

## Revisiting R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* on Silver Screen

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### ABSTRACT

*It is evident that an adaptation can be original or unoriginal but its presence is inarguable. Therefore this study does not make an attempt to see why a novel is adapted for cinematic projection, but tries to assess how effectively the adaptation is done. It is clear that the investigation is biased by both the eye and the eyepiece. R.K. Narayan adopts the individual as his reference and looks inward, affecting a microcosmic view of society and its problems. He showcases the idiosyncrasies of the characters and superimposes them on one another to come up with a layered structure of societal inconsistency and prejudice. On the other hand, Vijay Anand is inclined towards a top-down approach, treating issues and personalities first and then individuals and specific problems. For this purpose, this paper focuses on a famous work, 'Guide', by R. K. Narayan) and its adaptation for the movie Guide. It also examines how the film is different from its original source and how far a novel is adapted for cinematic projection, but tries to assess how the changes in the adaptation connote different insinuations and subtleties. It also explores how far the changes are independent of its original source and discusses the impact of these cinematic changes.*

*Keywords: cinematic adaptation; postcolonial; feminism; live-in relations; women empowerment*

### INTRODUCTION

Right from its very beginning, cinema has turned to literature for inspiration. In bringing classic literary works to screen, film makers have often adapted the popular and famous literary works of great litterateurs. Though much cherished, the endeavor is fraught with trials and tribulations. More often than not, the effort invites flak, for regardless of the degree to which the moviemakers adhere to the original text; certain deviations invariably sneak through into the tapestry of cinematic medium. The changes that thus occur between the narrative and cinematic versions are rarely viewed sympathetically and it is the celluloid version that gets the rude stick of criticism. This convention of holding the cinematic

adaptations in censure dates back to George Bluestone's (1957, p. 62) pioneering work on *Novels into Films* which suggested that "despite superficial simplicities, the movie and the novel are essentially antithetical forms and that a film adaptation will, even at its very best, be a lesser work of art than its source." Though there could not be any undermining of the monolithic importance of Bluestone's remark, it seemed to have focused exclusively on American studio products and the movies of the fifties – a period considered puerile with regard to the movies made in the USA in that period.

Even if we were to shrug aside the embedded censure in the above statement, transposing a classic onto the celluloid screen has traditionally been equated with belittling and diluting the purity of art that finds its true spirit reflected within the expansiveness of printed pages but fails to recreate its seamless magic on the widescreen. For some of the connoisseurs of art, the attempt insinuates smothering of the art on the altar of entertainment. Hannah Arendt (1989, p. 10) observes such fears as concerning "the imminent death of art at the hands of entertainment" Virginia Woolf (1994, p. 38), a great exponent of stream-of-consciousness and a noted critic, is also of a similar view when she says that cinematic adaptation "is threatening to devour and/or destroy its literary source." It is not just the critics but authors also who respond similarly to the phenomenon.

That the authors have never felt at ease while sparing their work from its printed confinements for their tinsel screen projections, has, in fact, never been a secret. Even in the times of crass materialistic spirit that seems to colour all art forms in worldly hues, authors have expressed their reluctance in letting their narratives be filmed. The latest in the list of such nervous writers who harbor motherly trepidation before handing their work to moviemakers is Amitav Ghosh who tacitly quips: "Let's say I'm in no hurry to let go of my baby..." (The Hindu 2011). These views mainly reflect that there has been a practice of giving cultural and aesthetic precedence to the source against which the adaptation is done and then judge how good or bad it is vis-à-vis the text.

Amidst such widespread resistance to let a story soar from the confinement of printed pages to the spectacle of silver screen, there are a few hopefuls who believe that such endeavours are not just inevitable but even desirable. One such voice comes from Andrew Dudley who believes that "it is time for adaptation studies to take a sociological turn" (Dudley 2000, p.35.); and another critic Stam (2005, p. 46) who recommends such practices believes the sociology of adaptation explores "the complex interchange between eras, styles, nations, and subjects". He goes on to differentiate three types of film adaptation—borrowing, intersection, and fidelity of transformation, with increasing adherence to the original. Andrew further endorses "a broader definition of adaptation and a sociology that takes into account the commercial apparatus, the audience, and the academic culture industry (Stam 2005, p.46)" Thomas Leitch goes on to observe that most commentators accept too readily the premise that discussions of adaptation should focus on essential differences between literary and cinematic media. He says, "...though novels and films may seem at any given moment in the history of narrative theory to have essentially distinctive properties, those properties are functions of their historical moments and not of the media themselves" (Leitch 2003, p.153).

