Chapter 4: Narrative Structure of the Novel and the Film
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This study deals almost entirely with films derived from canonical novels. The novels chosen for the purpose of this research originate from varied parts of the world. One notices that they differ in their origin as well as the time period. Even though the novels are all chosen carefully from the best works of twentieth century, they have emerged at different points in time through the modern age. The places of origin differ too. One may assign these differences to create different patterns of narration for each novel.

The aim of this chapter is to carefully look at the narrative structure of the novels and the films adapted from the novels. It is impossible to leave out the topics of theme, plot and narrative technique while discussing the texts and the films through this chapter. Deeper insights can be attained by looking into the voices of the texts, understanding the perspectives and the plot structures. David Damrosch states in his book, *How to Read World Literature*, the significance of reading repertoire while including of frames of reference. (Damrosch)

“Inevitably, we approach a work with expectations and reading skills shaped by the many works we have read in the past – both those of our home tradition and other foreign works we have already encountered. Rather than trying to erase this fund of prior knowledge, we need to use it productively as our springboard into the new” (Damrosch)
A novel and a film are both forms of storytelling first. Storytelling is no more than creative and artistic narration. Since the ancient age, stories have been passed down to generations through varied forms of storytelling, be it oral, written or printed and more lately recorded in audio and/or video forms. We thus understand that each way of medium of storytelling is different from the other. Therefore how each author would narrate his story would make it unique to him/her. Accordingly, when we look at works of adaptation, the narrative of an adapted film might be similar to the original novel or not depending on the way the filmmaker seeks to say his story.

Comprehending the reason behind the use of a particular narrative technique by a filmmaker is vital to understand the form as well. Sometimes, it might be necessary to change the narrative structure of the text when it is adapted into a film since that is the demand of the cinematic medium. A lot many scholars have debated that when a filmmaker does not remain faithful to the novel, it is a sure shot formula for failure. But time and again we have come across gems that are beautiful in their own way as pieces of arts, adapted so beautifully into another medium form one. Michael Ryan states in his book, *An Introduction to Criticism Literature/Film/Culture*, “Narrative filmmakers tell stories with meaning, much as novel writers do. But filmmaking is different because it is a visual medium that requires very different tools and techniques for creating meaning.” (Ryan)

The elements that help to understand narratives are frequency, duration and the order of events, the voice amongst many others. The order of events, frequency, duration and the voice are some of the important aspects that Gerard Genette suggests one must remember while dissecting narratology of a text. (contributors, Gérard Genette).

In their book on Film Theory, Richard Rushton and Gary Bettinson, also go on to argue what would be the response of a 'thinking viewer' upon watching a cinematic
text. They also consider whether such a viewer would be influenced by the narrative or characterisation. (Richard Rushton)

4.1 Linear Narratives in The Old Man and the Sea by Hemingway and John Sturges

In the novel *The Old Man and the Sea* (Hemingway), and the film the narrative structures are so linear and so similar that one can almost skip reading the book entirely and simply watch the film. The film (Sturges) by John Sturges is an exact replica of the novel. There is a use of the narrator in the film who is actually the old man himself. The film has few dialogues but mostly there is a background narration with each scene. The narration is actually the train of thoughts of the old man. Just like the way it is put forth by Hemingway in the novella, the filmmaker too employs a similar technique of narration.

In the films *Siddhartha* (Rooks) and *Samskara* (Girish Karnad) there is not much narration. In *Siddhartha* there are certain scenes where the character of Siddhartha is lost in thoughts or his reflections are narrated loudly for the viewer. In *Samskara*, Pattabhirama Reddy skips narration altogether. There is only dialogue and that is minimal as well.

What is interesting is the use of narrative techniques in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. There many sequences of narration where the protagonist Winston's thoughts are spoken out aloud for the viewer. These techniques of narration are not very novel or different. Many filmmakers employ such techniques of narration. Most of these are employing the use of first person point of view. The narrator is the protagonist in most cases say
for example in *Siddhartha* (the film) it is the character of Siddhartha (the protagonist) himself. In *The Old Man and the Sea* it is Santiago. They directly relate their thoughts or experiences. In the novels as well, the narration is very similar and therefore one might assume that the filmmaker might have directly employed a similar technique. In these texts the narrator directly addresses 'you' who is the reader or the viewer and tells or narrates their experiences, what they feel, think.

