Chapter 3: Form of the Novel and the Film
Chapter 3: Form of the Novel and the Film

Literature has always been a medium of great creative expression as well as a medium to derive information and pleasure from. The varied genres, such as prose, poetry, drama have in their diverse ways allured readers through the ages. In the eighteenth century, there rose a form in prose that was loved and well received by the readers and still continues to do so.

Form is the way art assumes its shape. It is the tool that an artist uses knowingly or unknowingly to give a definite outline to his particular piece of art. It is also useful to help in classifying the structure and framework of literature. While in general, one could describe form terms of height, dimension and shape. Also in arts, one could say that a form of something is the visual element of it, that one sees it in. (What is the Definition of Form?)

In his handbook on the glossary of literary terms, M. H. Abrams, defines, it as a literary term that is used very frequently in literature and yet has very diverse meanings. Often, the term is used to bifurcate the genre or the type of literary work. To quote M. H. Abrams, “The form of a literary work is (in the Greek term) the "dynamics," the particular "working" or "emotional 'power'" that the composition is designed to effect, which functions as its "shaping principle."
Thus, he states, that the ‘form’ is something that gives a literary work or art in general a shape.

There are other ways of classifying literature as well. One could classify literature depending on genres, periods and or places. As compared to literary genres and periods or places, the number of literary forms is quite less. A few forms of literature are Drama, Essays, Novel, Poetry, Prose, and Short Story. For the purpose of this research, five novels have been chosen. A novel is a work of fiction. It is a prose narrative that could be of a substantial length and it could also have complexity of action, plots, speech and characters. One of the most important characteristics of a work of literature is its literary form. It tells us a lot about the work. The form endows upon a literary work certain qualities that the basic structure of form brings with itself. Some literary forms are as old as literature itself. Epic poetry, drama can be dated back as old as humanity is. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata, in the Indian mythology, the ancient Greek Plays are all the founding fathers of literature and literary forms that exist in the modern day today. (Exploring the Arts Foundation)

Form is more like a tangible concept to grasp as compared to the literary genre. The two major forms of literature are fiction and non-fiction. Furthermore literature can be classified into other major forms such as prose, poetry, novel, short story. Novel is a prose narrative. If we look at the French word for novel, it is "roman". (Google
Translate). It is believed that the modern novel emerged somewhere around eighteenth century. (contributors)

A novel generally deals with the human experience through a connected set of events involving one or more settings. The core of the novel is the story or the plot. There generally is a single idea at the nucleus and the novelist works his/her way around it to create an interesting story. Ian Watts in his book, Realism and the Novel Form states, that in the eighteenth century, novels became very popular, since they were now portraying realism. People enjoyed reading these novels, as they were closer to reality, that which they lived in and hence it was easier to associate with literature. (Watts)

3.1. Hemingway’s Form and John Sturges’ Form – The Old Man and The Sea

One of the greatest authors of America, Ernest Hemingway gave to the world many classics. Well known for works such as *Farewell to the Arms, For Whom the Bells Toll* and of course, *The Old Man and the Sea* (Hemingway, The Old Man and The Sea), a short novel that won him the Nobel Prize in literature.

Hemingway's most notable work amongst all of his popular works is a tiny 100 paged book with a simple title *The Old Man and the Sea*. A small work of fiction many may prefer to call novella and yet such a power packed work of art, that it is bound to leave
the reader pensive. This small book by the well-known American writer was first published in 1952 and has been considered a classic. It cannot be forgotten that this little book won Hemingway Pulitzer prize and also bagged him the Nobel Prize in literature in 1953 and 1954 respectively. Would it be a wonder then that filmmakers have time and again been attracted by this fable to transform it on screen? The very first adaptation of this book came in 1958 which was a mere 6 years after the book's first publication.

Leland Heyward set forward to capture on camera the magic of Hemingway's words with the help of director Fred Zinnemann. It is said that Hemingway himself was to advise with the filming process but things did not work out as planned and the project was left unfinished. Years later, Heyward agreed with John Sturges to complete the unfinished project. Sturges agreed on one condition that the literary property of the film would not be compromised. The actor playing the part of the old man, Spencer Tracy would also narrate the voice over and the film would be a mere cinematic representation of the book. Hemingway had already abandoned the project at the first unsuccessful attempt.

Many state that this film is an absolute purist work of art. It is an absolute faithful adaptation of the original novel. The script for this film was written was Peter Viertel who happened to be a very good friend of Hemingway. (CERONE, 1990) He was
undeniably respectful of the work he had to adapt from. Many filmmakers and scholars alike consider this film a disaster. They feel that there is no point if the film has to be an exact copy of the original with even the dialogues read out from the book. The change of form does not serve the purpose then.

The film, *The Old Man and the Sea* (Sturges), directed by John Sturges begins with the scene of the sea. We see a vast expanse of water and the waves splashing. The sun rays reflecting on the sea water and we immediately know that it is someplace not too cold, the tropics perhaps. The director here has been successful at bringing to us the setting Hemingway describes in the first few pages of his novel. We see it is a coastal town. All the activities that men, women and children engage into depict that coastal life. The director aptly shows us the tall coconut trees swaying with the winds that come from the sea. The men and women live in thatched huts made with the dried coconut leaves and branches. It is a small town or perhaps a village located somewhere in the tropics, Cuba. This narration is anything but creative. The screenplay of the film is extracted word by word from the book *The Old Man and the Sea*. Of course, some text from the original book has been skipped and at times certain information is clubbed together. Right then we see a shot of a boy running towards the shore and to the boat. The narrator introduces to us the characters and gives us a sneak peek into the story. This is when all the background details of how the old man has gone eighty-four days without fish and the other people consider him a *salao* the worst form of unlucky are delved out.
The audience also comes to know that the boy had at first gone with the old man but stopped going since his parents wanted him to go with some other lucky boat.

As the old man and the boy unfurl the mast of the boat and pick up their fishing equipment and start walking back towards the old man's home, the boy offers to buy him a beer. The old man agrees and they stop by a cafe. In the book, it is understood that they both have a beer. But in the film, we see that even though the boy orders two beers, the cafe owner brings Santiago a bottle of beer and the boy a bottle of cold drink.

