



THE TRANSFORMATION OF LITERATURE IN KANNADA CINEMA

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ABSTRACT:

During 19th century, in the midst of several technical inventions and developments, the technical advent of cinematography and projection created a ripple in the modern world and still the medium is transforming through the advanced technicalities. However, whatever the technicalities may come but the concept of film communication will sustain its supremacy through the ages. In this juncture of complexities of global village, the medium cinema will be unique solace to a common man. Simultaneously it will be the guardian of subaltern socio-cultural aspects. There is no second thought, that the cinema is a powerful medium of the present day world. In Toto, it is magical wand for the wounded hearts. One of Sri Lanka's most notable filmmakers, Mr. Prasanna Vithanage opinioned that, the Film is the night school of a common man.



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KEY WORDS: *several technical inventions and developments , medium cinema.*

INTRODUCTION

As we know that the travelogue of the cinema crosses through the ages. And the idea of camera was crystallized during 16th century by Leo-Nardo-da-Vinci through his concept of camera obscure. Later Kircher's Magic Lantern paved an abstract for the present day cinema. Off course, there are several genius inventors, who put their hard effort to create an apt prototype model of camera and re-projection. At last inculcating all these prototype technical models; the Lumiere brothers, Thomas Alva Edison and George Eastman have done a remarkable contribution to shape up the present day entertainer.

Along with the development of technicalities of cinema, the age old instinct of storytelling also found a new avenue to narrate the story more effectively and lively. During the infancy stage of cinema was confined only to capture the day to day events. Later the cinema bought the concept of creating hallucination of Kircher, which explored the different dimensions of creative imagination along the

aesthetic forms, To achieve the excellence the film makers of yesteryear borrowed the different narrative forms of various literature schools of thought and the different modalities of visual art and painting schools. As a result the medium of cinema has become the medium of fusion art; Consecutively the adoption of novels into cinema has become the routine practice of film makers. This has become a passion among the film makers which enabled them to give the successive films.

Concerned with this phenomenon, it is appropriate to quote the Joseph Conrad's famous statement of his novelistic intention; 'My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the powers of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel-it is, before all, to make to see'. This remark of 1897 is echoed, consciously of otherwise, sixteen years later by D.W.Griffith, whose cinematic intention is recorded as; 'The task I am trying to achieve is above all to make you see'.

This is the same phenomenon was followed by the most of the yesteryear pioneers of film making across the world. Some of them succeeded in their venture and some of them drastically failed to impress either the audience or the authors. The reason might be the lacuna in their perception of the core concept of the literary work. Subsequently the creative egos too mighty have blocked the appropriate adoption of the literary work.

Once, Francois Truffaut, a renowned film critic, asked Alfred Hitchcock about his approach literary adaptation, and Hitch's response was as magisterial, worldly and mischievous as one would expect; "What I do is to read a story only once, and if I like the basic idea, I just forget all about the book and start to create cinema. Today I would be unable to tell you the story of Daphne du Maurier's the birds, I read it only once and very quickly I forgot that and starts working on my own."

The story is nowhere different in India. In the initial phase of Indian cinema Mr.Sakaram Bhatwadekar initiated the effort of filmmaking. And he too followed footsteps of his western counterparts. But soon Govind Rao Dhundiraj Phalke initiated the effort of adopting mythological texts into films. The same idea was carried out by his counter parts of vernacular language film makers in India. At later stage this phenomenon shifted from mythology to other social relevant subjects. While assessing these developments we can clearly demarcate the difference between the Indian cinema and western cinema as mood based and event based. Most of the western films are based on some significant and human interest events. But India or those of south Asia, most of the films are mood based.

However the adoption of literary works into neither satisfied the writer or the film makers in most of the instances in India. Once the evergreen hero, Devanand invited Mr. R. K. Narayan to the same name. After watching the film Mr. Narayan in the exclaimed that the Guide is died; though the film succeeded to bag several awards and appreciation.

The same story was repeated with the Kannada film Nagarahavu of Mr. Puttana Kanagal. An adopted version of TARAASU's NAGARAHAVU. After watching the film Taraasu critically commented that "it is not my nagarahavu, ironically it has morphed as KEREHAVU. But apart from these ups and downs, it is also noteworthy to point out a striking factor that Puttanna was one of the renowned film makers who were keen to adopt the literary works into film format. And most of his ventures are classics and blockbusters of the age. And his portrayals of woman characters in his films were typical in nature and representing the Indian of the conservative male chauvinistic society.

On the other hand on more renowned director and an exponent of social ideologies Mr. Siddalingaiah too adopted various literary works which dealt the diverse nature of social evils. During 80's Pattabhi Ramareddy, Girish Kasaravalli, T.S. Nagabharana are the exponents of promoting literary works through Cinema. These are only the glimpses of adopted worked apart from the socio cultural relevance of the subject.