It is evident that an adaptation can be complete or partial but its presence is inarguable and the impact of an adaptation can be far exceeding than anything measurable only by its degree of proximity to the adapted work. Therefore this study does not make an attempt to see how far a novel is adapted for cinematic projection, but tries to assess how the changes in the adaptation connote different insinuations and subtleties, some of which are independent of its original source. Film adaptation of literary works necessarily involves adjustment of the original to the demands of the visual medium. Ranganath Nandyal (2003, p. 21) maintains that an adaptation does mean a "writer's film" as opposed to an authentically "cinematic film". The choice of the latter does not amount to betrayal of the original.

In a way the approach adopted falls in consonance with the dictum that Andre Levinson (1960, p. 96) seems to have advocated in saying – "...in the cinema, one extracts the thoughts from the

image; in literature the image from the thought”. In order to study such distinctive nuances of these two art forms, this paper focuses on a famous work, *The Guide* by R. K. Narayan, and examines the improvisations the director has introduced in the tone, tenor and texture of the novel possibly to keep the audience not only enlightened but also entertained through the celluloid projection of a work of art.

## A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL AND THE FILM

Viewed objectively, it seems both the novel and the cinematic version of R.K. Narayan’s classic *The Guide*, attempt to delineate the complexity of human predicament. However, to achieve their individualistic drive, both the art forms explore and tinge the plot in their own way. The former “... floats gently as a lily pad on the surface of Indian life and yet suggests the depth beneath. It manages to describe a saint who is neither born nor made but simply happens”( Trivedi 2002, p.20) On the other hand, the film, *Guide* which was the first film to win all four of the major awards (Best Movie, Best Director, Best Actor and Best Actress) at the Filmfare awards, “...is a lush allegory comprising paradoxically-paired themes of, on the one hand, nation-building, modernization, and social reform, and, on the other, world-renunciation and spiritual self-realization -- all enduring preoccupations of contemporary Indian culture”(Lutgendorf 2010).

Even when cursorily viewed, the difference between the tone and focus comes to the fore stemming from the variant personalities and styles of the novelist and the director. Before venturing into *Guide*, Vijay Anand, the director, was known for movies such as *Teesri Manzil*, and *Jewel Thief*. Vijay Anand had already established himself as a director who seemed to have made ungrudging on-screen compromises to gain widespread popularity. R K. Narayan, on the other hand, was an apolitical, passive littérateur who through his “simple, unpretentious and ingrained humour” (Editorial 2006), was firmly established as one of the famous triumvirate of early Indian literature in English, along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. He had already been compared to many of his legendary peers like Chekhov and Guy de Maupassant for his ability to retain the regional flavor of characters while writing in the English language and to delve into the intricacies of Indian society, analyzed through a nuanced dialogic prose and littered with a sobered humour (Lahiri 2006, p.13). Narayan believed in the conventional method of gradual unfolding of a story, the reader’s interest is generally centred on the events of the future, i.e., in what will happen next (Samrajya 2011, p94).

In *The Guide*, Narayan adopts, just as he does in almost all his works, the individual as his reference and looks inward, affecting a microcosmic view of society and its problems. He showcases the idiosyncrasies of the characters and superimposes them on one another to come up with a layered structure of societal inconsistency and prejudice. Walsh writes: “There is no confusion, despite the movement of the narrative back and forth from the past to the present and the whole novel develops smoothly from the first critical meeting of Raju and Velan “(Walsh 1992, p.61). His approach is anecdotal and co-incidental while portraying his characters. At no point does he lose the leash on his characters, and thus ingrains the fantastic in the ordinary in a completely unassuming and uncontrived manner. His intention is not to overwhelm or astonish but to amuse and delight his readers.