Along this time, the characters in the film start saying dialogues. Till now, the filmmaker relies on narration only to dispatch information. At this point we can notice, that the boy is rather dry at his dialogue delivery. Spencer Tracy playing the character of the old man seems to be in his part. Also one can notice the lighting in the film and make out that sets are used for filming.

A pleasant addition in the film is the part where the boy goes to bring dinner for the old man. On his way, he passes a ground where many young boys his age are playing baseball. He stops for a second and looks at them. As he passes through the playground, these boys surround him and ask him to join them in their play. He simply looks down and continues. This is an addition from the filmmaker's part. The novel does not have this tiny sequence. It can be easily grasped that the filmmaker wants to add elements in
the film that will make us realise of the boy's unfailing dedication towards the old man.

This is where the role of the filmmaker as the author of his own work comes in.

Plate 1- The Old Man and the Sea. Directed by John Sturges. 1958. Manlin looking over the boys playing baseball in The Old Man and The Sea (Sturges)

Also at the same time, this boy goes to fish at the sea and has a lot of know how about the occupation. Probably he comes from a poor family and so to meet the needs of his family he has to work and cannot enjoy the leisure of playing unlike his fellow friends.

We do not know. Right after this, sequence we see the cafe owner, Martin mocking the old man's bad luck. He says that probably there is nothing like luck after all, the man is too old to be able to fish now. Here again the boy defends the old man. This is nowhere in the novel. Since film is a different medium and one has the shortage of time, the filmmaker has to remove some parts and at time add some sequences to create apt links in the minds of the viewers.
Any film lover would cringe at the fact that the major portion of the film simply shows the old man at the sea and his struggle with the fish. In the early portions of his novel, Ernest Hemingway has written dialogues between the old man and the boy that range from fishing, to baseball to dinner and the reader can figure out that the two are affectionate towards one another. But in the film, the filmmaker simply wants to focus on the old man and his struggle, everything else is secondary. Thus he cuts back on unnecessary dialogue and instead adds couple of new scenes to serve the same purpose that lengthy dialogues do in the novel. Thus the artist has to adapt to the form he is dealing with. We may accuse or praise the filmmaker for a very faithful rendition of the film, but we fail to notice that faithfulness does not simply mean sticking to the original cent percent. Liberties are taken here too.

As the boy goes back to the old man's shack with dinner for both of them, they talk about baseball. There is nothing new in their dialogues here. They are a mere copy of the words from the original book. What is interesting to note here is that within the old man's shack the lighting has been done beautifully. When he first enters his shack after a long day at the sea, he rests on his chair. The light of the setting sun dimly shines golden on his face through the door. Rest of the shack is darker. Each time he speaks we see a close up of his face and his eyes looking somewhere far out. Far out at the sea probably, where he will go again tomorrow in search for a new quest. There is immense hope in those eyes almost as if they seem to be speaking.
This film has quite a few scenes with special effects. The first one of these, is when the old man sleeps and we follow his dreams. The director opts for a fade effect. The old man dreams of the beaches, the sea, the islands and the lions. All of these scenes are edited such that they seem to blur out of the centre towards the outer part. The dream sequence begins with a fade in effect and ends with a fade in effect. The fade effect here means that the screen is black in the beginning and eventually fade the image appears on screen and gains brightness. In a fade out the opposite happens, that is, there is an image on screen, and the screen turns dark. All the way from the beginning the film has some soothing music in the background.

A gorgeous scene then unfolds before the audience. The next morning which is the eighty-fifth day the old man arises and wakes up the boy at his home and they head towards the sea. The dawn, the chirping of the birds and the hushed activity of all those are awake at this hour is captured aesthetically by the camera. The camera work done by James Wong Howe truly is awe-inspiring. The background score too is serene and sounds sacred to the ear. It almost sounds like a prayer chanting. The cinematography, the music and the visual all blend in perfectly. Even reading this portion in the book does not evoke such sentiments. While shortage of time is a disadvantage to this medium, the perfect amalgam of audio and visual suited to the exact storyline creates magic for this medium. A long shot of many boats entering the sea from different shores at around the same time looks like pure bliss. A lone lantern at the back of the skiff and
the sounds of oars splashing against the water radiates calm into the hearts of those witnessing it. The background score sounds like chants. The sea is pious. The men who go to fish at the sea call her *la mer* says Hemingway in his novel. She is their bread and butter. She is no less than a deity for those who depend on her for their means and ends. And so the chanting like music is justified and sounds pleasant to one's ears. The audience can also sense a sort of paradox that the filmmaker tries to bring out here. The sea is calm at the dawn, when the world is still rising; the men are still tying their sails to their boats and getting ready for a new adventure. Nobody can predict the sea. It is the eighty-fifth day and the old man believes he will be lucky today. But simply luck does not bring one the fruits, labour is required too. And this serenity is like a pre-warning that seems to be saying that there is always calm before the storm.

*Plate 2– Shot of the morning over the sea, in the film The Old Man and The Sea (Strurges)*
As all this activity unfolds, much of the novel described is narrated to us. The silhouettes of the skiffs entering the sea at dawn are shot appealingly. Cut to the shot of the old man in his boat, looking happy and hopeful. The music changes too at this point and becomes a happy soothing tune. The audio alters with the visual thus rendering a precise effect on the viewer.

Plate 3- The Old Man and the Sea. Directed by John Sturges. 1958. The silhouettes of fisherman, rowing into the sea, at dawn.

Narration begins once again and we see the images of fish passing by the boats, and birds fluttering and hovering above. All the fish and birds mentioned in the novel are shot. This is very interesting. One may say that making a copy of film is an easy task, but in fact it is not. It calls for capturing even the smallest details given by the author
and faithfully showcasing them. If one were to drift away from the original and adapt in their own way, they would thus be saved from this daunting task asking for accuracy and precision. Considering that the film was shot way back in late 50s, a mere half century after the innovation of the art of filmmaking it is quite an interesting piece to watch.

