

**Ramesh Sippy, 1975**





THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD!

G.P. SIPPY'S

# SHOLAY

Directed by RAMESH SIPPY

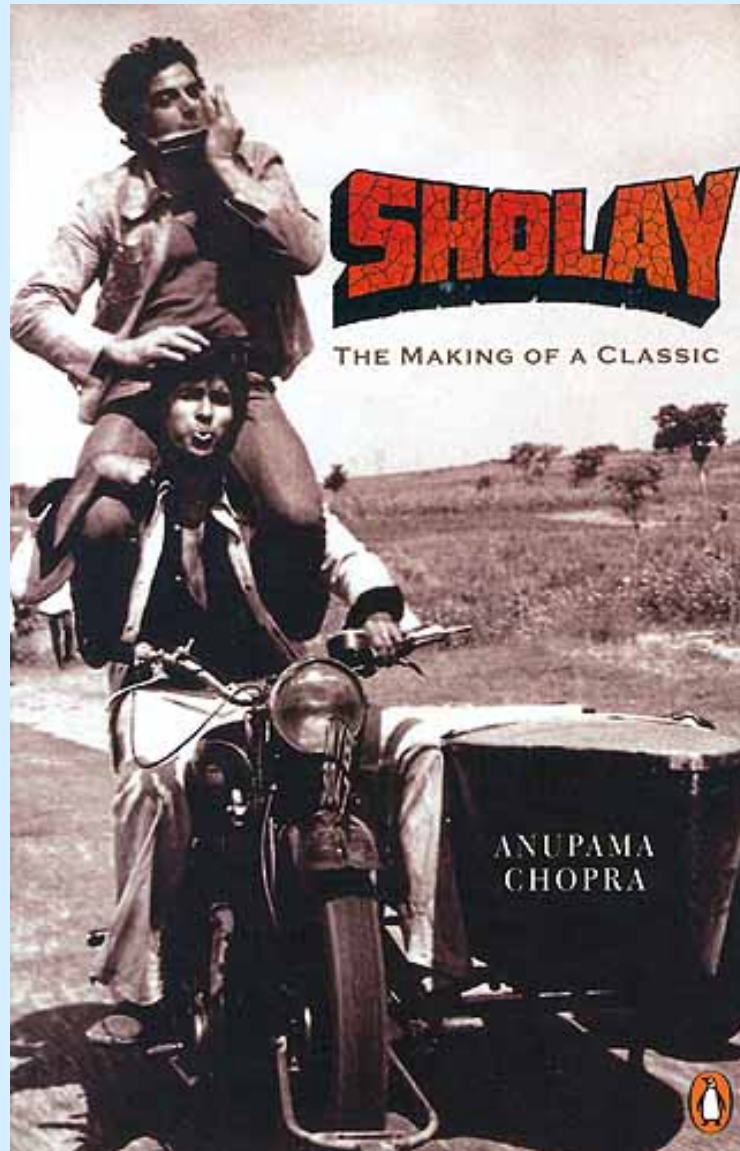
70mm

AND STEREO SOUND

शोले

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SCREENPLAY BY SALIM JAVED    MUSIC BY R.D. BURMAN    LYRICS BY ANAND BAKSHI    CASTING BY DWARKA DUTTA



(2000)



Some cinematic influences on *Sholay*:

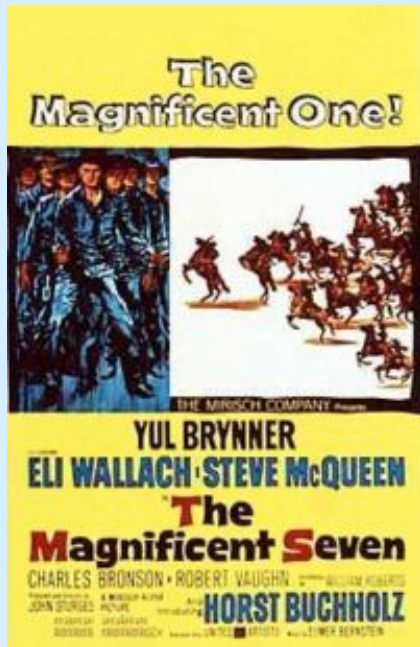
*The Seven Samurai* (Akira Kurosawa, 1954)

*The Magnificent Seven* (John Sturges, 1960)

*The Wild Bunch* (Sam Peckinpah, 1969)

*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*  
(George Roy Hill, 1969)

*Once Upon a Time in the West* (Sergio Leone, 1969)



# Dramatis personae:





Thakur Baldev Singh (Sanjeev Kumar)







