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## **FILM ADAPTATIONS IN THE SELECTED PARTITION**

### **NOVELS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Novels and films are media to express human life in terms of conflict with self, society, men, Nature and supernatural forces. Novels and films are two significant domains of transforming culture to literature. The concept of film being story based soon introduced the notion of film adaptation, which is the transfer of a printed text in a literary genre film. Transcreativity from print to screen is not new, it was prevailing from time immemorial. Novels facilitated through words whereas with subtle introduction of visual imagery films convey lot of meaning. “With many tools at disposal films can create an environment in which character’s emotions and inner conflicts become visual. Novels provide an unlimited space for readers’ imagination. Reader can create a whole world or a complete film in his mind through the lenses of imagination, since imagination has no boundaries” (Lavanya). With each reading of the text new interpretations become possible. According to ‘Post Modernist’ theories with every reading a new reader is born and there are no close meanings but only interpretations. It reasserts arbitrariness of word and ideas which are ground for different interpretations of the same text. The idea mystified in symbols and the veiled references to different aspect of life that is decoded through the films. Film adaptations unravel the text with different angles and create new interpretations which appeal to the imagination of the audience .Transfer of novel into film made it an ideal medium to communicate positive social values and progressive political messages even to the illiterate people.

“Often one might come across people who are of the opinion that novel is better than film or vice-versa” (To films and adaptations). This happens because while reading or watching a movie, reader has his own image about the text or movie in his mind. At this point it is important to understand the background of film adaptation. Through this it would be clear how adaptation has evolved and how the manner of adaptation has changed. Adaptation history goes back to late 18 century when novels were adapted for stage performances like ‘The strange case of Mr. Hyde and Jekyll’ which was staged in 1887. Later early in 19 century same was adapted in film with few changes. No doubt that difference of opinion was always there while transferring pages to screen.

“Melies who was a French film director in the early 19 century took Jules Verne’s science fiction for movie adaptation”(Adapting to adaptations). With the same name ‘A Trip to The Moon’ (1902). He produced classic films based on literary master pieces like, Gulliver’s Travels and Robinson Crusoe. ‘The strange case of Mr. Hyde and Jekyll’ was adapted into film in 1908 by William N.Seling (USA), Victor Flemings ‘Gone with the Wind’, Anne Lee’s ‘Sense and Sensibility’ are also based on novels. Influential film artist D.W.Griffith once said: ‘Early movies were met with praise not only for their innovation but for the promise they offered in educating their audience’. It is for this reason films appeal to common men.

Films and novels provide a media to revisit past and forecast future in which mind, memory and imagination play pivotal role. Popularity of film adaptation got so popular that nearly each film was based on classics such as ‘Of Mice and Men’, ‘Good Bye, Gone with the winds ,Jane nyre’ etc. According to 1992 statistics 85% of all Oscar winning ‘Best pictures’ were adaptations. Some of zeitgeist novels adapted into film are ‘Slaughter house five’, ‘Catch 22’, One Flew over Cuckoo’s Nest etc. Films and novels both capture the contemporary issues of human life.

Adaptation received criticism on the grounds of borrowing ideas from elsewhere which lacks originality of plot and novelties of idea. Virginia Woolf (1926) in ‘the movies and reality claimed that alliance between cinema and literature was ‘unnatural and disastrous’ to both, but the short end of the stick would ultimately be the original work since adaptation hurt the books that are being adapted’. Film takes the storyline from the novel in which ground work has already been done by the author. Films are created with the motto to sell familiar things which give pleasure to audience because they can relate themselves with what

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is happening in the film. Here one question arises whether ‘film adaptations do justice to the original work or is film presentation an improvised form?’ This becomes more important when iconic work like ‘Lord of The Rings’, ‘Twilight’ and ‘Harry Potter ‘are taken for film adaptation. Author Christine Geraghty focuses less on the way books are adapted and the process involved, instead more on the ways in which the film adaptation cause us as viewers to recall things by watching them.

The awful moment of 1947 partition gave rise to many writers in the Asian subcontinent to write about angst of partition. These novels are partition novels. To name a few great writer from both sides of the border are Krishna Sobti, Bhasham Sahni, Chaman Nahal, Manohar Malgaonkar, Attia Hosain, Sadat Hasan Manto etc. Urvarshi Butalia describes the monstrosity of the situation as the partition left one million dead, 75000 women abducted, raped and turning twelve million displaced into refugee status (Butalia).

The present proposed research work is concerned with selected film adaptation of partition novels as depicted in table 1.