We are in an age today where underwater filming has become much sophisticated. We in fact even have cameras that film the surface of moon and other planets. Shots of underwater photography in this film may look crude to our eyes so used to sleek photography of the postmodern age. But we have to remember this was from a time when the cameras were not as powerful as they are today. The director has skilfully taken shots of the boat rowing into the sea from underwater. This breaks the monotony of viewing it from a panorama point of view of above the sea. In fact, he has even gone ahead and shot the baits hung on the line by the old man thrown deep into the sea. These shots of sardines on the lines waiting to be eaten by bigger fish and the background narration of how the new day has begun and the old man is hopeful he shall be lucky today all blend in together very well. Since the major portion of the film is to be shot on water, the filmmaker has carefully been aware that the water does reflect in different ways under the light. As the position of the sun changes in the sky and the direction of the boat in the sea, the way lights and shadows fall on the boat and the old man must be adjusted accordingly. When seeing the close up shots of the old man, we see the
reflections of water on the boat. A very simple yet striking camera work when the boat is in the sea is that the camera too moves with the waves of the sea with the boat. This technique of swaying the camera is very effective. It gives the viewer a feeling of being there in the moment with the old man. If the camera were static and the visual of the old man in his boat was moving with the waves, it would make the viewer feel left out. One would get a feeling they are observing rather than experiencing. This technique adopted by the cameraman takes us into the sea with the old man while he rambles and thinks aloud and fights the fish. We are with him all the time experiencing everything his way. Now consider the same portion being read in the book. We would simply be drawn into the old man's world with his thoughts i.e. the words that we read. “Fish,” the old man said. “Fish, you are going to have to die anyway. Do you have to kill me too?” (Hemingway)
But the medium of film enables to give this extra effect that works in the favour or the medium and renders a lasting effect. Definitely words have immense power and Hemingway has crafted them such that they make a lasting impact on our minds. The filmmaker has anyways not changed Hemingway's words on the other had he has used the camera effectively to do justice to the form he has on hand.

Each medium has its own beauty. The artist who works with the medium must know how to use it to procure maximum possible art out of the form he explores. While the novel is part of literature and language is the tool the creator has at hand. He uses words, syntax, figures of speech and more to express his thoughts, ideas and feelings. Similarly, the film has the power of audio-visual representation. Now it has moved over to animation and 3D and even 4D technologies. How the creator uses the resources he
has at hand is upon his own accord and will. Hemingway has simply given to us his
thoughts and feelings and rummages behind the matter of a novel. The filmmaker may
have adapted faithfully yet, he cannot but help leave his mark on the work he creates.
And how does he do that? In the way a filmmaker films each scenes, the way it is shot
i.e. long shots, close ups, underwater shots, the use of lighting, dialogue delivery where
needed, and narration and sound. All these put together to make a coherent whole, the
film. If we now look at adaptation from this point of view, we realise that it is not as
easy a task as it may seem when we compare the novel to the film and pass statements
such as the novel was way better than the film.

In the film, it is easy to miss the parts where the narrator slowly shifts into the old man's
class and speaks out the dialogues in the first person. This happens quite a few
times and so smoothly that one would almost miss it if one were not watching film with
imposed awareness of noticing each and every minute detail. The scenes where the old
man is alone at the sea having hooked the Marlin and is famished and fatigued, he
speaks out to himself out of sheer desperation or hope at times. Then the narrator takes
over from the old man and completes the dialogues in first person. At first, it all seems
like the mistake and the director probably forgot editing this part. But on further
viewings of the film it seems intentional.
Plate 6, 7 – The Old Man and the Sea. Directed by John Sturges. 1958. The many moods of the The Old Man –Santiago while at the sea.
The many moods of the The Old Man – Santiago while at the sea during the span of three days and nights.

Maybe the old man is too tired and making him speak out loudly does not make any sense. In the book, there are lines that fishermen usually do not speak much when they are at sea. And the old man repeats these lines in the film. In the book, these lines are,

there were other boats from the other beaches going out to sea and the old man heard the dip and push of their oars even though he could not see them now the moon was below the hills. Sometimes someone would speak in a boat. But most of the boats were
silent except for the dip of the oars. They spread apart after they were out of the mouth of the harbor and each one headed for the part of the ocean where he hoped to find fish.

So when the narrator takes over from the old man and speaks in the first person, it can be inferred that we are now inside the old man's thoughts and are so intrinsically woven into the story that we can almost read (hear) his thoughts. It must be added here that the voice of the narrator was given by Spencer Tracy himself, who plays the part of the old man. Thus making it easier to mix these thought sequences where the narrator slips into the old man's part and we hear him think. Now this can only happen in the film. Such interchange of roles and blurring of lines would be too obvious if a writer had to do it in his novel.

In the novel we read about how the marlin is caught by the old man. It reads, "He reached out for the line and held it softly between the thumb and forefinger of his right hand. He felt no strain nor weight and he held the line lightly. Then it came again. This time it a tentative pull, not solid nor heavy, and he knew exactly what it was. One hundred fathoms down a marlin was eating the sardines that covered the point and the shank of the hook where the hand-forged hook projected the head of the small tuna."

(Hemingway, 1952)
Written with such immaculate precision, we can well imagine and visualise the entire scene in our heads how the hooked sardines look like hundred fathoms in the sea and how the marlin eats them and how the old man holds the line. This shows the qualities of a great writer who in very few words can express a lot, who makes it easier for the reader to visualise each word he writes. This makes the task challenging for the filmmaker. If the reader can already visualise it clearly, how will he show it differently and creatively in his film. Each segment of description must be shot accurately if one is following the guidelines of the source. In the film too, the scene is very lucid. The filmmaker focuses on the hands specifically the thumb and forefinger of the actor and also his facial expressions.

The dialogue delivery by the old man is done very realistically. Spenser Tracy slips carefully into Santiago’s character. The scene where Santiago talks to the fish at the sea is done beautifully. His speaks not just with this mouth but with his eyes, his expressions, his entire being. The way he asks the fish to eat the sardines nice and patiently such that the hook strikes its heart and kills him is all said with such fervour that we almost wish with him for the fish to be hooked. While he waits for the Marlin to be hooked, background music slowly builds the atmosphere. At the end of his tedious 3 day struggle with the fish single-handedly at the sea, the fish seems to be giving a final fight and gives 3 massive pulls. Each time Santiago tugs the line back with almost equal strength. The three pulls are accentuated by the background score that resounds
thrice to maximise the effect. By this time, one can notice that the frequency of dialogue delivery is increased. Unlike at the beginning of the film when the dialogues are bare minimum and we are delved information mostly by the narrator. By this time, there is almost simultaneous dialogue delivery and narration. Since the narration is done by Spenser Tracy himself, it sort of blurs the lines as he plays the protagonist himself.

