, who had, worst of all, driven him into a corner both in his business and his family life.

Raj's volte-face comes as a surprise, actually, because by then the audience is fully expecting him to brush away Vijay's pain and struggle. But instead (and true to his image as the supporting hero) he tries to call off Balwant from killing Vijay and finally redeems himself in the climax by dying to save Vijay. With is dying breaths, Raj says that maybe his blood will be able to wash away his sins and guilt, and pleads to not let the past come between the brothers. He begs forgiveness and passes away.

Geeta Geeta quietly provides the emotional gravitas and the relationship between her and Vijay is a complex one that evolves naturally over time. The chemistry between these two leads is exceptional, and while Geeta is not dazzlingly glamorous like (Hema Malini's) Sheetal, she exudes the quiet confidence of the "girl-next-door" who is also very good at what she does.

Talented Geeta is not introduced as Vijay's sweetheart; in fact, there actually aren't any typical romantic scenes between the two. She starts out as Raj's loyal and extremely competent secretary, whom Raj fires because of his short-sightedness, on Bhandari's instigation. Vijay, knowing how good she was, doesn't waste a moment to snap her up for her skills, and relies on her throughout the film for his business- related queries. Many of their conversations are about the business, in fact, as for instance, when she advises him not to try and bribe Verma.

Guide In very few instances in Bollywood cinema do we see the female lead actually performing this role for the hero; Geeta is more Vijay's compatriot than anything else. She is closest to his suffering and the only person Vijay opens up to. But she does not needlessly intrude or overreach her position and conducts herself appropriately at all times, even when Vijay's actions make her jealous.

Jealous Given their chemistry, one would half-expect Vijay and Geeta to have entered a mature physical relationship (like Raj and Shanti) after some little time working together. However, it appears that one instance of a relationship with premarital sex was plenty for the film! So we see Geeta on the sidelines, getting jealous and frustrated, as Vijay awkwardly tries to woo Sheetal and fails spectacularly. Only before the climax of the film, Vijay, now tired and sad, asks her for "a little friendship, a little love". She is shocked and happy, but before she can reply, Shekhar arrives at the door, moving the plot onward. We don't see Geeta again until the quick closing scene, but presumably she gets into a consensual relationship with Vijay.

THEMES

SOCIETY

Upward mobility Bollywood has told the "rags to riches" tale uncountable times; *Trishul* is arguably one of the better examples, with its heroes delineating the two usual trajectories of how it's done. First we have Raj, who is a conscientious worker and very good at what he does, so much so that his boss, Seth Deendayal, offers his mother the age-old, fairy tale deal "princess's hand in marriage and half-the-kingdom". Now, this was not uncommon practice in large business families who only had daughters; in order to keep the business in the family, a suitable employee would often be chosen to "marry into riches" and continue the family name. Further, Raj's mother is very adamant that the normal, simple sort of family life that a middle-class householder like Raj would enjoy with Shanti was nothing compared to his true potential of grasping bigger and better things. Raj also ends up agreeing with her and thus marries into Deendayal's family, essentially becoming a "*ghar-jamai*" or a "*son-in-law who lives with his wife's family*"; a situation that conservatives think is emasculating. With time, Raj becomes the chief executive and wields considerable influence with his canny insights and business acumen. However, is family life is unfulfilled as his relationship with his wife Kamini is somewhat strained and he barely has time for his children. This is the pitfall, the film seems to suggest, of prioritizing wealth and social standing over one's own passions.

