

What a Novel Can Do That Film and TV can't: are movies really justifying literature?

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Abstract—The paper is an attempt to justify the advantages of reading in the era of technology where technology has replaced habit of reading as well as appreciating literature. My purpose of researching this topic is to bring change in the society about reading, appreciating and understanding life through literature. There is a famous quote, Literature is the mirror of society. So, it's easy to understand life through literature. Over the last decade or so, I've begun to think hard about the differences between the novel as a narrative form and its adaptation of film. Writing about the relationship between Film and Literature deserves more than a cursory look at the two media individually because they constitute a great deal of the discourse in the areas of literary studies and the performing arts. In academic circles, there is an enormous interest in the exchanges between Film and Literature which are critically studied from various perspectives. There have been debates that have addressed such relations and exchanges between the two media since the beginning of the relations and exchanges between the two media since the beginning of the twentieth century. Such significant debates, as the historical evolution of the relationship between Film and Literature, the several methods and issues surrounding those relations, constituted discourse[s] on issues of genres and practices such as poetry and movies, film scripts as literature, or the relation between adaptation and popular culture etc. which are currently taking the center stage, within academic circles. Film is considered as a branch of literature. Filmmakers are indebted to literature in a wide variety of ways. Since literature is a narrative art intent upon creating images and sounds in the reader's mind, then film is obviously literary- an extension of the older narrative arts. But to me, these films sometimes lost the real crux of the depth of theme. How can we forget, Reading is to the mind, what Exercise is to the body? The paper will study if film makers justified the literary books in making their movies as it is making a wrong effect on readers mind. The focus group is my 50 undergrad students who have not read Macbeth but painted image of protagonist by seeing a Bollywoodian movie based on Shakespeare's Macbeth.

Index Terms—Literature, Image, Cinema, Fiction, Adaptation

I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, there has existed an interrelationship and mutual influence between literature and other forms of artistic expressions. This has resulted in painting and music based on works of fiction, drama and poetry, as well as literary works emulating pictorial styles and musical structures. The creative exchange between literature and film was initiated in the last decade of the 19th Century. Initially, film was most related to photography and painting. Literature shares with film the ability to employ the structures and devices of narrative. Sequence of images on screen told a story and this is equivalent to the sequence of words on page. The use of language in film established firmly the connections to literature. Films, like in literature, present action' images and words replicating life. Literary works also have a stylistic and thematic basis in a realistic

presentation of characters and incidents. Theatre, initially, seemed nearest to film because of the common use of actors and sets. Critics agree that films have a stronger affinity with fiction, and narratives. However, the primary thrust of literature is linguistic, the thrust of film is imaginative and visual. [1] Film draws from the tradition of live theatre which includes techniques of staging, lighting, movement and gestures. From the novel, film draws from structure, characterization, theme and point of view. From poetry it draws from an understanding of metaphor, symbolism and other literary tropes. Film can extend into areas of the innermost privacy and consciousness just like poetry does. From music film draws from rhythm, repetition and counterpoint. From painting it draws from sensitivity to shape form, visual textures and color.

II. FILM AND LITERATURE

Popular film was developed from 18th Century novel. Both the 18th Century novel and film relied heavily upon realism as a technique. Early films were concerned, with realism in literature, daily lives of ordinary people. The subject matter and audiences were people of low social standing. There is a relation in film and literature. The basic structural units of the novel were replicated in film. In the novel we have: the word, sentence, paragraph, chapter and the entire novel. In film we have the frame, shot scene and sequence. The word in literature and the image in film were similar in so far as they are visual phenomena, both perceived with the eye. Despite different degrees of explication, both writers and filmmakers use language or languages. Some differences may exist however. The film is multi-sensory communal experience emphasizing immediacy, literature is a private experience that is more conducive to reflection. A film is usually viewed in others' presence who become a larger part of the experience. Each audience member acknowledges the presence of the others. Audience response can also affect perception of a film. A novel is typically a private experience in which the relationship between the author and the reader is relatively direct and immediate. Others' responses do not impinge on the novel, making it conducive to reflection as the reader can pause and re-read. [2] The film and the novel are alike so far as their order is typically linear. Movement is generally sequential, and the events and scenes are ordered in direct relation to each other. Therefore, film is considered as a branch of literature. Filmmakers are indebted to literature in a wide variety of ways. Since literature is a narrative art intent upon creating images and sounds in the reader's mind, then film is obviously literary- an extension of the older narrative arts. Indeed, the most distinctive quality of skillful writing is visual; to convey images by means of words, to make the mind see, to project onto that inner

screen of the brain a moving picture of objects and events to convey a balance and reconciliation of a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order. Film is therefore visual literacy (as opposed to verbal literacy), a new medium which is an extension and enlargement of the idea of literacy itself. In contemporary scholarship, everything written, for example, film scripts, are a part of the study of literature, thus film is a branch of literature.