## CELLULOID CHANGES IN SETTING, PLOT AND CHARACTERS

Contrastively, *Guide*, the film belongs to a period that was dominated by technology emerging in the field of celluloid. In this, Vijay Anand, the director adopts more of a top-down approach, treating

issues and personalities first and then individuals and specific problems. He adopts synecdoche as his modus operandi, and showcases the concerns of national pride, women empowerment and an endangered culture through the lives of Raju (Dev Anand), Marco (Kishore Sahu) and Rosie (Waheeda Rehman). He uses rhetoric both in plot and dialogue to convey messages and gives his characters a free reign to grow into the persona they require to carry the burden of mobilizing reform. Unlike Narayan, whose caressing touch not only enlivens the characters but also induces in the reader a sense of wonder at the stroke of irony that pervades the protagonists' lives in the novel, Anand unhesitatingly paints the canvas with the fiery brush of emotional bluntness. Therefore, the much appreciated sense of existential absurdity in the novel seems to have been replaced with an overt sense of emotional sympathy that fills our heart when we watch the movie. Despite this obvious deviation from the text, the change in approach does not seem to undermine the celluloid projection of the work and if one were to view the socio-political backdrop of the times when movie was created, one can understand why this movie could find firm favours both from the masses and the intelligentsia alike.

Actually, the bold strokes of *Guide* can be seen in light of the social and political activism of the 60s. It essentially was the time when the average Indian household started witnessing the advent of technology and hob gobbling the changes that came in the wake of industrial development all around. Similarly, the wave of feminism, emanating from the West, started sweeping through the world and India too did not remain unaffected by it. The question of equality in terms of caste, colour, gender and religion came to occupy centre stage in intellectual deliberations. The electric atmosphere provided a charge of courageous, fervid and reformist cinema which sought to democratize these watershed developments and effect a change in attitudes.

The spread of the English language, imposing a challenge to the traditionally upper caste bastion of Sanskrit, is overtly shown in the scene where a duo of priests demand that Raju (Devanand) explain the meaning of a *shloka* to which Raju's riposte is a crisply accented monologue in English. The fact that Raju, an aspiring *sadhu* uses it in the cleverly democratized village of Anjanpur testifies the scope of English as a unifier and an aspirational language. The craftily scripted, alliterative exchange of dialogues and the lavish lyrics of the songs also seem to underscore a growing sense of purpose and authenticity in common man's life in an independent India. Similarly, the sequence in which Rosie confronts Marco in his caves testifies the boldness of modern woman. The blunt urgency displayed by Rosie brought to the fore the new face of Indian woman who too could query her husband's suitability if the latter failed to respond to her carnal urges.

Through such robust stances, the movie voices its protest against the age-old taboos that cripple individual freedom and suffocate creative energies in them. Though such concerns do form essential part of the overall tapestry even in the fictional version of the work, it is the brusque impertinence of its celluloid version that captures the imagination of the masses and forces them to reconsider and replace the primitive images with the present ones. Cinematic concretization of the images held in tinsel glass images in the novel lends to Anand's projection of *The Guide* the force and loudness which does not seem to be in consonance with the poetic essence of the original work.

Dismayed at such alternations, R.K. Narayan was critical of the fact that Vijay Anand had changed the setting from the idyllic and fictitious south Indian town of Malgudi to the real and concrete Jaipur. Narayan seems to lament the loss in saying "...By abolishing Malgudi, they had discarded my own values in the milieu and human characteristics. My characters were simple enough to lend themselves for observation; they had definite outlines-not blurred by urban speed, size, and tempo" (Mehrotra 2011).