These novels and films both make use of dialogue as well to aid their narration. In some novels such as *Nineteen Eighty Four* there is really minimal dialogue. The novel is mostly shaped through the thoughts of Winston the protagonist and we the world around him through his eyes and mind. The filmmaker Michael Radford has aptly made use of this technique in his film as well. There are dialogues as well. At times he also makes use of shifts in time as an aid to narration. This technique is seen in *The Old Man and the Sea* where the old man slips into dreams. The flashback or dream sequences are adapted on screen as well by the filmmakers. These make for a great foreshadowing tool to the narrator.
Plate 28 The Old Man and The Sea. Directed by John Sturges. 1958. In this still image, the old man takes up almost entire foreground. There is a lot of bluish tint in the image, to give an effect of the night time. He is seen holding the fishing line. The image is composed such that one realises the fish is hooked to the line and the end is very near.
Plate 29 The Old Man and the Sea. Directed by John Sturges. 1958. In this image, we see Santiago and the boy walking down towards his home. They are carrying Santiago's fishing equipment. The shot has been taken such that we see the sea, the boats and other fishermen in the background. The characters in the foreground almost blend with the background. This shot from the earlier part of the film gives the viewer an idea that the story is based in a fishing village. The red colour of the boy’s shirt helps to mark a difference between the two characters walking in the front from the rest.
Plate 30, 31- The Old Man and the Sea. Directed by John Sturges. 1958. In both the images above, we see the director has made use of lanterns on the boats. In the former image, the sun has set and hence the Old Man lights his lantern to see clearly.

In the latter image, a row of boats is going into the sea at dawn. This is an interesting and symbolic use of prop.
There is something quite remarkable about the dynamics of *The Old Man and The Sea*. Notwithstanding its obvious forthrightness, the story actually develops on a psychological dimension as well as emotional. “The tale of The Old Man and the Sea is parablesque”, says Eric Ting adapter and director of the theatrical production of the original novel. (TING) Ernest Hemingway’s style of writing is said to have been copied ("Ernest Hemingway: A Singular Style." Literary Cavalcade 57.8) by far too many. One may say that his prose is so simple which is why his narrative is so striking and effective. Hemingway writes about all the small things, the animals, the weather, the fish with much simplicity. His style is from complex.

Brian Hochman, writes about Ralph Ellison’s views on Ernest Hemingway in his book, Ellison’s Hemingway. In this book he states that, Ernest Hemingway’s writing is imbued with a spirit that transcends the tragic. Ralph Ellison goes to say that Ernest Hemingway produced great art because he wrote what he actually felt. It was not what one was supposed to feel or taught how to be felt that he cared about. He was real and he wrote down what was real. Ellison states that, “reading Hemingway literally meant the difference between eating and going hungry.” (Hochman)

In an article by a research scholar Eric Nakjavani, titled The Aesthetics of the Visible and the Invisible: Hemingway, we find Hemingway’s own words about writing. They are,” *I was learning something from the painting of Cezanne that made writing simple true sentences far from enough to make the stories have the dimensions that I was trying to put in them. I was learning very much from him but I was not articulate enough to explain it to anyone*....

*...He was the greatest. He, Nick, wanted to write about country so it would be there like Cezanne had done it in painting. You had to do it from inside yourself. There*
wasn’t any trick. Nobody had ever written about country like that. He felt almost holy about it. It was deadly serious. You could do it if you could fight it out. If you had lived right with your eyes. (Nakjavani)

A good reading of Hemingway’s short stories helps identify his style to the art of photography sometimes. The way he describes the settings and characters is so simple and visual. This probably is one of the reasons why so his writings are made into films. Ironically, cinematic adaptations of Hemingway’s works have failed miserable, even though his own style of writing is very cinematic. It becomes vital to go back to Brian McFarlane once again, while discussing narratives, and as he says in his work, Novel To Films that while studying adaptation, narrative is at the central of this entire process. He further says that the purpose of a cinematic adaptation could be leisurely pursuit, a means of expressions, or simple creation of an art, that what remains common between both the fiction and film is that they both have narratives. (McFarlane)

