



## MUNSHI PREM CHAND AND HIS LITERATURE IN HINDI CINEMA

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Cinema and Literature both are 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. But whenever the question of particularization arises, especially for comparative study of any specific film based on novel then it is essential to fix some parts, points for evaluation and set up some ideal standard and criteria for assessment. For access to any kind of decision about their depiction of social reality and influencing power can be easier through reading. Premchand's *Godan* which was written in the year 1936. It was his last finished, complete novel afterwards he wrote *Mangalsutra* also but unfortunately it was left incomplete, because he took last breathe on the eighth October 1936 that is why some critic supposed and assumed *Godan* as the authors' own *Godan* at the time of passing away from the completion of the journey from the world to heaven. Premchand's *Godan*, a literary novel and its adaptation into a film are unique but the artistic excellence attained by each is certainly of a different meaning and magnitude. Premchand's writing style seems changed in this work in comparison to the others. His peculiar style of writing get more sharpened in this work, i.e. modified and transformed in matured way. In an introductory foreword of the book '*Premchand ke Pattra*' the editor of '*Hans*' magazine and a great critic Rajendra Yadav says that Premchand seems to be a formal writer before his fiction '*Godan*'. After the publication of *Godan* and *Mangalsutra* that was half finished he got himself identified with the problems as a bearer of the same for his own living.

The book *Godan*, a masterpiece in which the theme of social evil's is successfully depicted and marvelously 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. It is believed or considered that it is as repentance of knowingly or unknowingly committed inhumanity, sin and crime of the past deeds and there was another belief that it will free the human beings from the cycle of the birth and death. By performing this ritual the soul will reach heaven to attain salvation. 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.

*Godan* film was based on the famous novel *Godan* written by the great author Premchand. 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 hours, fifty seven minutes and twenty five second. The adaptation was done approx. twenty six years after the publication of novel. Premchand known as the emperor of the novelists in the history of Indian literature who composed *Godan* as his unique creation. It has been translated in many languages of the world.

Premchand was the writer of the common men. He gave the words to the common men's feelings as he tried to transform their lives by giving them special treatment and preference through his writings so it is obvious to mention that it reflects social-reality of his time in all his writings. Especially and distinctly *Godan* is peculiar in theme and treatment among others. It is the greatest creation among all great novels because it got the true reflection of his maturity and his own experiences of the cruel inhuman world. As *Godan* was the last finished novel of his literary career so it has been assumed by critics that in *Godan* Premchand filled all the gaps of his failure in matured and concentrated way. The novel *Godan* as a piece of literary art reflects Premchand's desire and anxiety to reform the structure of the society on the basis of economic equilibrium.

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. There is a fact according to the text that Hori's second daughter Rupa was married to an old rich man named Ramsewak an owner of a number of cows. She had sent a cow to her father's house. There the question arises why the delay occurred for the access of the cow to its destination. It is observed that this event has not been incorporated in the film, though the intention of both the respective creators was ultimately the same. They wanted to present Hori's longing for want of a cow and has shown how an Indian peasant dies without his unfulfilled desire. "She asked her husband. The

following day a cowherd left for Hori's village with the cow. "Tell father I've sent the cow for Mangal," she instructed the cowherd" (Premchand 334).

*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 through out 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 a book written with great compassion and equally great, if mute, indignation against the whole army of village exploiters" (Rai 40).

It was shown in the movie and the text both. If any farmer or peasant borrowed any type of loan from those (*zamidars*) Bourgeois, their own life alongwith the life of their family members could have to surrender automatically under the dominance due to its repercussion with the life of their forth coming successors. The farmers were compelled to face the consequences of this curse known as the Feudalistic system. They had to bear the burden of injustice until and unless they would lose their own land, becoming the labours of them. It happened too when if only once they had taken loan from them. It shows that to take birth as a farmer was to bear the curse till death and their life was filled with melancholy. *Godan's* Hori had to pay the tax and revenue for his ancestors" loan due to it. *Gobar* had to bear the consequences of his father"s honesty and poverty.