While in the novel, there is a single description of the line cutting through the sea water and the beads of water around it, the film shows this part several times where the line enters the sea. At times, when the fish is pulling and the old man is clenching it tight, the line intersects the water with immense tension. And then the times when the old man is tired and rests there is a slight loose grip on the line. This is a meaningful photography since, most of the times, we do not see the fish, and the major portion of the story unfolds at the sea. Showing the line cutting through the sea waters is the only link from the old man to the Marlin. This is what physically connects them. Agreed, upon deeper reading we may say that both are connected by the circumstances, and we may compare the old man to the fish in the sea of life metaphorically. The line is the bond that connects the two of them. The line is also the bond that causes friction between them. While for one it is a tool of hunting, for the other it is a vicious trap that will kill him. For long time the fish pulls the line and in turn Santiago. The line is their bond and the old man silently sails where the fish takes him. He faces gruel weather, he is famished, he is exhausted but he does not break the bond. Ultimately the fish puts
up a fight and the old man still holds his still. When the two who are against each other are faced with a third enemy, the sharks, they still don't break the bond. The old man clings to the line while fighting the sharks to protect the Marlin. Even when the Marlin is totally destroyed by the sharks and nothing of the fish is left for the old man. He does not let its carcass float away into the sea. He still keeps it tied to his boat and brings him ashore. We may wonder as to why he does that. Well it could be simply because the hunter and the victim are both now at equal par. Both are now victims of fate linked by the line. Santiago sees a part of himself in the fish probably. In the film, when Santiago reaches the shore it is night and the town is asleep. While he walks back to his shack he turns round once to see the carcass of the fish again. This single shot says it all. All the while at the sea, he looks away from the fish. Hemingway writes that he cannot bear to see the mutilated fish and the film reiterates this fact. But then in the film why does he turn to look back at the fish, we wonder. It is a shot easy to miss, but a powerful one.

The narrative technique of both the film and the novel is similar. It seems to be moving in a spiral that goes upwards. The higher you reach the more tension there is. The contrapuntal theme of the novel and the film is very effectively conveyed. After being unsuccessful at the sea for eighty four days, Santiago finally catches a giant Marlin. But the sharks destroy it completely leaving a mere skeleton for Santiago to bring home. "His great triumph is reduced to a mere failure” (Rao, 2007). His prize is not the fish
but the modesty he learns. Thus while he fails materialistically, his triumph is at a
spiritual level.

Sturges has not left out the literary qualities of the the novel. The literal transformation
of the novel onscreen does not really rule out the literariness out of it. Infact the scenes
where the narrator instead of narrating, shifts into first person dialogue is a clever
representation of the interior monologue. Even though it comes across as an effective
loud contemplation but then in literature, this too is a type of interior monologue.

The entire film runs one hour and twenty six minutes. We are well into the first thirty
minutes of the film and we are at the scene where the old man is at the sea and hooks
the Marlin. This just goes to say that the filmmaker has given enough time to show the
relationship between the old man and the fish, sea and his struggle with them. What is
interesting is that almost all the creatures mentioned in the text be it birds or fish are
shown in the film. After all we don't call it a faithful adaptation not for nothing. It is
too good an effort on the directors part to not be mentioned.

While the visual picture shows moments of tension, the sound does justice to this
tension that the viewer watches, intensifying it's effect. Since the novel is mostly about
the struggle and defeat, the film too actualises the same on screen. There is a flashback
sequence in the novel, where the old man thinks of his younger days when he used to
bemuch stronger and had once defeated a nigger at arm wrestling. This flashback
sequence is filmed and we see it as the old man reminisces it and the narrator gives a background summary of what happened. This sequence is accompanied by chirpy jolly music as opposed to the loud and otherwise grim music in the film. Right after this follows the dream sequence and the old man drifts into a sleep and the same dream is followed as we see at the beginning of the dream. The filmmaker has made use of the same imagery and similar visual effects. This helps in maintaining a linear format throughout the film.

Eventually, comes the moment, when the big fish finally makes it appearance on screen. Very interesting to note here that we actually do get to see the big Marlin splashing in and out of the water. This is a wonderful shot merged with the shot of the old man in his skiff. At the end credits, it is specified that the footage of the Marlin was taken from the archives of Caso Blanco Fishing Club in Peru. A person named Alfred C. Glassell Jr caught a Marlin and this world record breaking event was videoed. Some part of this footage was merged with the film to make it look like the Marlin in the film. It is said that Mr Glassell Jr was even present at the times of shooting the scenes related to the portions where the fish and the old man both are at war. He guided with the acting and also with how the line was supposed to be held. Sturges must have really thought this film through to involve the person who actually caught a Marlin so as to make the acting look real and believable. And it really does look real. The way the old man pulls and
tugs at the line. It all does look like there is a heavy duty fish in the sea hooked to his line.

The use of foreground and background imagery is also a feature of this film's cinematography. Although it looks crude, for a late 50's film to incorporate such a feature is commendable in itself. While the background visual shows a Marlin making it's way to the surface of sea, the foreground has the back of the old man holding the line tight and struggling at holding it with a catch in his left hand. The portion where the sharks attack the marlin are filmed too.

If one were to look at the form of the novel and the film, it would seem too parallel. The novel is written in a simple descriptive form. The film draws heavily from it. The screenplay of the film has been written word for word from the novel.