III. RELATION AND CONTRADICTION OF FILM AND LITERATURE

Cinema and literature are connected /related to each other but still they are different in their own ways. It has always been one of the most fascinating forms of knowledge which has made significant impact on human psyche. From the early magical experiments till the recent release of films the relationship between cinema and literature has always been closely intertwined. [3] It has proved overall a successful symbiosis, with that remains to this day as inextricable as it is fruitful. Some half century ago, even one French film critic proposed the question as to whether the cinema can survive without the twin crutches of literature and theatre and the answer was “no”. Cinema is a nascent art, and as such, it has sought in its most vulnerable years succor from the previous generations of theatre and literature. [4] Cinema has been a thousand years in the making. The literature of antiquity has provided endless inspiration for cinematic epics like “The Bible” has spawned such films as *The King of Kings* (1961), *David & Bathsheba* (1951), *The Robe* (1953), *Samson & Delilah* (1949), and *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965) there are countless others. *Commandments* (1956), a film that was an amalgam of several novels and most famous till date. Bollywood cinema portrays women in more glamorous way, but that doesn't signify progress. The British have left India long ago, but the obsession with fairness hasn't lessened.

IV. INDIAN MOVIES AND THEIR DEPICTION

Movie stars represent idealized visions of female beauty, which does change through generations. Secondly, movie plots are riddled with the outdated hilarious characters. The “vamp” is overtly sexual, as if that alone shows strength. But, if sexuality is to be empowering, it must be owned, not just the fantasy of men in an item number. Though stories may demand certain types of characters sometimes, most of the time in Bollywood, the modern, and often “bad”, woman becomes the one in less clothes and the “good” woman is the sacrificing, loyal one, even if it means being humiliated. There were more powerful female characters 30 years ago as in “*Mother India*.” Many India movies may feature strong women but the story – unmarried couple deciding to have a baby is so far removed from average Indian society that they might as well be fantasies. Women fare better in the Indian cinema scene, like “*Dor*” or “*Fashion*.”

V. PROPOSED CHAPTALIZATION

It is said that if you're going to see a movie based on a book you think is worth reading, read the book first, you can never read the book with the same imaginative responsiveness to the author once you have seen the movie. Cinema is also used in a response to poetry. The tapes and films were chosen out of the American experimental tradition to exemplify various techniques of marrying the two arts. Poetry as the art of utterance and cinema the art of showing, both whole on their own, don't easily make a good couple. But these film and video makes have taken up the challenge anyway by responding to the spirit and the letter of the poet, creating an original cinematic writing. Cinema and language meet head on, not unified as in conventional film, but remaining distinct and dancing, stepping on toes, wooing each other with the charms of mouth and eye and mind. You'll see images' own syntax shuffled, blended, chafing and dovetailing with language; you'll hear and read poets' work while seeing and hearing filmmakers'.

VI. ADVENT OF CINEMA

The advent of cinema in the early 1900s rapidly led to a link between film and literature, the confluence of both medium becoming especially significant during the early 1930s, and a period that is often referred to as the classic cinematic period. Although the relationship between film and fiction has been largely beneficial, often resulting in increased recognition for novels that were previously unpopular, critical study of the convergence has frequently focused on the drawbacks of this adaptive and interpretive partnering. In recent years, the tie-in between literature and cinema has seen as intense and sustained revival, but discussion continues among critics and reviewers regarding the credibility of film adaptations from texts of fiction.

Studying the relationship between film and fiction, critics have noted the value and limitation of each medium. A major point of discussion among scholars is the ability of the written word to convey multiple layers of meaning and consciousness, in contract to the usually linear progression of events portrayed in film. In fact, some theorize that because of the sheer depth and intensity of novel-length narratives, the novella or short story is more often the right length for adaptation to feature film. Although controversy surrounds the adaptive methods employed by the screenwriters for both texts, there is consensus about the success of both the text and film versions of these works.