In contrast to Raj's relatively seamless rise up the social and economic ladder (though of course it's hard work to run a business), Vijay has a difficult path. Raised only by his mother, the embittered and cynical Shanti who is not at all interested in coddling him, Vijay grows up working on construction sites and has a rough childhood. But he also learns the tricks of the trade hands-on and is no less than Raj in cunning, as well as pure physical prowess. He leaps at the opportunity to defraud Raj of his expensive plot of land for 5,00,000 rupees, cheats and underbids Raj to establish a footing and then, as they say, the rest is history. In many ways, Vijay is the very picture of the "self-made millionaire", but his life too has its pitfalls, like loneliness and exhaustion from working too hard, too fast; as he tells Geeta, he has to do the work of 25 years in one and has no time to rest. As such, both trajectories underscore the importance of hard work and cunning business acumen in raising one's

social standing while not turning a blind eye to societal pressures; i.e., there is no glorification of "pulling oneself up by the bootstraps" here.

Illustrative moment: After meeting Shanti, Raj's mother refuses to let him marry her, saying that he is about to destroy her dreams. She wants more and better for him, even though Shanti would be a good wife and daughter-in-law; she has nothing personally against Shanti but that life would be much less than the potential she saw in him. She tells Raj that Seth Deendayal wants him to marry Kamini and take over the business. They argue and Raj half-heartedly protests about loving Shanti but finally agrees to marry Kamini.

Unwed motherhood From his very first film *Dhool ka Phool* (*Flowers of Dust*, 1959) Chopra had been exploring alternative family structures and unconventional women; in fact, the first part of plot of that film is almost identical to *Trishul*'s, with the exception that the unwed mother leaves the infant to die in a dark forest. But here, Chopra takes a bold step- Shanti, the unwed mother, raises her son by herself with dignity and honesty, without ever attempting to shield him from reality and poverty, though, thankfully here, Vijay is never taunted as a "bastard" (something we've seen in many a Bollywood film). Shanti takes *Daag*'s Sonia and *Deewar*'s Sumitra's positions even further without predetermining a fate like *Deewar*'s Anita; while they all single mothers, Shanti is the first in proudly being both unwed and single, and actually refusing Raj's half-hearted gesture of help.

In fact, noted screenwriter, lyricist and poet Javed Akhtar said, "The hero of *Trishul* was the first "real" illegitimate child on the Hindi screen. His parents... are not seen going to some abandoned temple and exchanging *mala*s (wedding garlands) to show they are married in the eyes of God, if not in the eyes of the world. Nor do they make love because it was raining (or some other exciting circumstance). (Raj and Shanti) share a mature physical relationship and that is clearly established in the film. That's how the hero's mother gets pregnant…It's the first film in which the heroine sleeps with the man in her life without feeling guilty."

Illustrative moment: Shanti, upon learning that Raj was marrying into money and that she was pregnant, shores up her self-respect and comes to sarcastically congratulate Raj with a bouquet during his board meeting. She tells him that it's her responsibility to tell him that she is pregnant with his child, then leaves. In the next scene, we see her Shanti as she's packing to leave town. Raj comes there, apologetic, but she tells him that he made his choice. He is worried how she will survive. She tells him that he must be feeling guilty to bribe her with support; but she must refuse it and raise her child by herself. She gives birth to a boy in a faraway hospital. Shanti sings, "*Tu mere sath rahega*" ("You will remain with me") while we see the baby grow up to be a boy, then a young man (fairly quickly in the duration of the song).