By replacing the subtext with the overtness of grandeur, the movie attempts to strike even with the audience who are accustomed to feasting on the recipe that combines delight with message and is not much in tune with the appreciation of artistic ambiguities. In an obvious attempt to reach out to

the common audience, Vijay Anand as director and Dev Anand as producer and actor, embellish R.K. Narayan's austere and simple tale not only by turning the film into a visual treat with the befitting use of camera, lights and sound but also by making the central consciousness of a tourist guide the intersection of the economic and social cross-currents sweeping postcolonial India. The metaphor of tourism simultaneously inscribes a condition of spatial mobility of the urban Indian and India's primal positioning vis-à-vis the global economy of desire. In contemporary India, it underscores the role of the city of Udaipur in Rajasthan instead of the fictitious 'Malgudi' in the original novel. Udaipur is thrown up as a tourist site in the national and local economy. The beauty of Udaipur's palaces and lakes, hills and mountains is presented for visual consumption through tracking shots and long shots, fluidity of camera movement and vividly colorful Eastman color cinematography. This munificent treatment can be interpreted as a validation of the Indian imagination, a shared platform which is accessible and emblematic. Udaipur, with its panoramic past and advantageous future serves as a fitting center of Indian consciousness- firmly grounded yet gingerly ambitious.

In the novel, R.K. Narayan uses the cinematic tool of flashback and flash-forward, and frequently changes voice- the all-knowing authorial voice is alternated with the personal insights of Raju. This technique is retained in the movie. Mithilesh K. Pandey, a film critic, feels that in both forms of media, the altered chronology and transition of voice are smooth and there is no loss of coherence between shots/chapters. However, the different weights given by both are of some interest. The element of time is of major importance in achieving clarity and effectiveness of expression.

Comparatively, the novel lays much emphasis on the circumstances that lead to the beatification of Raju and only the last chapter and a few brief interludes refer to the drought and his expiation in pursuit of rain. Raju the guide is imbued with his fair share of venalities --- ambitions, insecurities and jealousies -- and hurtles on these crutches for a journey towards his eventual redemption. Even within this structure there is a rapid alternation between the past and the present. The reason behind this might be that R.K. Narayan wanted a psychological exegesis and the unfolding of a humorous interplay of hindsight and coincidence. The reader can trace the sensitive relation between the event, response and psyche through Raju's recollections and the author's scrutiny of his present state. The movie on the other hand negotiates only one flashback (Rosie's) and has a detailed elaboration of Raju's saintly avatar.

In the film, the constraint of a laborious detailing of events has led the director to cull out the dominant images. Also, the idea of public discourse in areas such as education, self and the strength of communal effort and harmony has been imbued into the story of an accidental saint. Thriving on these compelling images, the movie achieves an immediate and spontaneous rapport with the audience. Using the strength of the medium, Vijay Anand evokes telling images that depict the large scale devastation that calamities such as droughts cause in the country time and again. By relating to both the pathos and religious sentiments of the masses, the movie touches a chord with the populace that see religion as a panacea for all the tortures and sufferings that one confronts in the wake of being a human.

One of the noteworthy deviations from the text seen in the movie is the omission of Raju's childhood. Narayan employs the use of a back story to sketch out the characters, atmosphere and events in the plots. The medium of the novel gives him the space needed to flesh out details which is often denied to the director in the movie.

As soon as a certain bridge off Malgudi was ready, regular service began on our rails; it was thrilling to watch the activities of the stationmaster and the blue-shirted porter as they 'received' and 'line-cleared' two whole trains each day, the noon train from Madras and the evening one from Trichy. I became very active indeed in the shop. As you might have guessed, all this business expansion in our family helped me achieve a very desirable end- the dropping off of my school unobtrusively. (p. 43)

This evocatively realistic and descriptive piece at the end of chapter three in the novel meticulously builds the atmosphere for future events. The starting of a rail service, the congregating of the unremarkable features and activities of a railway station, the diversion of the attention of Raju's parents from his education to the running of the shop and his own thrill at the prospect of not having to go through the drudgery of school; each constitutes a small but irreplaceable part of the plot. The believability of the plot increases when the reader sees the whole picture, cogs included.