3.2 Orwellian Dystopia and Radford’s Nineteen Eighty-Four

In the novel *Nineteen Eighty Four* (Orwell, Nineteen Eighty Four) the basic idea is to represent the terrible utopic world which is totalitarian. George Orwell, holds this as the central idea to his novel and weaves characters and events that justify this idea and carry the story ahead. On the contrary if we compare a novelist to a dramatist/filmmaker, the task is easier for the latter. They can opt to choose the ready plots from novels and stories to be dramatised. But the novelist has to be original and search for creative and nouvelle stories of human interest. A novel may be pure fiction
or based on real life, it may have melodramatic plots or plots driven by coincidence. It depends on the novelist how they wish to represent the story. *Picaresque* novels relied on the development of a rogue protagonist who turned over a new leaf. Picaresque fiction is realistic yet has an aim that is satiric. (Abrams)

"WHO CONTROLS THE PAST CONTROLS THE FUTURE WHO CONTROLS THE PRESENT CONTROLS THE PAST"

*Plate 10- Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. The film Nineteen Eighty-Four begins with this title slide, with a quote from the novel, indicative of the mood for the film.*

The paradoxical statements by George Orwell in his epic novel *Nineteen Eighty Four* set the path clear for the reader to figure that this novel is not going to be a comfortable read. Written in 1948, on his deathbed, suffering from tuberculosis, George Orwell gave the world a brilliant piece of work predicting the world to come. Instead of a shiny new tomorrow with modernity, freedom and technological advancements, he viewed and presented to us a dystopic future. Where there was enough advancement in technology but no freedom. The world was divided into three big states and no man was free to think of his own accord. Set in Oceania, this is a story of a man named Winston Smith,
who works for the Party headed by the Big Brother. He seems to be a little different from the rest as he prefers to think for himself. He commits a thoughtcrime.

For a twentyfirst century reader, this might seem like a new term. The future that Orwell predicts is governed by a totalitarian government. No one can go against the party, in deeds, words nor even thoughts. The Party tells you how to live, eat, dream, even think. Only then you are considered sane. The Thought Police is always on patrol to look out for thoughtcriminails who are reported at the Ministry of Love and made to undergo torture and turned sane or vaporised (killed in utter anonymity) in case they do not mend their ways. This is how George Orwell predicted the world to be in the year 1984.
Plate 11 – Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. The depressing, debilitating conditions in which The Proles live in 1984, as depicted in the film Nineteen Eighty Four

*Nineteen Eighty Four* portrays the life of individuals deprived of their rights. The film (Radford) takes place in a country called Oceania in the year 2050. One would assume the living conditions would be much more progressive and innovative than the present day. But instead the conditions are much worse. The people of Oceania live in terrible prison like conditions. They live in a state of pseudo-slavery. The setting of the novel is gray, and depressing and dull; and is constantly monitored by *telescreens*- televisions that allow Big Brother and the Thought Police to see what the people are doing, lest they defy the Party and the Big Brother. They are brainwashed and rather forced into loving their leader "Big Brother" and are expected to do everything out of love for Big
Brother. However, among these melancholic conditions there live two individuals, Winston and Julia who refuse to go along with the totalitarian control on each individual. They decide as to what one eats, where one lives, down to whom one might even love. Winston and Julia fall in love with each and begin an affair. Unable to escape what seems to be an all-knowing system, they are caught by the Thought Police, officers of the government, who arrest Thought Criminals, individuals who go against the government by exercising their own thoughts. This also includes having relationships outside of government's knowledge and approval.

When the door to Room 101 opens in his imagination, he sees an open land without any telescreens, reminiscent of a future that is truly free.

They are taken to the Ministry of Love where Julia and Winston are brainwashed into allowing the government to do all the thinking for them. Within Miniluv, they are taken to the Room 101, considered to be a horrible place. You asked me once, what was in Room 101. "I told you that you knew the answer already. Everyone knows it. The thing that is in Room 101 is the worst thing in the world." says O'Brien in the novel to Winston and we get an idea as to how horrific this place must be to each and every traitor of The Party (Orwell, 2004). The Party is omnipresent and even the nightmares of the citizens are known to the Party. Through brutal and extreme torture they slowly lose their ability to think for themselves and become what the government calls "sane". For example, they are taught that two plus two is not four, but whatever the government wants it to be. Still unable to completely give up their own ability to think, the film shows Winston
escorted to room 101, where people's greatest fears reside, for Winston it is rats. He is strapped to a chair with his head placed inside a cage full of rats, with nothing but a wire door separating the rats from his face. Unknowingly, Winston finally demonstrates that he has finally become "sane". In sheer terror he screams "No! do it to Julia! Not me!" (Orwell, 2004) He turned against the woman he loved to save himself, and she did the same to him.

*Plate 14 – Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. When Winston is actually being taken to Room 101 by the thoughtpolice.*
Plate 15 – Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. Winston comes face to face with his greatest fear, that of rats. A container with rats in it attached to his head. O’Brien standing next to him, telling him, these rats will bore through his face, if he still did not surrender to The Party. The ultimate torture, to bring a thoughtcriminal to submission.

What is interesting is that the filmmaker has filmed some segments that throw light on the inner psychological musings of Winston Smith. His greatest phobia seems to be that of rats. How it came to develop one knows not. In the film, Winston tries to rummage through his memory, since he cannot remember his mother. Instead he embarks on having an image of his mother lying dead on the ground with rats running all over her and O’Brien holding a teenage Winston by shoulder. If we are to go by the Gestalt School of Psychology, we can say that this is a smart device employed by the director. He shows this imagery through Winston’s efforts at remembering his mother who he cannot. Instead embarking on an unusual imagery such as this (which is untrue, but
created by Winston’s mind due to his fears) is a foreshadowing to is eventual fall at the hands of the thoughtpolice, and his eventual surrender.

Plate 16 – Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. Winston imagines his childhood, and remembers standing over his mother’s dead body with rats running over it, and O’Brian by his side. This is an inaccurate memory, since he remembers O’Brian a Party member in it, whom he had not known earlier.
Plate 17 – Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. Dead body of Winston’s mother lying on the grass with rats running over it. This is an imagination of Winston’s as he never knew where his mother and sister disappeared. His fear of rats is projected here.
Michael Radford, interestingly places such scenes of rats that a teenage Winston witnesses, which one does not even know if they are true at all or simply a figment of Winston’s imagination in lack of real knowledge of the past as it keeps altering in the Orwellian dystopia.

The closing scene has Winston and Julia meeting in a café talking about how they betrayed and feel different about one another, they seem callous and unemotional, Julia gets up and leaves, Winston is left sitting there with tears in his eyes proclaiming his love to "Big Brother" whose image is on a big screen behind Winston (Orwell).

