



SAROJINI NAIDU VANITA MAHA VIDYALAYA

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CINEMATIC ADAPTATION OF LITERATURE AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Literature and Cinema have been different forms of artistic expression. Both hold a unique and close relationship and has the capacity of taking its readers/audience to a different world in their own way. The experience of reading a literary work is certainly different from the experience of watching a film. The tradition of storytelling has been deep rooted in Indian culture. Since times immemorial, culture and tradition has been transmitted through folk lore and short stories from one generation to another. The medium of storytelling has undergone a transition from story books, Amar Chitra Kahayan, Panchatantra stories to T.V. serials to cartoons, web series, YouTube videos etc. Literature has been a source of inspiration for cinema all over the world. Cinematic adaptation of literary genres has also been quite common for the last several decades. There are more than hundreds of dramas, short stories, novels, biographies which have been screened beautifully by the artists. Epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana have been screened in form of television serials. Similarly, novels of renowned Bengali, Gujarati, Urdu and English writers have been made into films every now and then. Depiction makes it appear more natural and engrossing and has a long-lasting impact on the audience. Use of audio-visual and music captures the audiences' interest and involves them in a more natural way. Cinema with its mass appeal, connects to the common man in an easier way and thus becomes a powerful tool to reach out to public at large. As a medium, it plays an important role in the construction of perceptions and impressions about social conditions of society. The paper discusses that apart from mythology, Indian cinema has come a long way by taking up societal, cultural and gender issues. The paper analyses the cinematic adaptations of Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* which depicts common man's predicament and the wide gulf between the rich and the poor.

KEYWORDS: Panchatantra, Epics, Myth, Transitions, gender issues, The White Tiger

Both film and literature are the artistic expressions of human mind. The relation of both is as old as humanity. The adaptation of book into cinemas is nothing new. It is clear that right from Shakespeare to Ruskin Bond, adaptations have been inspired and adapted from literary works. Film and literature inspire and enrich each other. Since the inception of cinema, literature has attracted all creative filmmakers. In India, pioneers like Pramathesh Barua and Debaki Basu based films on the works of Sarat Chatterjee. Satyajit Ray's film *Pather Panchali*, which first brought Indian cinema international acclaim, was based on the great work of literature by Bhabuti Bhusan Bandopadhyay. Bimal Mitra's Bengali story 'Saheb Bibi Aur Gulam' filmed by Guru Dutt, R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* adapted into a Bollywood classic, are some of the fine examples in the field of film making. Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* is adapted into film by Samuel Goldwyn in 1939. William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* was scripted into film in 1963. Moving to Vishal Bharadwaj, the film *Maqbool* is an adaptation of *Macbeth*, *Omkara* of *Othello*, *Haider* of *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. Eminent directors across the world are still making films and web series based on the works of dramatists, poets and short story writers. This proves beyond doubt the irresistible charm literature holds for filmmakers. In recent years, the tie in-between literature and cinema has seen an intense and sustained revival, but discussion continues among critics and reviewers regarding the credibility of film adaptations from texts of fiction. The depiction of any situation, emotion or class with its predicament, along with music, sound effects, and other techniques make literature more interesting and capturing when filmed. According to Seger, "... Film is dimensional. A good scene in a film advances the action, reveals character, explores the theme, and builds an image. In a novel, one scene or an entire chapter may concentrate on only one of those areas."¹ Due to its visual and sound effect, films get wider popularity. Further, a film has the potential to capture human imagination in an easier way. Cinema with its mass appeal becomes a powerful tool to reach out to public at large. As a medium, it plays an important role in the construction of perceptions and impressions about social conditions of society. To quote, "The reading of literature is a mono-sensory private experience of readers whereas witnessing a film is multisensory communal experience emphasizing immediacy."²

Netflix's "The White Tiger" (2021) adapts Aravind Adiga's award-winning book of the same name almost too well. It portrays the globalised India depicting hard and rough life of the poor people and the class-based resentment. When it came out in print, *The White Tiger* shook the literary world as it presented the persona of an unapologetic middle-class man who murders his boss for ascending the ladder of success. The author has tried to articulate the voice of protest of the silent majority against the existing social pattern through Balram, the protagonist. Adiga has shown two worlds-the world of light and the world of darkness. In contrast to 'light' 'potbellied'



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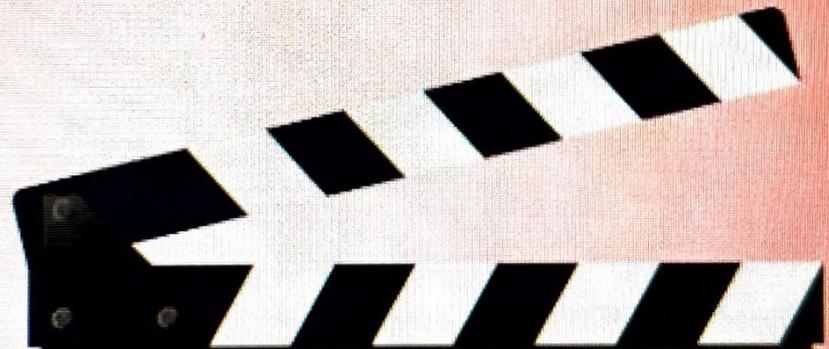
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of Literature in Indian Cinema-
A Reflection of Socio Cultural
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