Veeru (Dharmendra)

Jai (Amitabh Bachchan)





Basanti  
(Hema Malini)





Radha (Jaya Bhaduri)









Gabbar Singh (Amjad Khan)



“...somewhere between Mexico and Uttar Pradesh.” - Javed Akhtar



Minor characters:

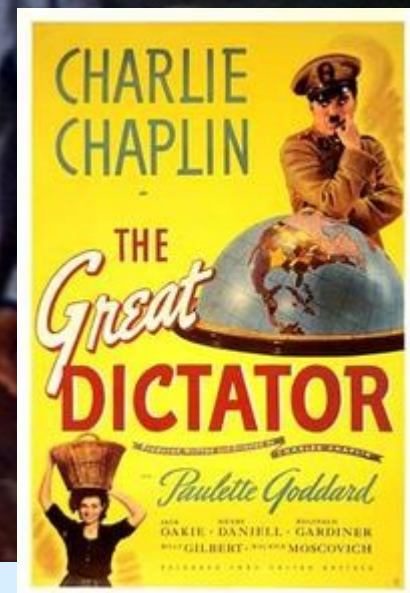


Surma Bhopali (Jagdeep)



The “British-era” Jailer (Asrani)





(1940)



Basanti' s Mausi (“Aunty,” Leela Mishra)





Imam (A. K. Hangal)



dacoits: bandits, highwaymen



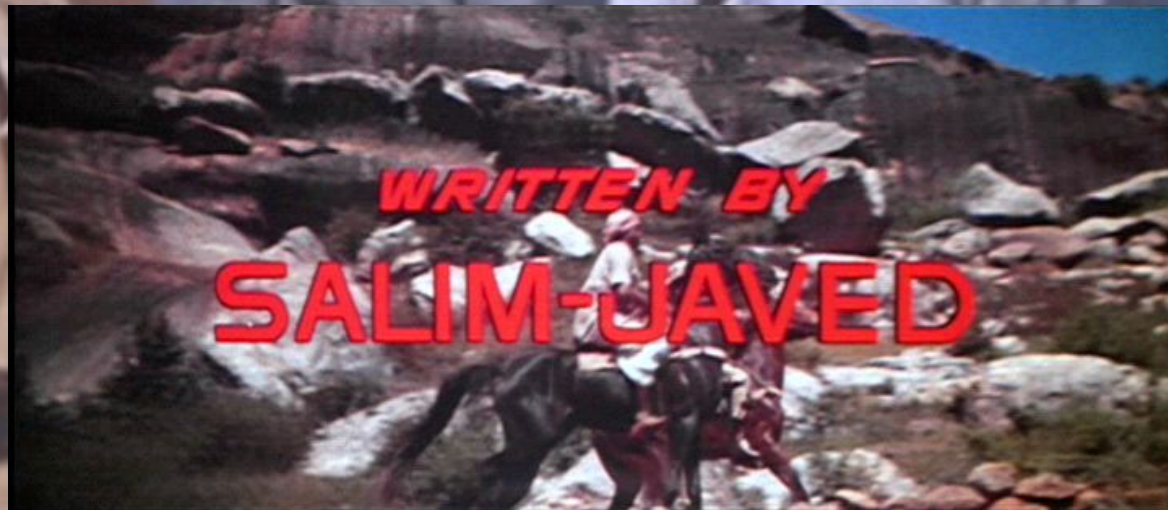
(Hindi: *daaku*)



Chance (or *Dharma*?)



dialogues:  
Salim Khan,  
Javed Akhtar







Jai “negotiates” Veeru’ s marriage....



“Suicide!”





Themes: *dosti*



(“friendship,” “loyalty,” esp. male )





“homosocial” (vs. homosexual, homoerotic)

***Yeh dosti*** (“This friendship”)

(refrain) This friendship we'll never break.  
We'll give up our breath, but won't break our bond.

O, My victory is your victory, your defeat's my defeat,  
listen, my pal!

Your sorrow's my sorrow, your life's my life,  
such is our affection!