FLAWS

Revenge Critics have called *Trishul* "Oedipal", in the sense that Vijay wants to figuratively "kill" his father to avenge his mother's harsh life because of him. Chopra's contemporary film-maker S. Mukherjee elaborates, "I have seen this picture three times to try to see why it's successful, but I can tell you that if you had come to me with this script, I would not have taken it... Here is a hero who is knowingly out to destroy his own father... his actions were breaking old taboos. So we had to say, 'You see, he's doing it for his mother!'". Vijay expresses this sentiment clearly to Geeta a few times, even though he never directly tells her his family history until later. But Geeta (and the audience) understand that he will stop at nothing to ruin Raj's prosperity; first by taking away his business standing and then attacking his family's happiness. As to be expected, that road is not smooth, and Vijay has some pitfalls, like his bid being rejected by Verma due to Raj's subterfuge- it's ironic, in that scene, when Raj calls Verma and tells him that his business motto is "Integrity", while actually doing the opposite. Vijay's manner is also very telling- he is suave, calm and double-edged in his interactions with Raj, but we can see his seething anger just beneath the surface. But he finally succeeds when he out-competes Raj's building complex with his own, which would be better and cheaper, at a significant monetary loss to himself. In fact, as Vijay tells Geeta, money is just a means to an end for him- the end being decimating Raj- while he outbids Raj at an auction and even buys up all of Raj's debts, potentially making him bankrupt. Vijay has equal, if not more, success on the other front; after failing to break up Shekhar and Sheetal, he pounces on the opportunity to manipulate his naive half-sister Kusum, by promising her that he will arrange her marriage with her middle-class, unemployed boyfriend Ravi. It does not appear that the sentiment of seeing his half-sister happily married came from an altruistic place for Vijay (even though he doesn't articulate it clearly), but rather, the impetus was to drive a wedge into Raj's family. Geeta, ever the voice of well-meaning conscience,

even chastises Vijay that he's taking his business rivalry too far by going after Raj's family. And after Shekhar, Kusum and Kamini find out about Raj's shameful past, they decide to leave him voluntarily. In fact, in a remarkable twist, the real "punishment" of bearing and abandoning a bastard child, here, falls not on the mother (as to be expected in Bollywood) but the father.

Illustrative moment: All this comes together in the final showdown between Vijay and Raj. Raj screams at him and blames him for his ruin. Vijay finally abandons his cool manner and tells Raj about this mother and his past and that he is his "illegitimate father". Raj is shocked and ashamed. One day he had left his mother for wealth, Vijay says, but now his wealth has left him. Vijay returns all his debt bonds to Raj and says that there is no one as poor as him, even with all this wealth (as now his family has left him).

Greed Another theme we see in *Trishul* is greed and Chopra explores it at more depth here than his previous films. Along with jealousy and disloyalty, greed makes up the unholy trinity that characterizes Chopra's villains in general. First off, we have Bollywood's favourite villain Prem Chopra reprising the role of Balwant. Balwant was a fellow employee with Raj, but was passed over by Seth Deendayal as a prospective groom for his daughter, sparking his jealousy towards Raj early on. Balwant goes on to become a greasy financier, loan shark and hitman for hire- the film never clearly states the nature of his business, but he is always dressed in dapper, appropriately upper-class attire and has presumably enough funds on hand to drop 5,00,000 rupees on a whim or buy up all the local cement supply to thwart Vijay's construction project. Balwant is always greedy for more, not in a hard-working, ambitious way like Vijay but an underhanded, "taking-all-the-shortcuts" manner which doesn't care for any morals. And of course, Vijay also incurs his ire when Balwant goes to gloat about Raj's misery and failure to him but is rebuked instead. Next, we have the multifaceted Parvez playing Bhandari- he too is greedy and disloyal to boot, selling out Raj's business secrets to Vijay for a paltry sum, then again ganging up with Balwant and selling out Vijay's secrets. But more that these clearly marked "villains", we are fascinated by this element in Raj's complex character- it is his greed for upward mobility, riches and improved social standing that fuels his abandonment of his pregnant fiancée. Even after he reaches the pinnacle of his professional success, Raj remains greedy for more, but now thankfully tempered with good business sense, even though it hurts his ego to lose bids against Vijay.

Illustrative moment: Raj's construction company was already at the top, but Raj's greed for more leads to his downfall. After the housing colony tender meeting with the famously incorruptible officer Verma, Raj creates a ruse of bribing Verma by sending his own secretary with some bribe money as if it was from Vijay. Verma gets furious and threatens Vijay with jail time, sending the secretary away. Verma then calls Raj and gives him the contract. When Vijay comes to the office and accosts Verma why he was not giving Shanti Constructions the contract, Verma tells him about the bribery attempt. Vijay is surprised and shocked, but that only fuels his anger further to buy up all the land across from Raj's proposed housing colony and build a better and cheaper colony there.

