

IN THE SHADOW: A NOTE ON THE INFLUENCE OF LITERATURE ON CINEMA

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Often literature is regarded as the mirror that reflects the society. Literature comes into being from the society and merges back in to it again. Literature is a meaningful union or fusion of matter, manner, medium and meaning. What is written by a writer must mean something, otherwise it has no value. There are various genres in the big body of literature, such as Prose, Poetry, Drama, Novel, Short story etc. Further these genres can be classified as literature of power and literature of knowledge, Literature of perusal or reading and Literature of seeing or viewing. If poetry and other forms are capable of providing pleasure when read, the drama is capable of sanctioning pleasure when read as well as viewed in the form of enactment on the stage. Thus drama has always been a delightful form of literature as it can provide pleasure even to the common people through the stage. It is a people oriented and public friendly form. The best drama has always been regarded as equivalent to fine poetry. Many Indian thinkers held the view that *kavyeshunatakamramyam* (In the body of poetry drama is the most delightful). This observation goes to underscore the point that drama is basically poetry made. Therefore many dramas of ancient period are held as poetic dramas.

Let us begin the discussion with the Indian concept of drama Perhaps the oldest observation made on drama is by Bharatamuni. In his the '*Natyashastra*' wherein, he says:

Yoyamsvawhaolokasyasukhadukhasamanvitaha

Songadyabhinayopetamnatyamityabhidheeyate

(Drama is a lively representation of the nature of the joy and sorrows of this world through gestures and action).

The western view of drama is also quite akin to this. According to western thinkers "Drama is a lively representation of a story through action depicting the ups and downs that occur in the life of human beings" while presenting human life or human predicament thus the laws of dramatic technique or art come into being according to the necessity and taste of the audience of a particular time. In other words drama is a visual art form and as such it depends on certain conditions of stage representation. It is a visual art form wherein action and speech occupy the pivotal role. But the conditions that govern the novel form are quite different. A novelist relies for everything on words. He must be quite cautious in handling the language that can create the required mood and atmosphere in the mind of the readers. Thus the techniques to be taken care of by a novelist and a dramatist are governed by particular conditions for effective communication.

In our contemporary times cinema enjoys an exalted position among other performing art forms. Cinema may be regarded as a matured form of drama in every respect. One expects everything in a cinema to be in matured and perfect form as one pays for it. From costume to conversation, from light effect to life style, from matter to movement, of the characters all or expected to be matured and matching in all respects. That way the director has to confront with a team of devil problems. Always cinema aspires to reach wide range of audience across the world. The audience may include literate and illiterate, cultured and uncultured, educated, semi educated and even uneducated set, with diverse tastes coming together for diversion under a single ceiling. Thus it has the power to unite the world through one language that is the language of cinema. It enables the audience to live a life for a moment not quite experienced by it. It welcomes the audience to visit the places not seen hitherto. Thus it has grown into a Proteanly unique form in modern times.

Though film industry has grown independent of other things it cannot completely go away from literature and culture. Of course, there may be innumerable technocrats and theatrically trained staff in the film industry, they are all just like the spokes in a wheel turning around the pivot which holds them together i.e. literature. “Whether it is the Indian cinema or the other without the support of literature the film industry or film world would just be a body without a soul” (Miss Beena, JOLIE, VoI-VII; 13-14 p97)

The important personalities who desire to subscribe to the world of film, especially a director, a lyricist, a composer of music must tend to be great lovers of literature and life apart from being voracious readers of good literature. As P.B.Shelley puts it elsewhere, “the responsibility of playwrights and dramatists is greater because they must show a fine path to the society by correcting the taste of the audience”. These words are equally applicable to the world of contemporary cinema. Thus there is an unquestionable relationship between cinema and literature. We have a host of directors like Mr. Satyajit Ray (1921-1992), his son Mr.Sandeep Ray, Mr.PuttannaKanagal, Mr. G.V. Iyyer, Mr. Shankara Nag, Mr. Girish Karnad, Mr. Suresh Heblikar, Mr. Nagatihalli Chandrashekhar and Mr. BaraguruRamachandrappa among others belonging to Bollywood and Sandalwood world, and Mr. Martin Scorsese, Mr.James Ivory, Mr. Francois, Mr. Carlos San and Mr. Truffaut from Hollywood film world who have made much name, fame and money by producing famous novels and stories in cinema or film version quite successfully .

The famous novels of English Literature such as Charlotte Bronte’s *the Jane Eyre*, Emily Bronte’s *the Wuthering Heights* Jane Austen’s *thePride and Prejudice* likewise the *PatherPanchali* the *AshaniSanket* are the famous films produced by Hollywood and Bollywood film teams respectively. In producing children movies the film team requires to be highly adept in matters of imagination, energy and creativity. This can be vividly seen in the children movies like the *Alice in wonderland*, the *Cindrella*, the *Pied Piper*, the *Gulliver’s Travels* and the *Sleeping Beauty* etc. Usually time tried and time tested stories enjoy popularity when transformed into a cinema.

This brings us to the point that imagination is an important criterion in both literature and film. Both are intended for the *sahridayas*. Enjoyment is possible only through the aid of imagination. It is required by both the writers as well as the readers, in the case of any literature for that matter in general and novel, drama and shorts story in particular, when intended for the perusal. Even the world of cinema is also ruled by the principles of imagination. Both the director and the audience must be imbued with imagination. Imagination is a creative force that brings novelty to the things. There are two types of imaginations namely Primary Imagination and Secondary Imagination. Primary Imagination is present among the *sahridayas*, therefore the aesthetic enjoyment either in reading a text or in viewing a film is possible. On the contrary Secondary Imagination is a special faculty with which the creative artists are endowed. The artistic work produced by a creative person is made a dear delight to the *sahridaya* through this faculty only.

Having a fine tacit tie up with Literature, cinema can act as an effective device of social transformation. As far as Sandalwood Film Industry is concerned, it has made many important and influential novels and short stories such as *the VamshaVriksha* (Bhairappa S.L.) *the Bara* and *the Samskara* (U.R.Ananthamurthy), the *Phaniyamma* (Triveni) the *Mansa Sarovara*() the *Ghatashraddha*(U.R.Ananthamurthy), the *Kavalu* and the *Tirugihodalu* (Veena Shanteshwara) etc into fine and popular movies. These films speak against the concept of purity of lineage, some evil practices associated, with the widowhood in the Hindu families, rituals related to death, a practice of

caste-creed difference while underscoring the point that these are not only meaningless and futile but also harmful to the smooth running of society. Social awareness against gender discrimination and domestic violence directed towards women is also foregrounded in many movies. All such movies undoubtedly induce correct understanding among the film goers through effective dialogue delivery and influential scenes interspersed in the films. All this becomes easily achievable only when the film industry is thoroughly supported by a good body of Literature. Thus the relationship between cinema and Literature is beyond all contrabands. A good body of Literature shall thus continue to inspire the world of cinema as a primary source.