Table 1- Selected 1947 Partition Novels adapted into Films

Serial Number	Novel	Writer	Year of publication	Film	Director	Release date
1	Train To Pakistan	Khushwant Singh	1956	Train To Pakistan	Pamela Rooks	1998
2	Ice Candy Man	Bapsi Sidhwa	1989	Earth	Deepa Mehta	1999
3	Pinjar	Amrita Pritam	2009	Pinjar	Chandra Prakash Dwivedi	2003
4	Midnight’s Children	Salman Rushdie	2013	Midnight’s Children	Deepa Mehta	2013
5	Race Of My Life	Milkha Singh	2013	Bhaag Milkha Bhaag	Prakash Mehara	2013

Reading about the Apparatus theory, Auteur theory Sergei Eisenstein, Andre Bazin French wave and watching the movies which have been adapted into film from novels like My fair lady, God Father, Omkara, 2 States etc aroused the curiosity in the researcher to delve deep into the topic of film adaptations based on novels. “Christian Metz, discussing film narrativity, writes: film tells us continuous stories; it says- things that could be conveyed also in the language of words .Yet it says them differently. There is a reason for the possibility as well as for the necessity of adaptation” (Bulgozdilmola).

It is researcher’s interest to understand nuances and intricacies of novels and the impact of putting them into the audio visual form through films.

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **International journal of Humanities and Cultural studies; Salman Rushdie’s Midnight Children; Revisiting India’s past.**

The purpose of this was to present how Salman Rushdie has woven historical events into fiction .The novel addresses political and social problems of modern India. Novel presents life of Salem Sinai who was born with magical qualities at the stroke of midnight of 15 August 1947 and how his life is woven with historical events. His life is metaphor for history of Indian microcosm in macrocosm.

#### **Introduction To film and Adaptations English literature essay.**

Why adaptation is required; novel works as a ground for film .reason being the authors of books have already worked on story through their experience and knowledge. Adaptation from novel aims to educate illiterate people through celluloid since visual impact is longer lasting and also they can see and understand. It gives knowledge about culture and literary heritage. Films tax less on viewer’s imagination because during making of film many brains are involved. Its best example is LORDS OF RINGS [2001- 2003], original book published in 1954- 55. It was nominated for the OSCAR and for BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY.

#### **The Other Side of Silence: Urvarshi Butalia.**

Through the diaries, interviews, experiences and memories of partition, trauma Butalia explored the silenced voices of children scattered families and women during the partition of 1947.

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A significant work on how and why partition happened the leading up events before partition is *Inventing Boundaries; Gender Politics and the partition of India* edited by Mushirul Hasan.

### **Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan: The Heteroclit world of Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus in a Sikh village.**

In the novel 'Train to Pakistan' Singh describes the division of united India into "Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan" (1) through an omniscient narrator. This study fills the gap in research on patrician literature of India and Pakistan. Novels from Indo-Pak have not been studied as a dialogic sites referring to heteroglossia as a tool to explore multiple voices in a schismatic region.

### **Love and sacrifice in the Time of Partition: A study of Khushwant Singh's 'Train to Pakistan'**

Partition was most cataclysmic event in the history- The decision of partition was taken into hurry and the interest of the masses who were directly going to be affected and their relocation were not take into consideration. Amidst this atmosphere of communal frenzy, there were people who retained their human values and did not take part in mass killing. It is evident through the character of Juggut, who sacrifices his own life in order to save the train which was going to Pakistan.

### **Postmodern Philosophy- Brian Duignan**

It came into light in the mid 20 century rejecting the philosophy of modernism. Post modernism asserts that text has different meanings; it is not inherent in written lines only. It is supported by the work of Latin-American writer George Luis Borges and Gabriel Garcia Marquez joins mythical elements with day to day life giving rise to magic realism.

### **Ice Candy Man: A saga of partition pain**

Lenny a Parsi girl crippled from polio lived in rich area of Lahore .Lenny has retinue in which Shanta was very close to her, she admires her. Lenny has a nightmare about the slaughter which is metaphor of impending violence of partition. In a family dinner she heard about the powerful political leaders like Nehru Gandhi and Jinnah who were involved in freedom movement. Novel also explains about the neutral reaction of Parsi community during the uproar.

## **India or The ice candy man: Page to screen**

She begins her narrative through the eyes of Lenny who was witnessing the changes in the psyche of people around her. Sidhwa unravels the plight of women at all levels of society.

Women body became the battleground to write the victory by the warring community. Women became the victim of communal frenzy during the upheaval.

## **The gendered experience of partition and the politics of post colonial**

Novel Pinjar exposes the women identity with reference to abducted or relocated women during the partition time. This cataclysmic event had created wound on the psyche of women characters in the novel like Pooro, Lajjo, Kammo and mad woman echoing the tragic process of relocation in which their bodies became yardstick to defame family honour.