The film however, passes over Raju's childhood, starting off at the point when he is at the peak of his career as a guide. The motivation of Raju, the disenchanted boy who dislikes school and resists the determination of his future without his say, his escape from the future earmarked for him and instead his using native skills as a glib talker and smooth manipulator, is overlooked. Perhaps Vijay Anand wants to smoothen the morally ambiguous beginnings of his hero and instead warps him into a prototype promising youth who instantly commands attention and evokes association in the audience. In the process, what the film does expand on is **the role of language**, which is also one of the main points of the novel. Raju's secret to worldly success is his mastery of words. It is by his ingenious and charming sense of humour, his clever persuasion, his rhetoric in short, that he achieves whatever he wants. For him, 'guiding' means saying what people want to hear. Raju works his way through social injustice by manipulating others through language. Immune to the idealistic syllogism that language is supposed to reflect truth, Raju employs his mastery over words to keep him firmly saddled in social and professional zones. The movie emphasizes how in the absence of smokescreen of words created by him, the mask of agreeability slips from his face as Rosie fails to relate to Raju who thrives mainly on the gambit of words.

#### DEMONIFICATION OF MARCO AND GLORIFICATION OF RAJU

The most striking, yet opportunistic change made in the movie is the polarization of the characters of Marco and Raju. The preoccupied, scholarly Marco in the novel, meriting amused sympathy is far removed from the brutish and oppressive Marco in the movie. In the novel, Marco is like the typical South Indian Hindu gentleman, caught between the renouncing *Bhramacharya* ideals and the worldly responsibilities of the *Grihaprastha* phase. He is mildly irritable and largely bovine in his dealings with the world.

He didn't even stop to ask me what time the train would arrive. He seemed to know everything beforehand. He was a very strange man, who did not always care to explain what he was doing.  
(p. 65)

The cinematic adaptation treats Marco unapologetically through the lens of aggressive social reform. It considers him an archaic specimen of intolerance and inflexibility which, like the sculptures he was studying in Udaipur, were deserved to be unceremoniously dumped in the waste-bin of historical ignominy. The immoral misogyny he harbours, is combined with his vituperative dismissal of dance (which he refers to as 'market trade') and is made to give a vengeful treatment to Raju to complete the image of a villain.

The film vilifies his traits and makes them one of the central problems which need resolution. And it offers the effervescent Dev Anand as the solution, in the garb of a fast-talking, self-promoting and very desirable Raju. Charging in as a perfect foil to distasteful Marco, Raju sails Rosie into the wavy dreams of fame, glory and fulfillment.

Two aspects which have been expanded or added in the film at the expense of Marco are the issue of his virility and the suicide attempts of Rosie. A balding, gaunt, sinister Marco is no match for very-virile, companionable Raju. By denying him his virility, Marco has been denied any chance of

redeeming himself. Marco and Rosie's relationship has reached a biological *cul-de-sac* which only Raju can resolve. He offers Rosie what she is actually craving for- artistic sanction, compassion and physical satisfaction.

#### TRIVIALISATION OF ROSIE WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE PRESENCE OF LIVE-IN RELATIONSHIPS

The greatest triumph as well as flaw of the movie is the character of Rosie. Seen against the backdrop of 1965 society, *Guide* was a tremendous leap of faith for the Anand brothers. Casting a Muslim woman as a Devadasi having an illicit affair and later 'living-in' with the hero were audacious steps forward in Hindi cinema. In the stiflingly straitjacketed times of 1960's, presenting a holistic exposition of a marginalized woman's unapologetic ambition was certainly breaking new ground. The movie seems to celebrate the individuality of the central woman character, Rosie, who has the resilience to push aside the men who obsess themselves narcissistically ignoring thereby her carnal or emotional needs. The scene in which the luminous Waheeda Rehman gently snubs Dev Anand flapping a cheque near her face by saying that for her even the fragrance of the flower in a bouquet was an elation, and if not, the whole was desolation, is a testament to Vijay Anand's consummation of the New Indian Woman- the feminist and yet feminine.

Further example of this is when Rosie, in her childlike enthusiasm, wears her newly acquired anklets (*ghungroos*) and skips through the market place, defiantly ignoring the lecherous and disapproving stares of men and women alike. Raju's love and support gives the unfulfilled Rosie the courage to take a bold step and defy the tabooed societal norms by leaving the oppressive atmosphere of her husband's house and moving into Raju's abode. Her sheer exultation in her new freedom is beautifully captured in her crucial song --- *Kaaton se kheench ke ye anchal, chhod ke bandhan bandhe payal*. It is evident in her dancing on the edge of a ledge in keeping with her dangerous new desires; in her riding in a truck trolley and breaking a pot, thereby metaphorically breaking all conventions. The scene in which she first teases Marco in the caves, by acting like the living embodiment of the statues he so fancied but later confronts him with acerbic comments is an evidence of Vijay Anand's transcending the sobered independence that Narayan has imposed on Rosie.