T.S. Nagabharana and Kannada Film Industry

Talakadu Srinivasaiah Nagabharana (born 1953) is an Indian film director, in the Kannada film industry and a pioneer of the parallel cinema. He is one of the few film directors to have straddled the mainstream and parallel cinema worlds. He achieved success both in television and cinema. He has been the recipient of international, national, state and other awards for 20 of his 35 Kannada movies in the last 40 years. He was nominated as the chairman of Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy (KCA), Bangalore. Talakadu Srinivasaiah Nagabharana was born in 1953. He is an ardent and avid reader of Indian English literature. He holds a degree in Science and Law.

But through the analytical view point, one can see the world cinema is replete with movies based on literary works. There is no beginning and of the amalgamation of literature and cinema, still this journey can be traced roughly from the BBC series on the complete works of Shakespeare to the latest Lee film *Life of Pi* based on Yann Martel's novel of the same name but on Yann Martel's novel of the same name. This journey is not only interesting but also thought provoking.

Even Indian Film Industry is not untouched by this fast emerging genre. In this segment Satyajit Ray's *Pathar Panchali* and Dev Anand's *Guide* are the milestones of yesteryear while Vishal Bhardwaj's *Omkara*, and Amir Khan's *Three Idiots* are some of the Indian blockbusters of contemporary cinema. Recently, the book based movies like Mira Nair's *Midnight's Children* on Salman Rushdie's novel of the same name and Abhishek Kapoor's *Koi Po Che*, based on Chetan Bhagat's *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, have set new standards in this symbiotic relationship between literature and film. The collaboration of literature with cinema increases its far-reaching appeal which now encompasses various socio-economic issues which were marginalized so far. The movies like *Pinjar* and *Chokher Bali* give substance to the stature of women while *Chithariyavar*, a Malayalam movie, gives voice to the voiceless Dalits.

The gender issues and identity crisis are beautifully brought to the fore by Rituparno Ghosh in his Bengali movie, *Chitrangada; the Crowning Wish*. Though both literature and cinema are arts of narration, their ways of representation are completely different. There are multifarious effects of this symbiosis which are positive as well as negative. Our texts reach out to local audiences only when they are modified in order to make them relevant to the cultural and ideological concerns of the new audiences that were far removed from the writer's vision. On the one hand it provides a larger audience to literary texts, while on the other; we observe an acute decline in the readership of these texts in the presence of their audio-visual counterparts. On the other hand the indigenous humanistic ideologies are strategically cornered to bring the western contents into the fore through certain literary works created by the liberal ideologists of the native.

The Cinema of Karnataka, sometimes colloquially referred to as 'Chandanavana' or the Sandalwood, is a part of Indian cinema, where motion pictures are produced in the Kannada language, and based in Bengaluru. Today more than 100 films are made every year. In terms of the size, Kannada cinema falls in the 2nd cluster along with Bengali and Marathi movies with 100 – 150 movies being made every year. The top cluster is represented by Hindi, Tamil and Telugu cinema, each of which make more than 150 movies per year. Bhojpuri and Gujarati cinema which produce between 50-100 movies a year fall in the 2nd cluster. However in terms of revenues, Kannada cinema is ahead of Marathi and Bengali movies. However as far as to south Indian movies are concerned, Kannada movies contribute just 2% of the revenues. Telugu and Tamil movies have 45% share each.

Kannada films are released in a total of 950 single screen theatres in Karnataka and a handful of the movies are also released in the United States, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom and other countries. The first government institute in India to start technical courses related to films was established in 1941 named as occupational institute then named as S. J. Polytechnic in Bengaluru. In September 1996, two specialized courses, Cinematography and Sound & Television were separated, and a new Institute

Government Film and Television Institute was started at Hesaraghatta, under the World Bank Assisted Project for Technician Development in India.

Certain issues such as dominance of non-Kannada movies in the state, financing & distribution problems, that that plagued the industry 80 years ago, continue to plague the industry even now. In addition there are newer issues. Firstly, the revenue windows for movies have shortened drastically and the fate of any movie is decided in the first 3 days. This puts tremendous challenge on the producers on leveraging on multiple source of revenues in a short time. Secondly, with more than 800 television channels offering a variety of content to more than 100 million pay – TV households, the industry has the challenge of luring consumers to theatres from their cozy living rooms. Thirdly, the cost of movie making itself has skyrocketed with high star remunerations and high input costs in all other aspects of movie making. Fourth, with technology accessible to everyone cheaply, the issue of piracy is a challenge that the industry is struggling with. Fifth, the movie makers are faced with the challenge of adapting to the ever changing consumer tastes and preferences. Sixth, Kannada cinema still depends on the shrinking number of single screens and has not exploited the potential of the new distribution channel called multiplexes.

Hence, it is the need of the hour to assess the Adoption, Appropriation, Adaptation and Adulteration of literary works into cinema. Mainly, due to the virulent augmentation of neo colonial attitudes among the young generation of the Asian subcontinent. In the recent past, the mindsets if the people of this geographical area have been moldered through various media tools idée fixed them as vagrant and vanity towards the western by-products ranging from metaphysical ideologies to the physical ideals, which are slowly morphing our present and future generation as contagious cannibals. It is in this reason; a subaltern model is required to be developed to assess the socio cultural land economical aspects of cinema and its contents instead of assessing

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