

Analyzing *The Guide* as an Indian Screen Adaptation

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Abstract

The Present paper aims to explore the major thematic concerns of the novel The Guide, which is adapted into movie. Adaptation is a kind of imitative work. Novels, non-fictions, short stories, autobiographies, comic books, scriptures, plays, historical sources and even other literature are a common form of film adaptation. Some films are based on particular elements of literature such as theme, characters, dialogues, settings, plot and other aspect of literature in order to enhance the quality of films. Novels are frequently adapted for film.

This paper deals with R.K. Narayan's novel The Guide and its cinematic adaptation by Vijay Anand. The researchers have tried to show that during the process of adaptation of novel into film, Director has taken some liberty to include some elements and exclude some parts of the novel which shows that an adaptation of The Guide into film is not merely a translation of a novel. Only a few producers and director have an aim to truly show the reader what the book is about, making their movies truly objective.

Researchers have tried to analyze a novel The Guide by comparing with the film Guide by taking in to consideration major parameters like setting, characters, opening, closing and narrative technique used in the film and the novel.

Key Words

Adaptation, Narration, Screen, Setting, Spectator's, Film.

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Introduction

Cinema and literature - These two words are opposing each other for quite a long time now. Since the beginning of the 20th century, cinema has produced a great number of films. Some of them are worth of the spectator's attention, some of them are not but nevertheless nowadays it is hard to imagine a person who does not know "what's new" in the movie world. Literature is a complete different world. It is a world that in spite of its openness and accessibility still remains unreachable for the majority of contemporary people. It is not necessary to analyze the reason of this phenomenon but it is important to say that a movie does save time in comparison with the book. This "time saving process" of course in the first place influences the quality of the "product" and as a result we have endless amounts of poor quality movies that are claimed.

As every production, movie-making needs "raw-materials". Books become a perfect never-ending source where film producers borrow or sometimes even steal the ideas of writers' imagination. People, as it has been said before, do want to save their time, but they also want to stay educated and get acquainted with the works that are considered to be "the classics". Therefore the only way to get acquainted with the most stunning literary works is through watching movies made from these books. Only a few producers have an aim to truly show the reader what the book is about, making their movies truly objective.

A film adaptation is the transfer of written work in whole or in a part, to a feature film. It is a type of derivative work. 'Adaptation', the transformation of printed works to another medium. Novels, non-fictions, short stories, autobiographies, comic books, scriptures, plays, historical sources and even other literature are a common form of film adaptation. Some films are based on particular elements of literature such as theme, characters, dialogues, settings, plot and other aspect of literature in order to enhance the quality of films. Novels are frequently adapted for film for example *One Night At the Call Centre* by Chetan Bhargat is adapted for the film *Hello*, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen is adapted for the film *Bride and Prejudice*. But there are certain differences in both the art forms i.e. fiction and film.

Analyzing *The Guide* as an Indian screen adaptation

R.K.Narayan's is highly acclaimed Indian author. He was born on 10th October 1906 in Chennai is considered to be one of the greatest Indo-English writers of the twentieth century. He is the author of *Bachelor of Arts*, *Swami and Friends*, *The Guide*, *The Dark Room*, *The English Teacher*, *The Financial Expert*, *The Vendor of Sweets etc.* Through his works, he became one of the leading literary figures of the world. He won numerous awards during the course of his literary career. R.K.Narayan's novel *The Guide* written in

1958 is recognized as one of the author's best works and won Sahitya Academy award. Its popularity attracted Vijay Anand and he decided to adapt this novel for making a film.

Many great works of literature have been adapted for screen. Comparing and contrasting both generates the interest to the researchers to do an excellent research. Vijay Anand's movie '*Guide*' is based on R.K.Narayan's novel *The Guide*. Movie was very commercial and got artistic success. The script of the movie was written by noble Laureate and bestseller Pearl S. Buck. As per the belief of the first critics of film adaptations of novels, George Bluestone, 'film maker is an independent artist, "not a translator for an established author, but a new author in his own right"'. Like any other adaptation Vijay Anand has done many interesting additions as well as omissions in the film.

It is an attempt to analyze the novel *The Guide* by comparing with the film *Guide* by taking in to consideration major parameters like setting, characters, opening, closing and narrative technique used in the film and the novel.

Setting of the novel & the film

R.K.Narayan's all novels are located in South Indian fictitious place Malgudi, *The Guide* depicts railway station, Raju's School, home and market in Malgudi very artistically. It also describes remote village in rural area Mangala very vividly. While the film is set in Udaipur City instead of Malgudi. Udaipur is a tourist place which justifies the character of Raju as a Tourist Guide. The film has been beautifully shot in various location of Rajasthan. The creative cinematography clearly speaks for itself. When novel is adapted for film it becomes important to take the audience into consideration. Malgudi place may not have appealed all the audience as it is fictitious place whereas Udaipur is nationally and inter nationally known for its historical monuments and lakes. Mangala Village is also replaced by Anjanpur village in the film.