RELATIONSHIPS

Parenthood Much of *Trishul* is an exploration of the relationship between parents and their children, beginning with Shanti and Vijay. Vijay's entire life until adulthood is shown quickly in the span of a few minutes, where we see Shanti doing her best to make him self-sufficient. A deep and abiding love grows between them. On her deathbed, which is the only sequence we see between mother and adult son, Shanti apologizes to Vijay for their hard life and tells him to always be brave-hearted, as the world doesn't let weaklings survive. Once shorn of his obligations towards his mother, Vijay puts himself on the path of ruining Raj's life (one is left to wonder why Vijay waited that long). In the many interactions between son and "illegitimate father", we see Vijay repeatedly alluding to Raj's past, which only puzzles him- up until their climactic showdown, Raj has no idea that Vijay is his oldest son. And while Vijay harbours a deep resentment towards his father, it's not unmixed with filial love, as we see in the sequences when he outs Bhandari's disloyalty for getting Geeta fired or when he slaps Balwant, who had come to commiserate with Vijay against his long-time rival Raj. And finally, we have Raj's distant and somewhat strained relationship with his two other children, Shekhar and Kusum. Raj treats his son as the eventual successor to his business empire and won't entertain any other options for him, encouraging him to practice the lifestyle of the super wealthy, which fortunately comes naturally to Shekhar with his charm and flair for noblesse oblige. As for Kusum, Raj is somewhat overprotective not so much from his love for her but the inescapable "what will people say", as when he decides that she would no longer be allowed to drive after a minor accident or when he tries to

force her into an arranged marriage rather than let her wed her beloved.

Illustrative moment: A series of thinly veiled, double-edged conversations ensue between father and son, of which the one after Kusum's accident is the most telling. Vijay ends up with a bad cut on his hand, which he hadn't noticed; the blood gets on Raj's hand when they shake hands, surprising him. Raj says he will wash it off. Vijay snidely replies that washing the blood off may not get his hands clean, in a double-edged Macbeth reference to Shanti's blood that Raj has metaphorically spilled, but Raj unknowingly turns it around by saying he mistook it for his own blood, i.e., one's own kin.

Brotherhood Here again after *Deewar* and *Kabhi Kabhie,* Chopra pits the two superstars Amitabh Bachchan and Shashi Kapoor against each other, with diametrically opposed personalities, as brothers. In fact, it is a testament to Shashi Kapoor's acting prowess that he manages to shine in the limited role assigned to him and even steals the scene from Big B a few times, all while carrying on the mantle of "champion of justice and morality" from his previous films with Bachchan! Where Vijay is reserved and ambitious, with no time for romance, Shekhar is carefree and a habitual flirt. Where Vijay is cunning, calculating and cold in public, Shekhar is straightforward, forgiving, prone to relaxation over hard work and always seen with a smile on his lips. The brothers first meet as rivals over Sheetal, which is quickly decided in Shekhar's favour- these sequences are truly awkward, to say the least, as there is no chemistry at all (perhaps deliberately) between Hema Malini's Sheetal and Bachchan's Vijay. Then there are a few meetings related to their business, where Vijay gains Shekhar's admiration. So things are initially smooth, until the time that Shekhar learns that Vijay was planning to arrange Kusum and Ravi's wedding against Raj's wishes and decides it would be a good idea to go beat him up. They throw punches and kicks and roll around on the ground comically for a long time (Chopra likes to include some of these friend vs friend "boys will be boys" sequences) until Geeta comes and tells him the truth. And of course, Shekhar also being a beacon of morality and forgiveness, takes his brother's side over his father's.