In a work of literature, there exists narration that happens only through a narrator. The narrator could be the protagonist, first person, second person or third person or there could be an omniscient narrator. But in a film, the scheme of things changes and the narration can be done in many different ways. The cinematic techniques can be used creatively and effectively to become sources of narration. In The Old Man and the Sea (Sturges) and Samskara (Reddy), the filmmakers have resorted to flashback sequences as tools of narration. Both the film adaptations have rather linear plots, which are very similar to the original novels. But with the change in the medium of expression, the technique of narration too changes. A very interesting and to the point statement made by Christian Metz has been highlighted in McFarlane’s Novel To Films, “Films tells us continuous stories; it “says” things that could be conveyed also
in the language of words; yet it says them differently. There is a reason for the possibility as well as for necessity of adaptation.” He further adds that the most common ground on which a novel and a film stand is that of a narrative. Not only is it the chief factor both novels and films based on them stand on, but also, it is the chief transferrable element. (McFarlane) It is only because, cinematic medium has been a medium of storytelling, has it gathered enormous power and gained maximum audiences, adds Metz.

4.2 Transformation in The Metamorphosis of Frank Kafka

The film The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka is an experimental film made by Spanish director Carlos Atanes (Atanes). The name of the film itself suggests that it is a work that is a metamorphosis (transformation) of the actual work that is written by Franz Kafka.

Even though the main plot is retained in the film, there are some interesting effects given in the film. The film (Atanes) has many digressions and though the original story is the same, a few changes have been made to the film. There is no narrator at all in this film. There are dialogues and use of music. In fact the director has included a beautiful portion of Beethoven's 5th symphony in this film. There is even a scene with Adolf Hitler and Nazi soldiers marching down the street and checking down the houses where Jews live and visiting the Samsa house.
The world of Metamorphosis created by Kafka is so brilliantly imagined that it continues to live on in varied adaptations throughout the world. Though there are many theatrical productions of the same, surprisingly cinematic adaptations are scarce. Many literary purists might be happy upon knowing that no full length feature film has yet been made on *The Metamorphosis* (Kafka). But the one that stands out clearly is a short film made by Carlos Atanes. It is approximately 29 minutes in length and has English subtitles. For the most part the story is similar to the original version but there are a few changes. This film is based during the time period of World War II. There is a scene where two Nazis show up at the Samsa house. This is an added input to the film. The original story has it that Gregor hides in his bedroom when he is transformed into an insect. But in the film, he hides in the large dim lit library.
The use of camera in the film is very nifty. One has to watch the film intently to notice the minute filming techniques that may otherwise be overshadowed by the dialogues and the story. The cinematography is good. In the beginning of the film, there is a scene, where Gregor returns from work. He opens the door to a large dining room and enters it. Till this point the camera follows him. But it does not when he enters the dining room. The camera stays still where it is till Gregor comes out of the room. This gives the viewer a distant feeling. Just when the viewer feels close and let in, the director pushes him out. It is like one is intentionally made to feel left out.

Plate 33 – The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka. Directed by Carlos Atanes. 1993. Shot of Gregor Samsa about to open a door. In the novel he goes inside his bedroom, but in the film, the door opens into a library.
The film is shot in a set that looks like a giant European archaic mansion. But each individual shots are shot in small confined spaces. If the shot is taken in a big room, then the camera is placed very far away. Or sometimes, the rest of room is not lit. This seems like a deliberate act on part of the director. He specifically makes use of small spaces or long shots or dark and light contrasts. Probably he wants to deliver the message that people may live in big houses or spaces but their mind-sets are narrow. They Samsa family may live in a big house but they treat their son like a commodity. Till the time he is fit enough to perform his duties they take care of him, but the moment they realise he can be of no help, they ill-treat him.


The name of the film is The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka. It is almost like saying that the film is derived from the story The Metamorphosis written by Franz Kafka, but it is metamorphic in itself or has been changed. It is the metamorphosis i.e. the transformation of Franz Kafka’s story. Many things are changed in the film. In the
novel, Gregor Samsa enters bedroom. But in the film, he enters the library. In the film, he is shown working in the library and suddenly notices himself doodling. The director portrays this scene as if Gregor involuntarily starts doodling and is surprised himself. Suddenly, he is drawn into another world where there are big doodles all around and he hears buzzing sound. He soon passes out after that and wakes up on the library floor to find that he is transformed into half insect.