While looking at the form of the novel and the film, we have to give the director Michael Radford brownie points forshowcasing the gloomy dystopic state of Oceania justly. It
seems that the cinematographer had initially wished to shoot the film in black and white but the distributor of the film agreed to filming in colour. Roger Deakins the cinematographer ran the whole film through a colour saturation filter. In the world of instant digitized cameras and photo editing applications, one certainly needs no introduction to this term. They help increase colour through reducing reflection thus resulting in brighter blue skies, greener foliage and so on. The saturation is not increased uniformly, it can be adjusted depending on the subject and space.

The novel emphasises on people from different races being subjugated by the authoritarian government, but in the film, only caucasian characters are shown. In the novel, the sign for Ingsoc is a traditional fascist fist salut, but they film does not represent this similarly, they used hands forming an X. While the novel focusses on political totalitarianism, in the film, it moves over to romantic ans sexual rebellion by Winston and Julia against the Party. A lot of information and events relating to the fake brotherhood are left out in the film. But the film manages to capture the grim state of
mind, the thoughtlessness and yet it’s awareness. The desire to rebel and the fear to do so. These paradoxes are aptly justified through the character of Winston Smith. Most of the time the information is divulged through the interior monologue of Winston Smith. A lot of the things are changed in the adaptation, but still the film manages to give a fairly decent outlook at the dystopic world of Orwell.

Filming a book that has such a stature is quite a daunting task and to create a dystopia that with all its telescreens, thought police, Big Brother anthems, the near poverty like conditions of living is all done accurately and very artistically.

3.3 Kafka’s The Metamorphosis and Atanes’s The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka

While considering the types of Adaptation as given by Geoffrey Wagner, which are Transposition, Commentary and Analogue, the film, The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka by Carlos Atanes is the only one that can be classified in the Analogy category. An adaptation that simply takes base material from the novel, but it very different in the treatment of the story and stands independently is called Analogue. The film made by Carlos Atanes runs for barely thirty minutes. What is most striking about this film adaptation, is that it really comes across as the director’s own work. No doubt, the film (Atanes) is based on the novel by Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis (Kafka), but the film is very independent and is a personal expression of Carlos Atanes and his
impression of the novel. Dudley Andrew’s types of adaptations are *Borrowing, Intersection* and *Fidelity and Transformation* and he also points out that adaptation is no easy task. This film can be categorized under the third category of *Fidelity and Transformation*. Andrew points out, that adaptation is a difficult task, let alone adapting what one interprets from the original. Here, the adaptation has to capture the ‘spirit’ of the text and yet maintain creativity. (Dudley) The filmmaker has shot this film so artistically, that one would want to view it over and over again. The ‘form’ of cinematic medium is fully explored in this film. As compared to the films like *The Old Man and The Sea, Siddhartha*, where, a viewer simply sees the visual rendition of the novel on screen. The scope of cinematic potential does not seem to be fully harnessed here. Of course each filmmaker has his own vision to develop a film, but for a student of cinema, the process of enjoying a work of adaptation is only fulfilled when presented with various aspects within a film that can be dissected.

Carlos Atanes purposefully seems to make use of bright lights and lighting in the film. He contrasts it with shots of absolute darkness. Power, helplessness, social superiority and inferiority, mental complexes are all displayed with the creative use of lights, placing characters directly under lights or in absolute darkness. He shows characters standing and seated upon staircase and accordingly takes low angle or high angle shots. These interplay of filming techniques makes this film worth a watch simply to marvel
at how a filmmaker can use these cinematic techniques to showcase one’s own interpretation of a novel.


While in the novel, Gregor is described as sitting in his room and working, In the film, Atanes replaces the room with the library. One does not know the exact cause of this change, but it seems, that filming in the library room inside a gigantic house would serve the purpose of effective bright lighting and darkness through the aisles of books.
Since, this adaptation can be said fitting to be put under the category of Analogue as per the types given by Geoffrey Wagner, one can say that the filmmaker has made use of his absolute freedom of interpretation and metamorphosed the original The Metamorphosis. In this experimental endeavour by the filmmaker, one cannot help but notice the unpleasant faces of the characters. The use of shoddy makeup is probably purposeful as well. The unpleasant look of the characters is enough a reason for viewers to remain distant from the film as a whole.

Plate 23- The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka. Directed by Carlos Atanes. 1993. Towards the end of the film, members of the Samsa family gather in the library to look over Gregor who has transformed into an insect. The use of lighting is noteworthy and symbolic of change in power dynamics.
The shots in this film are either extremely horizontal or extremely vertical for the most part. This is to imply that, the use of wide shots (horizontal) and shots that are high/low angle (vertical) are ample. This kind of imagery juxtaposed, rouses the viewer to be attentive and pay attention. The way characters shift places from top to bottom and how they are placed in terms of closer to lighting or further away from it, goes to signify the shifts in power and also the many moods and themes within the work.

Andrey Dudley says that cinema speaks in two ways: one is through the elements that are outer, like the lighting, colour schemes, adjusting frames and the other is through the way a the discursive sense is delivered from a film. It speaks out through the many styles employed via the images to set a narrative tone.

A Form of a novel or a film is really the skeletal formation of the body of art. How it shapes up is vital to how the art will be delivered and received by the audiences. In case of cinematic adaptations, it remains very crucial to have an open minded understanding of the films, as new forms of art altogether. Even if the film is based on the novel very faithfully, it can deviate in ways more than one, such as narratives, characterization, use of music and so on. In this sense, the form changes and it becomes the filmmaker’s work of art. The cinematic adaptations have found a whole new meaning with the advent of theorists and scholars like Bluestone and McFarlane, who have advocated for
the freedom and independence of these works of arts. It is only fitting that the form of the film be regarded as independent even if the film is based on a novel for its story.

3.4 Hermann Hesse and Conrad Rooks on Siddhartha

The famous novel from sixties, *Siddhartha* (Hesse) that revealed to the world the spiritual part of Indian culture has been filmed by Conrad Rooks merely a decade later it's publication. The novel on a thematic level surpasses a realm of immense acumen. Simple language adorned with mystic spirituality and a subject too interesting makes it a novel that many claim to be their favourite. The author's craft is in sync throughout the novel and it progresses through the novel.

This novel is made up of twelve chapters. These chapters are divided into groups of three. Each group has three chapters in it and is followed by an interlude. The purpose of the interlude is to summarize the overall matter of the previous chapters and sync all the ideas. One may delude that the first three chapters are more about the experiences of Siddhartha is the physical world, the next three about his experiences in the spiritual world and the final three about the synthesis of these experiences and eventual awakening.