Illustrative moment: Once the misunderstandings between the brothers have been eliminated, Shekhar requests Vijay to perform the father's ritual *kanyadaan* ("gifting the bride") during the Hindu wedding ceremony, which until recently couldn't be performed by women (like the mother, who here supports her children over her selfish husband). Shekhar requests Vijay to do this as their oldest brother since their father (Raj) wouldn't be attending, thus accepting him fully into their lives. Vijay is moved and both of them get teary-eyed.

Romantic love No Chopra film is compete without vignettes of romantic love and *Trishul* is no exception, though love is not the focus of the film. We see several romantic couples, each with their own unique kind of relationship. First of course is Raj and Shanti, who have a mature physical relationship outside of marriage, with the understanding that they would eventually wed. This is unconventional and also somewhat unbelievable for those times, as Shanti is shown to live alone, independently, in an apartment where Raj can visit and stay at will- something most landlords don't allow to this day, even in large metropolitan cities. In any case, their relationship bears bittersweet fruit in Vijay, moving the plot forward. Then we have the suave romance between the son of a CEO Shekhar and the GM Sheetal- both of them have upper-class hobbies which they enjoy together, like golf and tennis. They are always dressed in "old money" styles and enjoy going to parties, singing, dancing and socializing, befitting their station in society- everyone thinks they are a good match. The next romance we see is the sweet, naive love between a fresh-faced Poonam Dhillon playing Kusum and an equally innocent Sachin (playing Ravi)- both of them would eventually become big names in Bollywood, with Dhillon more so. As Ravi is clearly middle-class and (presumably) Kusum's college classmate, their dates are somewhat lacklustre compared to Shekhar and Sheetal's, but they also manage to drive around and sing songs in pretty locations. Of course, neither of these two couples engage in premarital sex, like their father. The climax of the film is brought about by the somewhat contrived urgency to get Kusum and Ravi wed; Raj decides to get her into an arranged marriage the moment he finds out about her relationship, a typical (Indian in general and Bollywood in particular) response arising out of fear for Kusum's chastity and desire to retain his paternal control over her. And finally, we have the lingering love between Geeta and Vijay, which neither of them puts into words. Geeta first falls for Vijay, as we see in the sequences where he's flirting with Sheetal, much to Geeta's frustration. But it goes unnoticed from his end; to Vijay, Geeta is a loyal, hard-working "friend, philosopher and guide" who knows much more about the business that he's trying to break into. Only almost at the end of the film does Vijay realize his true feelings and propose to her in his characteristic melancholy, burdened manner.

Illustrative moment: Of all these romances, Shekhar and Sheetal's relationship is visually the most

Chopra-esque one. Just after Vijay takes Sheetal out for coffee and hides Shekhar's car keys, trying to get rid of the competition, Shekhar arrives. Shekhar says he rushed there in a taxi when he couldn't find his car keys. Vijay then accidentally drops said keys right in front of Shekhar! But Shekhar makes up a story excusing Vijay, who abruptly takes his leave. Finally, it's Shekhar's time to shine- he tells Sheetal that he's had enough of the light-hearted dilly-dallying and now he's serious that he wants to marry her. She agrees, but not without leaving him in suspense for some time!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) Which features of the "angry young man" figure resonate with you the most? Discuss with two examples.

2) The two main heroes of this film, Vijay and Raj, are both morally pliable. What sets them apart from the "villain" characters like Balwant and Bhandari?

3) How is the relationship between siblings depicted in the film? Discuss with any two pairings (Vijay-Shekhar; Vijay- Kusum; Shekhar- Kusum).

4) Although Shanti has a small role, it was a landmark in Bollywood. Discuss how unwed and single motherhood affects the development of the plot.

5) Which of the several romances in this film appealed to you the most? Discuss with two sequences.



Cast with Yash Chopra on extreme left, Raj Kapoor, Sashi Kapoor, Poonam Dhillon, Amitabh Bachchan, Gita Siddharth (Kamini), Sanjeev Kumar and Rishi Kapoor.