Arguably, R. K. Narayan's gentle strokes and nuanced shades have been painted over in a glamorous and fascinating manner by Vijay Anand. In the novel Rosie is an intelligent woman, unpredictable but mature. Though her actions are not merely a function of the actions of the men around her, she lacks the thumping sense of assertion, with which the heroine seems to stalk the silver screen in the celluloid version of *The Guide*. In the novel Rosie's edgy quest for a meaningful survival coupled with a torn penancing self, renders her incapable of pursuing her emancipation with authority and conviction, something that she unmistakably enjoys in the movie. Rosie's oscillation between the philosophy of spousal devotion and duty that she espouses her part-carnal part-gullible composition assigns to her character, an artistic and uneasy subtlety in the novel. Such complexities emanating from the dark recesses of her heart have been hinted only through the depiction of some obvious bouts of remorse as caught up in a flawed, fake world of fame, Rosie finds herself trapped in the midst of a maddening vacuum and emptiness in the movie. Rosie's approach towards Raju is far more tentative and unsure in the novel. Even her conjugation with Raju is undefined and accidental rather than being determined, assertive, and pre-meditated:

She opened the door, passed in, and hesitated, leaving the door half open. She stood looking at me for a moment, as on the first day.  
'Shall I go away?' I asked in a whisper.  
'Yes. Good night,' she said feebly.  
'May I not come in?' I asked, trying to look my saddest.  
'No, no. Go away,' she said. But on an impulse I gently pushed her out of the way, and stepped in and locked the door on the world. (pp. 88-89)

Even through the course of their affair and much later still, she refuses to accept Raju as her soul-mate, instead cursing herself for her impropriety:

‘...I deserved nothing less. Any other husband would have throttled me then and there. He tolerated my company for nearly a month, even after knowing what I had done.’ (p. 201)

The see-sawing of her emotions, depicted consciously in the novel and touched cursorily in the movie, doesn't hamper her meteoric rise in her dancing endeavors. Her transformation from 'Rosie', a name carrying the 'tawdry overtones of the demi-mondaine world of the traditional *tawayaf*, *devadasi*, or (in colonial lingo) "nautch girl" - a courtesan learned in dance, music, and poetry, often "married" (if Hindu) to a temple deity, and permitted to perform in public (as respectable women were not), and to form casual liaisons with mundane men to a delicate lotus ('Nalini') is exclusive. The fine balance between artistic success and fame married to emotional duplicity and insecurity is carefully transmitted in the novel. On the silver screen, Waheeda Rehman the actress, effectively conveys her character's repressed energy and desires through her many breathtaking dances. She's subtle as ever, and her expressive eyes flash fire as well as frighteningly cold rage.

Despite some obvious deviations, the complexity of human relationship is brought out palpably both by the writer of the novel and the Director of the movie. Director Vijay Anand handles the complex subject with maturity and flair. He adopts a largely non-judgemental stand, interestingly evident in this musically-blessed film's two back-to-back Point Of View songs. When the lead couple have an acrimonious fall out, the heroine sings *Mohse chhal kiye jaaye* while the hero counters with *Kya se kya ho gaya bewafa*. It is almost as if the director presents both the sides and lets the audience make up their mind. This unsubtle bracketing of the needs and desires of the characters is where the movie projects boldly in terms of character delineation. Where the novel functions in a wide tract of grey, the film is binary in its coloration.

#### ADDITION OF RECONCILIATORY SEQUENCE AT THE END AND CONCRETIZATION OF ENDING

One of the major structural changes that the film incorporates over the novel is the ending. The novel adopts the technique of an open-ended finale. Whether the rains come or not, is left to the imagination of the reader in the novel. R.K. Narayan's tendency to report but not comment is rooted in a detached spirit, providing for a more realistic narration. Narayan lifts the story to a domain of faith, trust and devotion and lets it float back to the earth. In the concluding part of the novel, Narayan brings Raju to the precipice of a miracle through a pure series of coincidences, a testimony to the brilliance of the novelist that he acknowledges the limitations of humans and forgives them for it.

