

## Godan, The Film: What it Replicates and What it Hides

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### Abstract

The present research paper compares the novel Godan by Munshi Premchand written in 1936 in pre-independence era and the film directed by Trilok Jetly in 1962 in post-independence era. It simply underlines the scene, plot, persons and events etc. the cinema replicates or hides.

Literature and cinema seems to have one similar motif or seems to work on the similar ground that is to reflect the society. Literature doesn't lie but "not mentioning something" or "saying it in different way" also ruins history. Generally, we consider literature as a piece of history and what is written in it, we take it as a reality or truth. And if

this literature doesn't mention anything, we don't think it ever exists or nothing worthy of considering. But is this the only truth? isn't there not a world beyond literature? There is a very big scenario outside the frame of literature, which the so called literary persons forget to mention. About the cinema, also we have the same formation, we think that what it shows, reflects reality or is strongly influenced by the reality. And cinema has one big advantage of reaching out to the largest amount of people. It has the tremendous amount of audience compared to literature. It can influence people in a great amount.

Keyword: Godan, Munshi Premchand, Godan Movie, Premchand Godan.

The adaptation of literary classics to films has surged as one of the most appealing topics in the twenty-first century in interdisciplinary studies. Literature and Cinema both are an inevitable part like the heart of the society. They are known as the mirror which reflects the true and somehow in some extent the actual image of the society. They are always influenced by and to the society.

The book Godan, a masterpiece, in which the theme of social evil is successfully depicted and marvellously knitted around the novel is all about the sensibility of lack of humanity, famine, poverty and exploitation of Indian peasantry.

India is the agriculture based country so having a cow is very essential and considered as an auspicious symbol of prosperity in home of every farmer. According to mythology, it also empowers and strengthens the Indian farmer. To give cow as a gift to the priest was termed auspicious before someone's death by following the custom. This is the general belief and conceit about Godan in term of society.

Godan film was made by the producer director Trilok Jetly in the year 1962. The lead roles of the characters Hori, Dhaniya, Gobar, Jhunia, Malti were played by the actors and actresses in the same sequel by Rajkumar, Kamini Kaushal , Mehmood, Shobha Khote,

Shashikala etc. The novel is of 339 pages when the film was produced into that particular genre it contained fifteen reels with the length of thirty five mm and of one hour, fifty seven minutes and twenty five seconds. The adaptation was done approximately twenty six years after the publication of novel.

The text was made by the author before independence and the movie was made by the filmmaker after independence, so the creation-time of both these genres was changed from one to another. This matter should be carefully observed before analyzing the social realities and the issues. It is quite sure that the film somewhere reflected the social reality of Godan because Godan the text itself was nothing but the only critical assessment of peasantry lives of the common people or it can be said that the life of the down trodden ones before independence. So the same thing has been crucially shown in the film. The social reality is easily found in its visual form also, but at what extent it is identical to the text, it is the matter of the basic difference.

Godan film and text both are the true stories of exploitation and corruption of peasant community of the Indian society. It is a clear picture of the struggle throughout their lives. The peasant, the agriculture man who is known as the central pillar of the Indian economy is placed at the nucleus of the text. It is this what the cinema reflects or replicates.

Premchand's Godan reflects the major issue of Dalit woman's exploitation named Siliya by the Brahmin man Datadin. Premchand dared to show the affair between Dalit and Brahmin. And when Datadin refuses to give recognition to the relationship, they, relatives of Siliya and she herself takes revenge by putting a piece of meat by force in the mouth of Datadin. We think this is the outstanding scene of Dalit revolt and fight for justice which is totally hidden in the cinema. This could have a revolutionary scene of the film from the point of view of Dalit identity. But was totally neglected by the director. The filmmaker did not

provide any single space to the other parallel stories of the novel like the Siliya's affair with Datadine.

In the movie, the character of Malti was totally cut down in comparison with the novel of the same name. As the whole plot of the depicted novel influenced the original text though the viewers will not be affected by its presentation whose only intention is to watch the movie but who read the text of specific novel on which the movie was based they will surely be disappointed. They could be able to learn a lot through their characters whose portrayal is incomplete in the movie or sometimes some character was totally vanished. Siliya's character was disappeared though she played an important role to show the reality and hypocrisy of the casteism and the loyalty and disloyalty in the man-woman relationship and Dalit issues.

Being a lower caste woman like the Syla compelled to bear the curse of her caste. She was bitterly, badly exploited by Matadin, a Brahmin, who had illegitimate relations with Syla. But never ate food prepared by her and never helped her in her adverse condition of life, but he changed himself at last. He was son of Datadin, a cunning priest of the village, who used religion for self profit only. There were many incidents described by the author where these cunning fellows gave illustrations from different mythological books for their own economical benefits.

Premchand advocated the social status of Dalits in the Indian society of preindependence period. He tried to portray true picture of Dalits' life and social response to them, the reasons of gloomy darkness of melancholy in their life the socio-economical reasons of their exploitation.

Through Godan, Premchand has depicted the development of revolting spirit in them. He sowed the seeds of protest in them against the exploiters the so-called the upper class caste of society. Dalits literally are considered as the people born to suffer, bearing the work

of cleanliness inside the society. The author through Godan tried to remove this dirt of discrimination from the society.

The author described an incident in the text where a woman named Chuhiya had a business of woods and whose husband used to pull Tonga. She introduced herself as a mother of a dozen children. This fact shows the high birth rate in those days. Chuhiya not only helped Jhuniya when she was suffering from labour-pain but also she did the job of a nurse, i.e., devotional care and support during the birth of the second son. It was the best expression of their worst life.

The author's intention behind focusing on this type of upcoming change in the society is to be forecasted the future condition in Indian societies. Premchand took the risk of writing about such sensitive issues of society but the filmmaker could not show the guts, never dare to indicate.

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