Gregor Samsa is shown to be spinning around in confusion, and his eventual metamorphosis into an insect. In the novel, he falls asleep and wakes up to find himself transformed into an insect. The narrative in the film, shows his metamorphosis slightly differently.
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The rest of the story continues as is from the novel. The minor changes in the story and the use of filming techniques make the film a different experience all together. The use of Nazi references in the film is blatant.

Another worthy mention of a film based on Kafka’s classic is Franz Kafka’s It’s a Wonderful Life, made by Peter Capaldi in 1995 (Capaldi). Sources (Makowsky) on the internet state that Capaldi was inspired to write the film when his wife confused the names Frank Capra and Franz Kafka. The name of the film, Franz Kafka’s It’s a Wonderful Life is a short film as well. This short film lasting around 23 minutes portrays Kafka’s struggle with writer’s block. The filmmaker then shows that while writing the novel, how immense number of thoughts can enter and leave a writer’s mind. He shows what all possibilities pass through Kafka’s mind. In the film, while
Kafka is writing, he is interrupted by people who come to wish him happy holidays. Thus Capaldi shows both the struggles that a writer faces; inner and outer. The inner struggle that goes on in his mind and the outer struggle that is the external forces of the world that he cannot control. The people who interrupt Kafka are a travelling knife salesman, a woman who says that Kafka ordered a giant bug costume, his neighbour Miss Cicely. The film comes across sometimes as a giant mockery. For instance when Kafka is disturbed by the noise of holiday celebrations being made by Miss Cicely, he thinks about going to her door and complaining. When he does go to her home, she invites him to the party and he looks inside her home to see pretty girl friends of Miss Cicely hopping like Kangaroos. At each stage we are taken inside the inner world of Kafka. He is so immersed in writing his story that sometimes, his imaginations mixes with the reality he sees.

The background music is eerie and gives the film a gothic like atmosphere. The film ends in a way that the viewer is left pondering whether anything that one saw real at all. This film too like Atanes’ film is an experimental approach at adapting Kafka’s canonical work, “The Metamorphosis. This film won the Oscar for best short film in 1995.

Both the films adapted from Franz Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* are short films and in a way works of experimental art. While Atanes’ approach is more grotesque and one can find it grim and obnoxious at times, Capaldi’s work comes across as bizarre.

After all narration is the tool used to make stories and tell them to the world and everyone would have a different way of telling stories. Moreover narrations are largely defined by social, historical and cultural contexts. Thus each writer whose novel we have selected to study would have a different technique of narration and so
would the narrative techniques of all the films be different. The use of narration is very interesting in each and every novel and its adaptive film.

Through this study, one can safely say that a narrative film opens with a story it wants to tell. But in order to tell this story, the film has to be made and for the film to be actualised, a set must be constructed, actors must be hired and other tools for filming must be procured such as the camera, the microphones, the lights and the post production tools as well.

The inner world of the author finds manifestation in the narrator and the interactions of the characters in the story. The reader brings along his life experiences and philosophy, life circumstances, assets and limits when he reads and interprets a literary work. Kafka, as omniscient narrator in The Metamorphosis tells a fable that requires a reader’s constant involvement. The story is filled to the brim with misleading assumptions and deceptions.

4.3 A Spiritual Journey through Hesse’s and Rook’s versions of Siddhartha

The narrative structure of Siddhartha, the novel is interesting as well. The novel progresses in three stages. The first stage is where Siddhartha questions the purpose and meaning of life. He discards Brahmanism (*Encyclopædia