## **The theme of partition in Salman Rushdie's: Midnight's Children**

Novel depicts the journey of India covering the period of seventy years of pre and post independent era and division of East Bengal. Novel gives insight to the readers through the chaos and digressions in order to depict the true picture of confusion and suffering of people in partition era. The story is woven within the canvas of historical event of Indian partition along with magic realism. Salim Senai, who took birth exactly at the moment India got freedom and partition that is on 15 August 1947. He was born with magical quality of hearing of those children who were born at particular time of midnight.

## **Need of the research**

Great work on the pain of partition has been done till now and same goes with the audio visual depiction of partition in the form of films but still there is a lacuna. Fewer attempts have been made to adapt novels into films which are based on partition exclusively. This hiatus is clear to the researcher after going through the journals, articles, essays, research papers, thesis and films which are based on partition novels.

## **Aims and objectives**

Primary interest of the researcher lies in finding out whether the movie version of the selected partition novel has succeeded in upholding the thematic authenticity of the original novels. Researcher will also explore the effect of technology in film making which have

capacity to increase or decrease the aesthetic value of the work. In the present work Researcher will delve deep into the commercial aspect of movie making and attempt will also be made to evaluate communicative powers of novels and films.

### **Hypothesis**

- The use of modern technology in film making has improvised the post -colonial themes of novels and films.
- Audio Visual media is more powerful in communicating subaltern voices.
- Films have succeeded in delivering the message of human values whenever these are at low ebb.
- Commercial aspect in film adaptations which has capacity to enhance or degenerate the literary text.
- Film adaptations are true to the original selected text.
- Educative values in film and novels.
- Post colonial perspective and socio cultural conflict.

### **Research Methodology**

Selected partition novels and films which comprise the primary sources will be closely examined and a special focus will be laid on the secondary sources to expound the topic of study using library research method. Researcher will examine films again and again to understand different modes of representation and reception.

### **Result and Discussion**

The three primary origins and explanations for Partition of the Indian Subcontinent are Muslim Extremism, Congress Patriotism, and British Colonialism, one of the most terrible occurrences of the twentieth century, on both sides of the border, the Holocaust triggered widespread migration, with the issue of how many people were unable to cross remaining unresolved. On both sides, India and Pakistan, people were not merely slain but slaughtered. Actually, Separation meant mass murders, robberies, assaults, and damage; psychologically, it was a horrific experience for everyone who could think and feel; and intellectually, it represented the loss of humanity, brotherhood, and regard for one's fellow human being. Many historians and theorists have labeled Jinnah, the proponent of the Two-Nation theory, as a victim of personality conflict. Fear of the Hindu

majority ruling over the Muslim minority is thought to have fueled his "two-nation theory." Thus, one of the three key factors behind Partition was the use of religion by modernist elite leaders to promote Separatism or Communalism.

On the other hand, nationalism or the Indian National Movement was organized to overthrow colonial rule and establish self-government in the country. However, the communal spirit harmed the country's strength here as well. The second key factor responsible for Partition is misunderstandings and misinterpretations between Hindu and Muslim leaders, as well as the poor execution of the Indian National Movement. Muslim elite leaders were adamant in their demand for a Muslim nation, and Hindu leaders were equally adamant.

The shrewd British Imperialists' divide and rule policy worked in India, but it failed in the rest of the world. It was simple for the British to create a schism between Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim communities, which were culturally distinct but socially united. From Bengal, they began a policy of cultural segregation. Separate Muslim electorates, as suggested by them, were enough to stir up separatism. The early announcement of the "withdrawal of power" caused consternation among leaders and the general public. As a result, the British injected communal chaos and a lack of planning into India's long-awaited independence. As a result, imperialism is the third major contributing factor to the subcontinent's partition.

Partition's consequences are just as important to consider as the reasons for partition. It has helped to grow the poisonous tree of 'communalism' in the minds of Indian and Pakistani citizens. It has shattered the dreams of 'Surajya' held by the martyrs among the freedom fighters, not only geographically but also politically. Those who gave their lives to ensure India's future generations' freedom could never have imagined a divided country. India became a 'Swaraj' on August 15, 1947, but it has yet to reach the pinnacle of 'Surajya' after six decades, owing in part to communalism.

When the arms are chopped off, it is said that the pain is felt by both the body and the arms equally. On both sides of the border, the pain of Partition was reflected in various art forms such as novels, poetry, drama, essays, painting, dances, and, most recently, films. The agony, torture, pangs, and pain of this most disturbing event have found the most expression in fiction, specifically social and political novels. Even six decades later, the expression of tragedy has not changed.