VII. PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN: THE BIGGEST CLICHÉ.

The portrayal of women in Indian cinema is the biggest cliché that the discourse on gender must address. But the more specific aspect of this cliché i.e. the representation of the female body and the time and space that accommodate it is worth elaboration. Society was very patriarchal during earlier times; men were in control of all monetary assets. When a man died, his money was passed on to the closest

living male heir and the women were left penniless. While men and women could choose their own partners, money/wealth/status was very important and often marriages were made on those grounds alone. I took a class while studying in one of my course about cinema and literature and devoted a large part of time to the analysis of cinematic adaptations of literary works. Since then I have been very interested in the comparison of the two mediums and this dichotomy between the written and the visual modes of storytelling. While reading one of the essays in and its Film adaptation, I suddenly remembered of that class and discussion of cinema vs. Literature. Janet Stagier in her essay "Authorship Approaches," quotes Astruc as saying "cinema is becoming a language, which allows it to break free from the tyranny of what is visual, from the image for its own sake...to become a means of writing just as flexible and subtle as written language. While literature relies on verbal communication through the form and structure of the written word and the decoding of the text by the reader, cinema depends upon a visual form of communication though the imagery of a film and its interpretation by the audience to tell its story. For example, for all the narrative power of the written word, words can never achieve the visual clarity made capable by cinema. On the contrary, however talented an actor or actress may be, it is impossible to reproduce the level of psychological depth of character obtainable through the written word.

VIII. LITERATURE: READING VS VISUALIZATION

Literature basically reflects the bad and good of the society and thus helps the people of the society to recognize what they are going through and how they could rectify the activities that are misplaced or not in order. Since literature reflects or is the mirror of the society, it has a very important place right from the history. It is basically a reflection of human action in that society and therefore, one would be able to clearly understand one's own weakness and strengths. Every action is captured in literature. Action like, what people think, say, act and so on. Great writers have given wonderful literature to read and they have presented every character of their writing with so much perfection that the reader would feel the presence of drama, romance, betrayal, humor and almost all other feelings that we go through in life or see around us. Stories or acts are carefully and beautifully crafted based on lives of people surrounding us, and it is then just edited here and there without taking of the actual concept or reflection of the story.

The statement that "literature is a mirror of life" may appear strange at first and we may think how works of literature, where there is a clear sequence of action and an interesting story, can be the mirror of everyday life. Indeed, life is often boring and could feel pointless on many occasions. Literature, however, can be said to be the mirror of life, because it reflects and comments on aspects of things people encounter in their daily lives. The same is true when going centuries into the past. The play, Hamlet

by Shakespeare, for example offers not only the story of a prince and his dead father, but also how this prince is human. His reaction to his father's death is utterly human. He experiences grief a loss like any own son who loses a father. When he realizes his father has been murdered, he is outraged and wants revenge, which is another human reaction. So, although the worlds of royalty and Shakespeare's time are alien to us, Hamlet's feelings are not. Therefore, Shakespeare's work can be regarded as relevant even today. Poetry is perhaps the type of literary effort that best reflects life. It shows the reader how the poet sees life. The poet asks the reader to enter his world and share it with him. In fact, this is what any author does, regardless of the specific thing being written. Literature holds up the mirror of other people and other lives to the life we as readers live. This reflection can teach, inspire, make us laugh, or horrify us. This is the beauty and the joy of reading. In every part of the world, literature has been, mirror of society. At the earliest stage, literature invariably takes the form of poetry, while prose is a much later creation, because prose develops with matured age. Poetry is out and out a product of imagination, while prose is the fruit of intellect. The earlier form of poetry is the epic. In Italian, Greek, German, English or Indian epic we can find a clear reflection of the ancient social history of the countries. Mark closely the contents of the Beowulf, the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and you will find in them a picture of the ancient life and society of the countries concerned. Even in the much later epics of England, Germany or India, you can find a similar picture of ways of life of the peoples or more recent times of those countries. Of course, poetry has more of the element of imagination than of reality, and therefore, it is not likely to be as much a faithful mirror of society as prose, or even as the drama. Next to poetry, the drama is another mirror of society. The drama is partly a creation of imagination and partly of real life. The earlier dramas in every country are a more faithful picture of society than the later dramas, probably because the creator of poetry or dramas at an earlier state of human history is far more imaginative than at the later stages which are marked by the production of prose literature such as the story, the novel, the tale and other.