The film follows the novel very closely in terms of story line and also three phases of life of Siddhartha and his eventual stumbling upon happiness when he least expects it. What is very notable about this adaptation, is the cinematography of the film. It is so
peculiarly striking that one cannot help but awe in wonderment at the beautiful images rendered on celluloid by Sven Nykvist. Each frame is a photograph in itself. These singular shots which are mostly angle shots or close-ups are strikingly beautiful.


The novel may be divided into three groups yet, it seems seamless. Like the river in the novel, the flow of the story is constant. The narrative is beautiful and like a story. One does not get the feel that one is being preached to. Yet a lot is absorbed and finds its way into our thoughts. There is a river in the novel that flows through all the three chapters and is like a character in itself. It is like a mirror that constantly reflects Siddhartha's life and events for him. It is vast and quiet yet it is always flowing. It is never constant just like life. Life is ever moving and progressing just like the quiet river which may seem to be still but it is not.

A striking element about this film is that the cinematographer treats the entire film like one big landscape. Anyone who watches this film, cannot help but awe at the magnificent landscapes that are filmed which look like photographic masterpieces. Conrad Rooks had a director of photography who was the master at his art. He probably wanted this film to look like an introduction to mysticism and spirituality in India.

Rudolf Arnheim has aptly put that the material of the film must be toyed with by the artist who seeks to create something with it. This he stated held true for all arts and artists. Only when a medium is used in subtlety does it gain meaning and ‘pure shape’. (Arnheim) Sven Nykist seems to have done in the film just that what Arnheim states
Like the novel, the film too beautifully flows. The film *Siddhartha* (Rooks) is almost accurately faithful rendition of the novel. This film is an oeuvre d'art extraordinaire. Sven Nykvist's cinematography created magic in this film which suited the subject just right. India, was always looked upon as an underdeveloped country, full of snake charmers and elephant rides in the west. This brilliant cinematography created an image that would break all the stereotypes in the west about India. It emerged as a beautiful land of nature and intellect, a country of love, reverence and spiritual upliftment. The film remains for the most part true to the original novel. There are portions were the filmmaker has indulged in aesthetic portrayal of love through and emotions including nude scenes of the actors Simi Garewal and Shashi Kapoor. The film was not played in India then owing to the nudity but it became a super success in the United States. The amalgamation of the Indian philosophies of love, spirituality, religion and peace make the text unique.

### 3.5 Samskara – A Ritual for a Dead Man

A thought stirring novel by Padma Bhushan, Jnanpith awardee Dr. U.R. Ananthamurthy is a landmark in the field of Indian literature. It tells the truth about the fragmented Indian society, divided on the lines of caste system. By telling a tale of an Agrahara Brahmin community and weaving plots and story about the characters that reside there, he makes a very important commentary of the decaying Indian society as
even in the 21st century, there still prevail injustices done in the name of caste. The novel discusses the hypocrisy of the so called caste of Brahmins the creamy layer. A fellow Brahmin has died and his body needs to be cremated instantly but nobody wishes to do so as he was not a pious Brahmin and never abided by the laws of caste system. He mingled with the people of lower castes and even had immoral relations with a woman of a lower caste. He consumed alcohol and meat which was prohibited by their religion. In short, he was a wealthy man who defied all laws and lived by his own rules. His stinking corpse was inflicted by viruses of plague and if it would not be instantly cremated it would mean an epidemic of deadly disease.

Moreover it is also a story of the head of all the Brahmin community. Praneshacharya who is a devout man. He faces the dilemma of who could cremate the body and how it would be done. The way his character transforms and evolves as the story progresses is worth a read. It is an open ended novel and there are too many plots, incidents, characters that can be decoded and analysed according to one's own wish.

_Samskara_, was first published in 1965. It was U.R. Ananthamurthy's first novel, written when he was still a PhD student at Birmingham (Ananthamurthy). He was living abroad at that time and yet was urged to take an objective look at his own society and culture. What he churned out was a severe and ironical critique of Brahmin orthodoxy. Not to mention that this work had the community in a rage. But it was the 1960s and the
derisive energy of the age had infected modern Kannada culture. Soon, a team that came together to turn this novel into a film would be the envy of any filmmaker in the world today. Director, the late Pattabhirama Reddy, had Girish Karnad in the lead role and, fantastically, in the opposing character, cast the late P Lankesh. The late Snehalata Reddy, Pattabhi's wife, played the female lead. Cinematographer for this film was Tom Cowan and the film was edited by Stevan Cartaw. The team was a brilliance personified and it was still 1970s, and in India nobody could even imagine of banning such a project. The film even won a Gold Medal at the National Film Awards in 1970. It also went on to win major critical acclaim at major international film festivals. But to India, this was the proclamation of Navya Kannada Sahitya movement (Kannada New Wave)

It is noteworthy here to mention, that in spite of the advent of colour cinema, this film was made in black and white. The filmmaker might have resorted to a black and white film simply because this film was reminiscent of the bygone times. Even though the caste system and discrimination is a problem still prevalent in many parts of the country today as well.

Roughly the novel can be divided into three parts. The first part introduces us to a sin being committed by the Acharya. The Agrahara community is faced with a great dilemma and this brings out the faults and vices in each of the characters. The second
part of the novel shifts focus from the entire society to one individual and the sins committed by him and him alone.

The third part of the novel focusses on the Acharya who is led by heavy guilt of having committed sins, now trying to find redemption from the sin.

A short novel of about roughly 140 pages recreates the deep rooted Indian philosophies of caste hierarchy, social institutions and human emotions. Having read the English translation of the original Kannada novel, by A.K.Ramanujan has the title as Samskara: A Rite for a Dead Man. Translated in modest English is an easy-to-read novel for any average reader. The many plots of the novel make it interesting. It acts more like a social annotation. On a philosophical level, too the novel is enthralling. There are numerous allegories that bring out the literariness in the novel. The reader can read this novel in various ways; such is the flow of the story that one can interpret characters, events according to one's own imagination.