The majority of novels dealing with Partition's beast are at odds with humanity and communal attitudes, which are ultimately defeated by secularism. Many of the stories conclude with love and goodness triumphing over the evils of the time. They start with communal harmony and progress to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, doubt, suspects, disharmony, and man's moral degeneration. All of the stories, however, come to a peaceful and relaxed conclusion with eternal love, fraternity, and brotherhood.

The current research focuses on four novels: Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (the first major Indian English novel on Partition), Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy Man* (the major work of a



Pakistan-based Parsee female writer), Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar* (a Punjabi, Hindi novel depicting problems faced by women in the pre-Partition and post-Partition period), Sulman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, and Milkha Singh's *The Race of My Life: an autobiography*.

In Khushwant Singh's book *Train to Pakistan*, the mindset of the Mano Majra, a tranquil small town, changes quickly when they hear about Partition from strangers and how religious peace and, as a consequence, their lives are altered and transformed overnight. The arrival of two trains from Pakistan conveying the dead of Sikhs and Hindus, which paused at Mano Majra, sparked suspicion and unease. Hukumchand's futile efforts to block the conflict and Iqbal's retreat into courageous dreams, Jugga, a local dacoit, rises to the frontline in conducting the heroic death act of rescuing the train boarded by his Muslim beloved and other Muslims, eclipsing all the forceful, influential, and skilled characters. He does this at the expense of his own life. As a consequence, love prevails over religious and community animosity.

*Ice-Candy Man*, a novel by Bapsi Sidhwa, depicts the trauma and its impact on the lives of various communities in 1947 Lahore. The novel can be described as a portrayal of a minority complex characterized by distrust and fear, as well as the strategies employed to avoid conflict and death. It also tells the story of Parsis, who worked on a plan to settle with whoever was appointed as the government. The desecration of the Ayah demonstrates how women have been used to demonstrate a community's power by murdering values such as trust, faith, friendship, brotherhood, and affection.

*Pinjar* by Amrita Pritam begins with the kidnapping of Pooro, a Hindu woman, by Rashid, a Muslim youth, during the Pre-Partition period and her parents' rejection of her. She returns to her abductor and accepts him as her life partner, bearing the scars of orthodoxy and fear. Pooro is dealing with the effects of dislocation and identity shift. Pooro's brother's wife is also abducted by a Muslim later during the Partition period. However, in the name of rehabilitation, the orthodoxy is weakened and flexibility is introduced. She is rescued by Pooro and Rashid. Pooro refuses to return to India, opting instead for Pakistan and the family of Rashid.

Most Partition novelists have either experienced or witnessed the trauma and have narrated the tragedy in true and vivid colors, with grave strokes of pain and pangs. The majority of them have described events that occurred shortly before or after the partition, with the exception of *Pinjar*, who began in 1936 before the partition. Because the authors of the four novels included in this study have all dealt with the agitation of Partition in some way, their creative endeavors have reflected their individual experiences in unique ways.

The portrayal of migration – the displacement of millions of people across the Indo-Pak border – is a prominent feature of these novels. The story of migration, or pre-migration and post-migration refugee camps, is told in a heart-wrenching manner in all four novels. Along with migration, the authors have not forgotten to include descriptions of heinous acts such as looting and arson, as well as murders, kidnappings, and rapes that occurred in the most heinous manner during

this period. Only dead bodies of those migrating to India were carried on the ghost train. The abduction of Hindu girls in the refugee 'Kafila' by Muslims in *Pinjar* and a similar train arriving at Lahore Railway station from Gurudaspur carrying corpses and sacks full of chopped breasts of women in *Ice-Candy Man* are just a few of the many examples.

Three of these novels also depict the loss of identity that both men and women experienced during the Partition movement. In *Ice-Candy Man* Shanta, Lenny's Hindu Ayah is turned into a prostitute and renamed 'Mumtaz' by the *Ice-Candy Man*, and Pooro is rechristened as Hamida in *Pinjar*. These characters refuse to accept their new identities and live a quiet existence. They don't fight back because they're either alone in the enemy's horde or are unable to react. What matters, however, is their 'desire to live,' to survive, and to continue living. Death is something that no one wishes to experience. Pooro was the only one who could adjust to his new situation and cope with life. Sahni departs from Harnam Singh and Iqbal in order to take his story to a new level. Shanta is rescued and rehabilitated, as opposed to Pooro, who was given the opportunity to return to her family but turned it down. Shanta continues her quest to reclaim her former identity, with the possibility of crossing the border to rejoin her people.