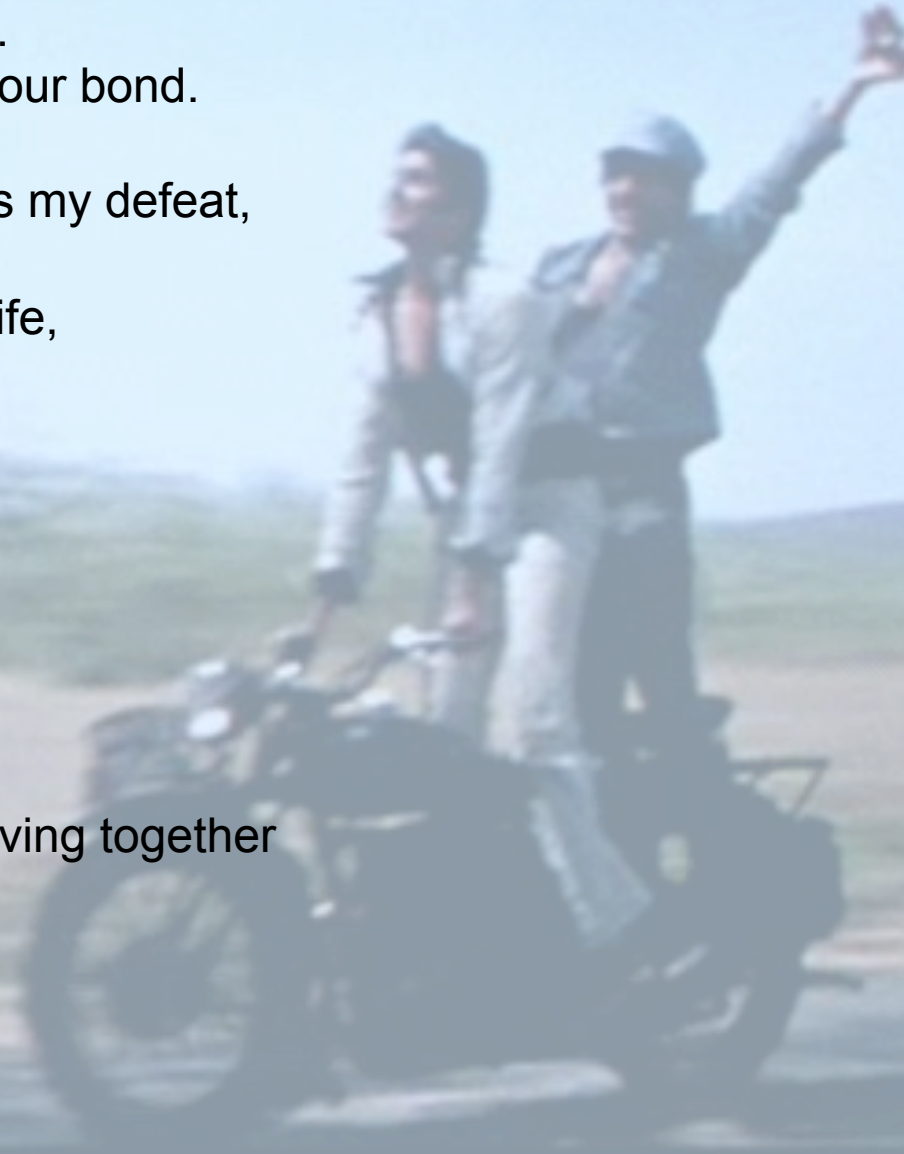
I'll play with my life, for your sake  
I'll take on everyone!

People see us as two but, hey,  
It's not so.

We might be separated or cross, but

O God, may this never happen!

Eating and drinking together, dying and living together  
(for) our whole life!