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* Brahmanism, religion of ancient India that evolved out of Vedism. It takes its name both from the predominant position of its priestly class, the Brahmans, and from the increasing speculation about, and importance given to, Brahman, the supreme power. Brahmanism is distinguished from the classical Hinduism that succeeded it by the
Britannica.Encyclopædia Britannica Online.) and ventures out to seek the purpose of life and happiness. He meets Gautama Buddha and questions him about where one could find true happiness in life. But his answers do not satisfy Siddhartha. He then decides to leave the troop of ascetics he had been following so far and decides to go solo. This marks the end of the first phase of Siddhartha’s journey. In the next phase, he is met with physical pleasures when he is introduced to Kamala, a beautiful courtesan. He sheds off all his ascetic ways and becomes a samsara i.e. a worldly man. After some time the monotony of this life catches up with him and he feels the need to move forward. This marks the end of the second phase of his life. He plunges into the third phase sorrowful not having found true sense of freedom and happiness in life. While sitting on a boat chatting with the boatman, he expresses his grief. The boatman, a simple common man gives the answers to all of Siddhartha’s questions by simply giving the analogy of the river. He explains to Siddhartha that life is like a river. This simple philosophy that the boatman share with Siddhartha is enough to wake him and jolt him to life. He realises that running behind happiness will never make one happy. You have to be still and content with the way life is and happiness will come to you. He then takes over the job of rowing the boat on the river and lives a peaceful, happy life.

Hermann Hesse has beautifully linked the three phases of the novel with the three phases of Siddhartha’s life. Each phase begins with the river and we realise at the end that the river itself was the answer all along to Siddhartha’s questions. This beautiful smooth narrative of the novel makes it alluring to the readers.

*enhanced significance given in classical Hinduism to individual deities, such as Siva and Vishnu, and to devotional worship (bhakti).*

In the film *Siddhartha* made by Conrad Rooks, we see a similar narrative is followed as well (Rooks). The film though comes across as an artistic piece in itself. Sven Nykvist, the Swedish cinematographer has beautifully rendered the novel on celluloid. His imagery of India’s landscape is serene and calming. The director has made use of Indian music (classical and folk) to add to the narrative of the story. The chants of the monks and ascetics and the beautiful *thumri* (contributors, Thumri) makes its impact on the story and the way it progresses. The cinematographer, Sven Nykvist, has for the most part relied on wide angle shots. The entire film has a hazy imagery. To elaborate, it seems like the sharpness of the picture has been reduced while editing to give the film, a soft look. This could probably be the filmmaker’s way of giving a feel of mysticism. The use of Bengali music at varied points in the film, adds to this mysticism. The second part of the novel, talks about Siddhartha’s meeting with Kamaswami and Kamala, a courtesan. In this part, his fascination with material wealth and physical desires is described. In the film, direct reference to the ancient
carvings from Indian sculptures has been made. The scene where Simi Garewal who plays the role of Kamala, is shown completely without attire, became quite controversial, but it was simply adhering to symbolism. Thus, in Siddhartha (Rooks), has stayed as faithful to the original as possible. In terms of McFarlane or Dudley Andrew’s types of adaptation, this could be categorized under the second type in both. The film follows the story of the novel, but not without its own additions and elements.

4.4 Power, Control and Freedom in Nineteen Eighty Four

The narrative of the book Nineteen Eighty Four is very alluring too (Orwell). It is a well-crafted narrative that plays along the plot of the dystopia story very well. George Orwell has sought many writing techniques to portray to the readers a dystopic world or future. In the beginning of the novel itself, he describes the protagonist of the story, Winston Smith. He describes him as entering into the building where he lives which is old, shabby and dilapidated. The surroundings of the building too are foul and dirty. This itself sets the grim tone of the novel. He provides the image of dystopia with the use of words such as dull, bleak, controlled, oppressing, repressing, depressing, sad, and stark. He mentions that all the characters and any movements are under constant surveillance of the Party (the government).

The use of colour and sound too aid the narration. Michael Radford has beautifully done this his rendition of Nineteen Eighty Four (Radford). The use of dull and then contrasting them with bright colours is an aid to the narration where the character slips into the dream like utopia and then is hurled back into the present dystopia. The film follows the original plot of the novel devotedly. Winston Smith is a citizen of the
totalitarian state, Oceania. He rewrites historical documents for the Ministry of Truth. Winston leads a dreary and routine life; he must abide by the strict procedures of the Party, like propaganda movies and daily inspections. Upon failing to do so, he may have to answer the Thought Police. Winston also secretly keeps a journal that contains his private thoughts. The story’s takes a turn when Winston meets Julia, a bold and energetic young Party member. The two enter into a forbidden romantic/sexual relationship and Winston rents a secret apartment above the store of a trusted associate. Winston and Julia’s secret is eventually found out through the surveillance of the trusted store owner. The Party seizes Winston’s diary as evidence and imprisons Winston and Julia.