Premchand used abundance of characters in his novel and all of them were typically varied in nature and truly representatives of Indian society. It can be observed that variety of people was living their respective life. Every character had its good and evil tendencies. The author had balanced each and every character perfectly in an adequate manner. It is neither extreme in goodness, nor worst in badness. He left them remained the human being as it is. Neither let him or her treat as God nor as a Devil. In *Gaban* and *Sevasadan* it was used as the medium for revealing and disclosing the hidden truth but in *Godan* he showed the indulgence of corruption in the contemporary Indian society. These perspective and hidden intentions of the landlords and feudals were the personal benefit for collection of money. In *Godan* Mr. Tankha used his publication house for his own benefits being a capitalist of a mill, he used it for threatening other businessmen and establishing fake fame for arising the riots in the society. By this Premchand signified and revealed the declining condition of printing press as the faithful profession to which he attached himself till the last breath of his life. Before a month of his death in September 1936 he published a last column about '*Mahajani Sabhyata*'.

*Godan* film and text both are the outcome of their creator"s protest-ful, revolting mind against such social imbalance of sophisticated and lower, down-trodden class. It means there is Marxist outlook and ideology have been poured into the description.

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.

Premchand was the ultimate writer of the Indian poverty. He has presented the poverty of Indian farmers in real sense than any other novelist. Like his other works *Godan* was the lively treatise on the issue of poverty in Indian villages. It was the fundamental problem and root cause of other problems generated through poverty. It promoted due to interlocking the other social problems like exploitation, unmatched and child marriage. The author himself was the victim of poverty so he could pour into real experiences of his own life with blending of imaginative characters, its causes and consequences through his writings.

The visual representation of *Godan* also shows the arranged marriage of Sona with all rituals including *sangeet*. Their protesting attitude is not shown clearly by the film maker. The established dowry system is shown through the scene where the deal on the basis of Rupa's marriage was fixed with an elder man in comparison to an appropriate aged man for marriage. It can be said in other words that the marriage was an unmatched marriage. Hori and Dhaniya were not willing to perform the marriage but they had not any other option except it otherwise they would lose their lands on which their life had been surviving. So they left it on destiny of the girl like the other helpless people.

Both the author and the film maker showed in the established superstition's belief in society in their respective creation, as the concept of using the black thread for the cow's safety when Dhaniya asked Sona to bring Black thread for tying up around the neck of the cow. This thing shows the caring, and concerning attitude towards a cow but it is unavoidable fact that such behaviour and belief leads to many other superstitious activities, which could harm the new scientific approach and logical thinking of the society. It worked as a barrier in the way of social progress.

The film maker incorporated the filming techniques and tools with camera and light. The use of village scenes was perfectly used like the traditional wall painting on the walls of huts. When the comparison of the movie with text is carried over some facts have been found which were dealt accurately, truly as copied from the text and some are totally cut short by the film maker though the central theme has been dealt beautifully but by observation some differences in portrayal of the text have been found separately in them.

Jai Prakash Chouksey, the renowned film critic has written in his book *Cinema ka Sach* that the film based on *Godan* was 'shabby' (Fuhad) and exaggeration of dramaturgy has ended the meaningfulness of the text.

The visual re-presentation of any fiction is impossible without the use of technology or tools in collective forms. The ending of the *Godan* movie has been magnificently adopted in visuals. When Hori was close to the death, he was re-calling and re-memorizing the pleasant moments of the past including the dark unpleasant moments memories of also like the death of cow etc (See.Fig.1). This scene had become more beautiful and marvelous with the help of the unavoidable tools of cinema i.e. the camera and light. In few frames portrayal of a number of memories have been made possible very easily and intelligently. This is the positive point of visual representation, in which *Godan's* film maker used it for proving socio- reality of the time. By adoption of this type of scene by the film maker could shorten many number of pages of Premchand's novel. In this short cut procedure of the film some kind of fictional reality about society could not be fully presented through the frames but in a gist it could be presented in the cinematic form in an indicating way (See.Fig.2).

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Fig.1: A peasant Hori's love and pleasure towards a cow.



Fig.2: Technical superiority of the film over the text. The imagination of longing for a cow at the time of Hori's death.