Opening of the novel and the film

In the opening of the novel, Raju is at Barbar's shop in a village. The man gazes reverentially at his face. Raju feels amused and embarrassed, then talks with villagers. He is happy to hear the human voice again. He had had his last shave only two days before and paid for it with the hard-earned coins of his jail life. While movie begins with prison scene in the opening of the film, Raju (Dev Anand) come out of jail. Then he collects his luggage and starts to walk. He sees two ways. One which goes to his city where his mother, beloved and friends may be waiting for him and other way goes to village named Anjanpur, name itself is symbolic Anjan means nobody knows, He thinks about his crime

and decides to go to village Anjanpur, where nobody knows him and he doesn't know anybody.. He walks toward the village and the song "Yaha kaun hai tera, musafir jayenge kaha" adds strong emotional effect, here music plays very important role to reveal his state of mind.

Characters

There are many characters in the novel like Raju, Rosie, Raju's parents, Velan, Marco, Mani, Gaffur etc. But the major characters in the novel are Raju, Rosie and Marco.

R.K.Narayan's novel is based on the selfish journey of Railway Raju, a man who cheats himself and all those who surrounded him for reasons best known to him and in the end turns into a demi-god who ironically sacrifice himself for an illusory cause of others. But the screen adaptation of *The Guide* differs a lot on the outlook of Railway Raju. In the film, Dev Anand plays the role of Raju, as a Guide. The self-effacing man becomes a sacrificing philanthropist who takes charge of Rosie's life and changes it forever.

Rosie is a reader's predicament. Various elements are quite strangely mixed in her. She remains Dusky rather than bright being seen through the film. Marco is also only a two dimensional figure rather than character morally upright and studious. While in film Marco is treated as a villainous, shrewd, adulterer and grumpy to justify Rosie's character and to arouse sympathy for her, It is a common structure of a commercial film to have hero, heroin, villain and some twist in the story to make movie commercially successful.

Velan comes out as a representative of rural India with changed name Bhola to suit his character. In the novel Raju's father plays very important role in bringing up Raju. There is a lot of description of Raju's child hood, his teacher and school while in the film all these events are missing. It may be because in the novel there is no time constrained while on the other hand in the film we see there is time constrained by compression of events into two hours or three hours in film. Compression of entire novel in two or three hours is the art which director has; therefore director is an independent creative artist. The director of *Guide* compressed nearly 247 pages novel into nearly 3 hours. Others characters are off secondary importance like Gaffur, Mani are portrayed well in the novel while in the film they are less important.

Narrative Technique

Whole story of the novel is narrated in the first person through Raju whereas some events in the movie are narrated in the first person by Raju and some events are narrated by Nalini / Rosie to avoid monotony of male voice and to raise Rosie's character to the level of Raju.

Closing of the novel and the film

There is tremendous difference in the end of the novel and film, in the novel, Raju becomes weak after his twelve days fast for villagers. Doctors warn him again and again to break the fast but he is not ready to break the fast. All night crowd stays with swami. On Twelfth Day morning at five thirty he asks the man near him to help. He gets up .He is held by Velan and another man on the other side .He goes down the steps of the river, halting for breath. He tells, 'Velan , it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs----' and he sags down (Narayan 247) Narayan ends the novel ambiguously it is not clear whether swami dies at the end or survives? It seems that Narayan left it on the readers whether it rains or it was only illusion of swami. It depends on the readers whether they believe in superstition that it rains and Raju dies or believe in medical science that doctors might have saved Raju. While Vijay Anand has taken freedom to vary from the novel in the end entire village becomes like a fair. Village becomes like a pilgrimage. Rosie and Raju's mother reunite with Raju. At the end of the movie it rains and all the villagers' joy had no bounds and Swami dies in the ending. Film answers many questions of the spiritual bound and ends with the note to have faith in God and spirituality.

Conclusion

In short, the film is different from the novel but it became super hit at that time. When the film is played on television, the channels score a high TRPs as *Guide* is seen to have an ending which is heart rendering as well as answers many questions of the spiritual bound. It won three times the best film awards, but R.K.Narayan was not happy with this film. So in Life magazine of London, he expressed his views in article titled 'Misguided *The Guide*'. He showed his dissatisfaction towards the movie. Perhaps these changes were not fathomable to R.K.Narayan and hence he disowned the cinematic version of his brainchild.

To conclude it can be said that the film *Guide* uses several aspects of Bollywood cinema, music and narration are the strong sources to express emotion in the film. In this way the dynamics of visual medium visibly alters the structure and content of the novel. Movement from literature to film translation from one medium to another brings new perspectives and responses to the source novel.

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