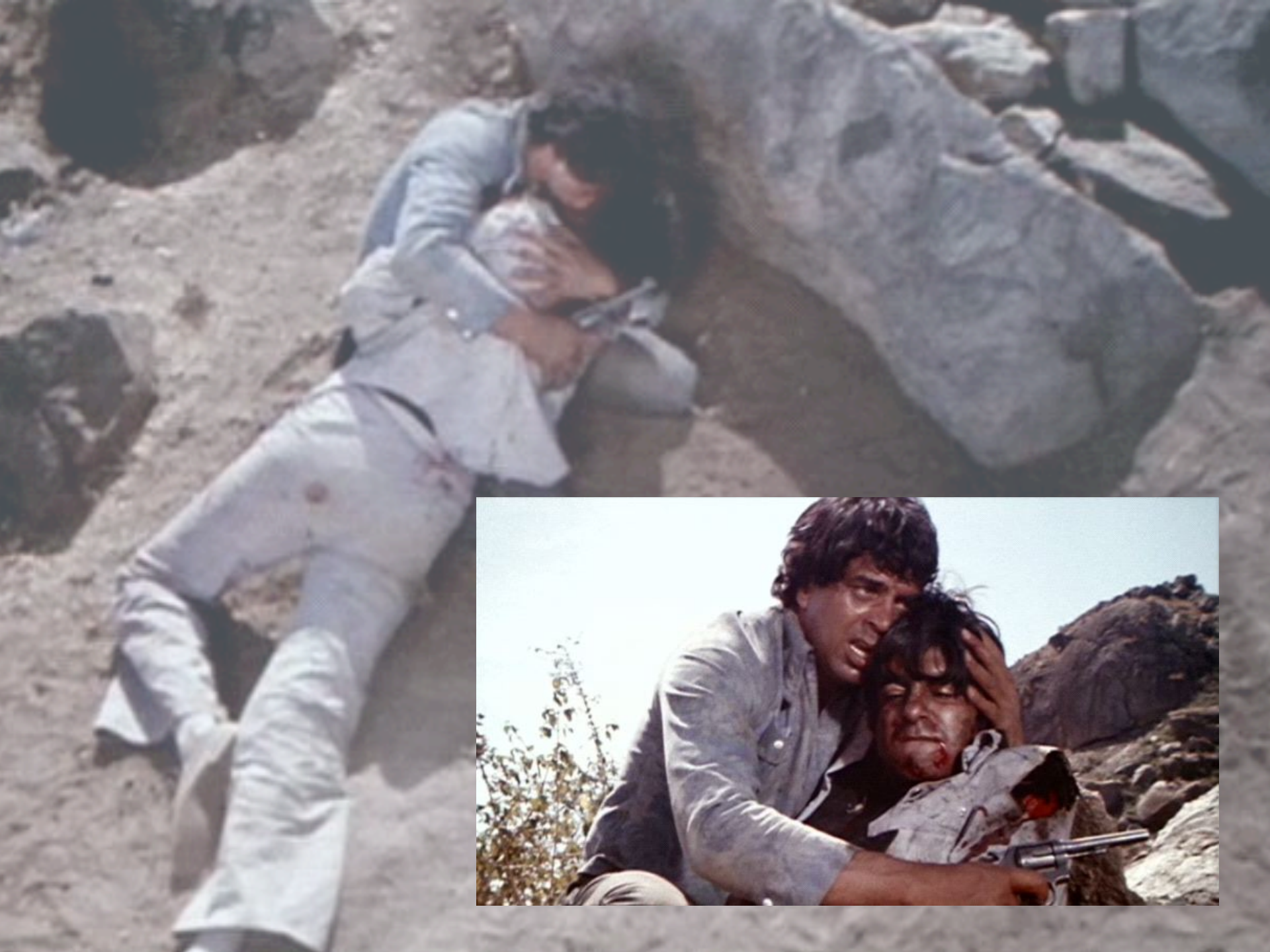




Priya Jha, “Lyrical Nationalism,” 47

“Both Veeru and Jai participate in a celebration of *dostana* as they overtake the rural landscape, the motherland, in a stolen motorcycle, celebrating their friendship. A homosocial space is constructed as it clashes with the tropes of modernity, her represented by the use of a motorcycle, which stands in as a reminder of a Western legacy. This ultimately gets refigured through the homoerotic as the sidecar of the motorcycle separates from the main body, and, suddenly, Veeru appears out of nowhere right behind Jai as they sing, “People see us as two, but we are only one.” The affirmation of a singular, dyadic identity—two sides of the same coin—relegates modern history as fragmented, symbolized by the splitting of the motorcycle, while the postmodern, fragmented postcolonial subject is vindicated and made whole.”

Do you agree with this analysis?





the village as microcosm:



Ramgarh (“Rama’s Fort,” Ramanagaram, Karnataka)

# Holi (spring harvest festival)







*dharma*

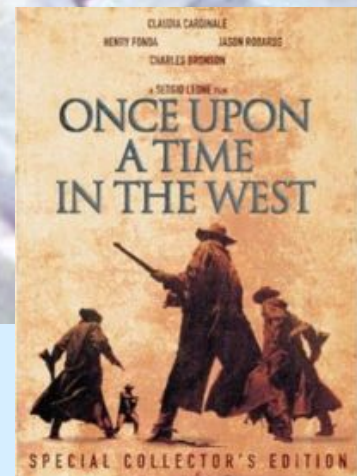


VS.  
*adharmā*





violence



(1968)













critique of Gandhian nonviolence (*ahimsa*)









sacrifice/  
renunciation/  
martyrdom





# Indira Gandhi

## Prime Minister, 1966-1977

(also 1980-84)





*'All those opposed say no! Surprise, surprise! The ayes have it!'*

Declaration of “State of Emergency,” June 26, 1975



# 19 months of “Emergency”

- Freedom of speech, press suspended
- Thousands of opponents jailed without trial
- Labor strikes forbidden
- Police and army break up protests
- Emergency ends with crushing defeat of Congress Party in 1977 election
- Congress Party mandate is seriously eroded