He in fact allows them to raise the wonder and magic of normal occurrences to the level of the metaphysical in an outstanding manner. The ingenious way in which he lets the plot reach equilibrium completes his insight into the transience and illusion of human action. The novel ends on a note of such ambiguous epiphanies:

The morning sun was out by now; a great shaft of light illuminated the surroundings. It was difficult to hold Raju on his feet, as he had a tendency to flop down. They held him as if he were a baby. Raju opened his eyes, looked about, and said, 'Velan, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs-' He sagged down.(p. no. 247)

At this very point the director brings in the climax in the film by using the lighting & sound effects. The film "acquires overtones of the much-maligned mythological/ devotional genre (at one point, the voice of God speaks from a penumbra of light, and the climactic moments recall Damle's



1936 classic *Sant Tukaram*), and its validation of the simple faith of the villagers may appear, in a materialist reading, as a cynical sop to India's most powerful opiate." The movie-version Raju has a more definite fate- he passes away as the rains start pouring. The melodramatic conversation between his *id* and *ego* truly reflects the conflict which seems so real and rich that ends with the saffron clad saint vanquishing the *khadi* wearing guide and immersing with the one in a fever pitch of song, dance, sound and light. Rosie, Gaffur (his estranged friend) and his mother are all present at his arm not only to complete his reconciliation with the material world but also to witness his resurrection from the ordinary and ephemeral to the eternal and blissful. The literal 'tying-up of loose ends' is Vijay Anand's interpretation of an ideal ending- one which elevates the protagonist well above all the physical world of confusion and chaos to spiritually glorious and enlightening levels and resolves the malaise of society in a shower of divine blessing. Unlike the accidental rise of the protagonist, as R.K. Narayan envisioned, the rise of the individual in the film is well aligned with the importance of larger-than-life personas that inspire public by achieving glory, immortality and bliss through suffering, austerity and atonement.

## CONCLUSION

In brief, considering validity and acceptance of adaptations, it is observed that some critics heavily privilege the source novel and others treat the film as a distinct entity, neither group satisfactorily acknowledges both the social expectations about adaptations and the differences in media convention. In the former instance, critics ignore the peculiarities of cinematic art and fail to acknowledge the at times impossibility and unfeasibility at other times of transferring certain linguistic properties to the screen; while the latter group downplays the inevitable social resonance adapted films have with their source novels. While critically analyzing and comparing the eye and the eyepiece, Vijay Anand's philosophy of adaptation does not fall into the category of complete fidelity of transformation. Vijay Anand, from the very beginning maintained that he was not merely interested in copying any work of art from one medium to another unless there was some scope of value addition. The more tangible reasons he had for making these changes included tailoring for Hindi speaking audiences and glamorizing dialogues. The introspective language of R.K. Narayan which though completely suited to the genre of a novel would never have captivated the cinemagoers and a suitable lyrical and immediate quality had to be infused into it.

The heavy reliance of successful Hindi cinema on formulaic ingredients and conventions necessitated an unambiguous and simplistic adaptation. The larger reason for this was the issue of creating a homogeneous work of art which could be appreciated both by critics and the masses. Moreover adhering to the spiritual ethos made the audience let off all the worldly mistakes/ aberrations of the protagonist and admire the pure, selfless and enlightened soul. The exquisite cinematography, elaborate sets and elucidated dance sequences were as artistic as they were unifying. Besides, the raw sensibilities of Indian audiences were kept in mind through out. What is commendable is that the message was not diluted at any stage; if anything, it was made more accessible and direct.

Undoubtedly the artistic merit of both film and novel has been duly recognized. The film received several Filmfares and was widely considered as one of the greatest movies the industry has produced, and the novel added to R.K. Narayan's unmatched repertoire. Like tributaries of a river diverging from its source and merging at the delta, the two *Guides* branch out from a common source, chart wholly separate lives and meet again at the repository of art and narration.

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