During the holocaust, all of the novels highlight the higher literate class, bureaucrats, imperialists, and communists' retreating steps, rejection of action, or disinterest. Hukumchand, Iqbal, Richard, Shethi couple, Pooro, and Ramchand's parents all appear defeated and retreat when action is required. Instead, because of their second or third place in the hierarchy, illiterate, semi-literate children and those from the economically lower class, who are also in more trouble, emerge as heroes in their own little spaces.

For example, Jugga, a local Hindu dacoit, risked his life to save the whole train going to Pakistan; Lenny and her God Mother find ways to help the Ayah; Harnam Singh and Banto are assisted and provided protection by Rajjo, a Muslim lady; and Laajo is helped to flee her intended victims by Rashid, the Muslim kidnapper of Pooro. These acts can be described as a love and fraternity motif that exists among India's and Pakistan's less educated and economically disadvantaged. The upper class disregards the emergency and the mediocre act for the sake of love and brotherhood in all four novels.

The central theme of all of the novels is 'love,' which serves as the driving force behind the text's climax. For example, in *Train to Pakistan*, Jugga's love for Nooran motivates him to risk his life in order to save his beloved, and as a result, the entire train bound for Pakistan is saved; in *Ice Candy Man*, the protagonist, *Ice Candy Man*'s love and affection for Shanta motivate him to act as an antagonist, a villain, and abductand rape Shanta in order to possess her; and in *Pinjar* Pooro's abduction by Rashid, love is one of Pooro's hatred turns into admiration as the novel progresses. She begins to recognize his inherent good qualities, and instead of returning to India to join her Hindu

family, she chooses to stay with him. Interestingly, love and affection bloom between the rival communities – Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs – in each case, without exception.

All of these novels were adapted into films by experienced or upcoming but ambitious filmmakers and their teams after a significant period of time had passed since their publication. They might be able to help the novel reach non-reader groups through the silver screen, as cinema has grown in popularity as a source of information and entertainment, owing to its sole capability: moving, talking visuals.

Partition, India's greatest tragedy, has been the subject of numerous films made by India's film industry, which is one of the world's largest. Surprisingly, this is a sobering fact. This could be due to the fact that in a country like India, where communal riots are constantly in the news, Partition is regarded as a very sensitive issue for screen for mixed audiences. Of course, one of the major consequences of Partition is a large number of films about terrorism. But this is because no particular community will be compelled to sympathize with a terrorist or a gang of terrorists, and the director may always reduce the impression by adding previously damaged persons from the terrorist's neighborhood. Another reason is that a terrorist can be depicted as a lone wolf or a small group. Partition, on the other hand, cannot be dismissed as a minor or isolated event because it impacted a large portion of both nations as well as a large number of people on both sides of the border. As a result, the horror re-enacted on screen may rekindle the feelings of those who have personally experienced the trauma or who have lost loved ones and possessions as a result of it.

When a filmmaker creates a film for the Indian market, he or she considers a number of factors, particularly if the film is commercial. He embellishes his film with appealing sets and costumes, various shades of color, and melodrama, songs, and dance to make it appealing to audiences from all walks of life.

Even though the directors and crew of the films based on Partition lacked firsthand experience with the traumas and pages of Partition, they remained faithful to the events depicted in the novel.

It's also worth noting that adaptation has its own set of rules and regulations, particularly when it comes to turning a novel into a film. Both the novel and the film have similarities and differences in their stories. The story is the similarity. The novel provides the filmmaker with food for thought, an idea, and a concept. The director gives this story a specific shape that fits into a specific time frame.

Novels and films are comparable in that they replicate human behaviors and facilitate their maker's and audience's delight and happiness. They generally maintain the same narrative conventions and take their audiences to a fantastical realm. Flashbacks, conversations, speeches, illusions, and a stream of awareness are all used to obliterate or alter time. Both arrange their subjects in a logical framework, which is the storyline of the tale.

## Conclusion

Films and television shows are slowly and continuously displacing print. It would not be strange if a book became well-known as a result of its adaptation into a film or television series in this new era, which is more technologically oriented. The issue of shifts, fidelity, or changes would be ignored for the time being.

The cinematic adaptation of any literary book is becoming more important as a teaching tool for acoustic literature. Every visual text gives the study of the literary text a fresh push. What matters is how the director's message reaches the viewer, not what is kept or removed. The book, which is an imitation of human behavior, is made more intriguing and understandable for a larger audience by its adaptation—films.

In terms of each other, both the print text and the visual text have a complementary position. But it is also true that every contemporary work is as if anticipating its sequela in its movie adaptation.

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