The film (Girish Karnad) follows a simple plot line similar to that of the novel. Since Ananthamurthy himself sent the finished manuscript of his novel to actor Girish Karnad who then worked on the screenplay with Pattabhirama Reddy. Australian cameramen, Tom Cowan was the director of photography. The film was shot in black and white. The screenplay of the film followed the novel's storyline. Thus the film is a true copy of the novel.
The film begins with a title slide where the words from Atharva Veda (contributors, Atharvaveda) regarding Hindu Funeral Hymn are written. They are

“May the organ of vision go to the sun, May the breathe merge with the atmosphere,
May you go and rest in a virtuous place provided with food and endowed with a body.”

(Girish Karnad)

Upon reading this itself, we are reminded of death and new life. But more prominently we think of death. The film is a story revolving around more than one deaths. Next comes another slide with a short summary of the story of the film. It ends in rhetoric’s, that go “What man has the right to judge another? What man dare withhold veneration of another’s death? Who of us is without sin?” Such strong questions are put before the viewer right at the beginning of the film. The beginning of the film goes about introducing Praneshacharya and his ill wife. The daily routine that he follows. While he bathes and walks back home from river, the first sound of the film is heard. It is the sound of young children reciting Sanskrit shlokas (hymns) probably at some school. The dialogue between Praneshacharya and his wife unfolds in Kannada, but the English subtitles help us understand. A mysterious shot of Praneshacharya suddenly looking up at the sky from the cowshed while feeding the cow and seeing a vulture hovering over accompanied by a continuous drumming sound leads to an effect of tension. We do not know yet what this symbolises. But such shots of vultures hovering over the village in
the sky are shown are various times during the film. Each time accompanied by a piece of music that would create a tensing effect.

Plate 26 – Samskara. Directed by Pattabhi Rama Reddy. 1970. Brahmins gathering outside their homes (in the agrahara) and making commotion to scare the vultures away.

The novel does not describe the hovering of vultures in the sky above Durvasapura. This kind of sightings of such prey birds near a human settlement is unusual, and the director has added this element in the film. One may wonder as to what effect does it signify including a few shots of such prey birds hovering over the sky, and the villages who are at once surprised and scared by seeing lurking vultures nearby, bring out
whatever they can, utensils, gongs, and other things out of their houses and make loud
banging noises to scare these birds away. But they keep returning.

The major theme of the novel deals with death. So if we are consider McFarlane’s
views on adaptation, we can understand practically, that how rearrangement in
adaptation works. It does not have to be a major change, the minutest of changes, imply
a lot of meanings. Narrative devices are similar in the novel *Samskara* and the film, but
these minuscule rearrangements, are the real shifts that make a film adaptation, the
director’s own work. (McFarlane) The use of close up shots is interesting as the lighting
is done in a way that it seems natural. When Praneshacharya stays up late at night
studying scriptures to find a solution to the problem of cremating Naranappa, his close
up shot in the light of a lamp burning still manages to capture his facial expressions
evidently.
The film has been shot with immense aesthetics. While the novel studied for the purpose of this study is an English translation by A.K. Ramanujan from the original Kannada novel, the film has been made in Kannada language entirely. It has English subtitles added by the NFDC (National Film Development Corporation). Most of the film follows the story and the plot line of the novel but there are places where the director has to remember the cinematic form and accordingly make amends. For instance, the part in the novel where the Muslim friends of Narranappa cremate his body on Chandri’s request, it entirely left out in the film. We do not know if the body is cremated at all.
The part where Bhagirathi is cremated by Praneshacharya with the help of some other Brahmins in the novel is shown in the film only where Praneshacharya alone cremates her. The scenes of Belli the untouchable in her hut complaining of too many rats, nursing her sick parents, are all eliminated from the film. But it is only justified that these portions be eliminated because they do not make any fruitful addition to the plotline. They are just subplots related to the actual plot line. Their being there or not being does not make much of a difference. The film still makes sense. One must also remember here that the film has a different ending from the novel. In the film, we see that the use of music has been done effectively. Whenever the story gets serious, and the action gets tense, the background music turns intense. There are many shots of the vultures hovering over the village, and they are all accompanied by serious gonging music. The characterization is done aptly too. They agrahara is shot accurately. We do not know if it is an actual village or a set. The river Tunga in the novel makes it ritualistic appearance in the film too. Girish Karnad an acclaimed actor plays the part of Praneshacharya and absolutely fits the bill. The part of Chandri, the low caste mistress of Naranappa is played by Snehalata Reddy, wife of the film's director, Pattabhi Rama Reddy. She is beautiful and expresses well. The portion from the novel where Praneshacharya copulates with Chandri is filmed with the help of mere facial expressions of the actors. The fair at the end, the temple where Praneshacharya eats and runs in order to hide being identified all are filmed just fine. But as in the novel,
Praneshacharya does not return to Durvasapura in the film. He leaves it once and for all. Chandri too comes back home to pick up her belongings in the novel but we never see her coming back in the film. Probably the filmmaker finds it too tedious to film every single detail of the film and wants to leave some parts open ended for the viewer to question and answer himself.

A remarkable note about the film is that it is entirely shot in black and white. The brilliance and the simplicity of the story still manages to seep out in monotone. While the end of the film differs from the end of the novel, it does not digress too far making it unimaginable.

The film is made in Kannada language, the one it is originally written in. It has English subtitles and yet one does find that the crux of the film is lost in reading the subtitles. Definitely a thorough reading of the text is recommended before viewing the film. The film lacks in some of the details, probably to confine to the time frame. But then again, the artistic simplicity of the film cannot be missed.

A general understanding states that literary novels are about character and mainstream novels about plots. But there are many literary novels that have fantastic plots. What one must remember here is that each form serves it purpose. Each director is the master of his own art. Whether he chooses to adapt faithfully or whether he chooses to dare is for him to decide. After all the film is his text and no film is devoid of literary qualities.
While viewing the film by Sturges made on Hemingway's novel, the simplest way to dissect the piece of art was to apply the conventions of cinematography to the conventions of fiction. Whereas in *The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka*, the director goes all out in his interpretation and representation of the original novel. Thus, when Bluestone states that a filmmaker is an author in his own right, it can be justified with the examples of films that are blatantly creative expressions for the filmmakers, where they might have relied on a literary source for material. (Bluestone) Since a form based evaluation would be too simplistic to analyse this film. The criterion was to observe how the film as a text evolved with the change in form.
Works Cited