The plays of Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Goethe, Aeschylus, Plautus, Seneca, Kalidas, Shaw and others are reflections of their own times and people, although there is quite a good element of imagination in every one of the works. The drama is a tale of action put upon the stage, and naturally, it must contain some elements of real life. Leaving aside the historical dramas, most of the other dramas in every country throw considerable light upon the social, political, moral and even economic life of the time and the people. The play of Shakuntala of our country or the plays of Shaw are a mirror of the society of the ancient and modern times of India and England. But the most realistic forms of literature are the stories and the novels. The stories and the novels which deal particularly with the problem of social, economic and political life of a country are bound to reflect contemporary history, while those of other which deal with psychological problems are

comparatively more imaginary and less real. A few of the stories and novels deal exclusively with historical themes, and such works are essentially realistic and serve as the correct picture of society. Most of the modern stories and novels of Russia and India are realistic and they do reflect the society of the times of their countries. The stories and novels of America of France or even of England have still in them a great element of imagination, and therefore, they, are the best mirror of society.

IX. WHY READING IS MUST

Ever since the first book was adapted into a movie (Sherlock Holmes Bafflel,1900) there has been much discussion about reading the original book or watching the movie adaptation? Each version has its own merits, which is probably why the debate has never been laid to rest, but to me there is a clear winner. As an avoid book reader and lover, I will always recommend book, no matter how good the movie is.

When reading, the reader must do this, whereas television does the work for them. Improving theory of mind can enhance a person's sense of empathy. Reading encourages greater brain connectivity. As the reader learns about the character, they place themselves in their shoes, which encourage brain activity. Several readers who read the same book develop their own unique version. When watching television, there is only one way to interpret it. Unlike television, there is no danger of the reader losing their place with a book. They do not have to stay up late to finish an episode or pause the TV, they just need to put the book down. It is possible to take a book anywhere and read it without disturbing other people. While portable TVs are available, they are not as socially acceptable as books. When you read, you engage with your inner life in a way you can't with television. [5] I will always prefer books as they allow you to know what the characters are thinking or feeling whereas in movies one rely on acting of characters and the subtext director create for the performance of the actor. Books let get to know the characters better as you spend more time with them, and you learn more details about them. A movie has a limited time frame of roughly two hours. With books, you can take your time and read at whatever pace you want to. Books allow you to be more creative and imagine the characters, places, scenes and can have their own interpretation of things when they read any book. [6] The books that we read and love as a child or an adult, have a way of sticking with us and influencing us in ways we could never have imagined. The series of my childhood stories, I read at a very young age, the stories have stuck with me to this day and remain one of my all-time favorites. I still learn so many lessons with them.

X. CONCLUSION

And for these reasons, I prefer books to films. Films destroy amazing books and TV has changed books. Maybe some people enjoy reading books because the films exist,

but I think vice versa. I think people should read a book because they want to read the book and every book has a new lesson. And of course, there are films not related to books at all. Sometimes it's best if the two things aren't connected. Books are a more proactive form of entertainment and learning. The reader must concentrate on what's being said and to think through concepts in the book. When we read, we're forced to use our imaginations to understand unsaid. Books also have the advantage to describe in greater depth. While films are composed of dialogue between characters, books can walk readers through scenes, characters' thoughts, and provide lengthier commentary. How nicely Berns concluded: "At a minimum, we can say that reading stories reconfigures brain networks for at least a few days. It shows how stories can stay with us. This may have profound implications for children and the role of reading in shaping their brains." [7] But these days, with the ever advancement and technology, there is more distraction and other things for people to do as they have lost interest in reading, some even find it boring as they prefer to play video games or spend all their time on their phones. This is a crying shame, as reading offers many benefits, it also plays a vital role in development, improves ability to focus, retain information, think better and concentrate. Reading covered all crucial areas of development. So, pick an informative book or article, sit and relax, turn off your electrical devices and put your worries and problems to one side and take full advantage of all the positive and calming benefits that reading has to offer you.

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