This is forbidden by the State, because free thought in Oceania is considered thoughtcrime\(^2\), and those who commit thoughtcrime are never seen again. They are brainwashed by the torturous practices of O’Brien, a Party leader, and forcibly made to deny their thoughtcrime* and love for each other before being released.

In Nineteen Eighty-Four, another striking feature is that there are groups of three all throughout the narrative. They occur over and over again. The first one that one cannot ignore, whether one reads the novel or watches the film, is The Party slogan:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{War is Peace,} \\
&\text{Freedom is Slavery} \\
&\text{Ignorance is Strength}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^2\) A thoughtcrime is an occurrence or instance of controversial or socially unacceptable thoughts. The term is also used to describe some theological concepts such as disbelief or idolatry, or a rejection of strong social or philosophical principles. The term was popularized in the dystopian novel Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell, wherein thoughtcrime is the criminal act of holding unspoken beliefs or doubts that oppose or question the ruling party.
The world as described in this dystopia is comprised of three super-powers.

**Oceania**

**Eurasia**

**Eastasia**

The three ministries that govern Oceania where the novel (and the film) is set

- **Miniluv – Ministry of Love**
- **Minitrue – Ministry of Truth**
- **Minipax – Ministry of Plenty**

Winston Smith, Julia and O’Brien are the three central characters to the novel.

“There are three stages in your reintegration,” said O’Brien. “There is learning, there is understanding, and there is acceptance” (Orwell) Thus the emphasis on ‘three’ is evident in Nineteen Eighty Four. Even in Indian religious mythology, there is the Holy Trinity worshipped and revered.

The language in this novel is simple English. The vocabulary is simple and yet striking. The theme is so powerful in itself that probably Orwell regarded that the use of simple vocabulary would still be equally prominent. It certainly brings out the beauty of the narrative. The plot unfolds in a way that is easily predictable. There is a definite beginning, middle and an end. George Orwell primarily uses first person narrative (which is Winston’s perspective) to unfold the story. He also sometimes shifts to a third person narrative. Thus this dual use of narrative helps the story to open up on two distinct levels. One is personal, from the point of view of the
character that lives the story. The other is a general perspective which is open to interpretation of the readers.

In the film too we follow that a similar approach to narrative has been retained. The director of the film, Michael Radford portrays a grim tale on screen. As a viewer, this film is not easy to watch. It is a much better attempt at adapting the iconic novel on screen. When Winston and Julia happen to be together in the room above Charrington’s shop, during one of their secret meetings, they are looking out of the window and the following dialogue and action ensues.

‘We are the dead’, he said.

‘We are the dead’, echoed Julia dutifully.

‘You are the dead’, said an iron voice behind them. (Orwell)

The voice described as being iron, here is that of the thought police. They have caught Winston and Julia red-handed. It is shelved out here that thoughts of rebellion in their minds too were planted by The Party. They were then taken to the Ministry of Love where they would be tortured into surrender and brainwashed of their thoughtcrimes. The entire novel has a narration that fluctuates from Winston (first-person) to an omniscient third person narrator. But the point of view remains that of Winston.

Michael Radford brings out the best ideas of Orwell from the book on screen. The State controls the media and education. The State also infringes upon privacy and Property Rights. Moreover the State infringes upon Sexual Liberty too.
Plate 40 Nineteen Eighty-Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. This image shows the bureaucracy within the Ministry of Truth/Minitrue. An important feature of this image is the arrangement of cubicles to the left and the right and a woman walking through the centre looking down. A high angle shot creates a sense of superiority for the Party. This goes to show that the Ministry is above all. It is the most powerful and controls everyone.

Plate 41- Nineteen Eighty Four. Directed by Michael Radford. 1984. Smith hides from the view of his telescreen while engaging in own life. The protagonist of the novel is shunned to a corner of the frame. Whereas the telescreen takes up the major portion of the frame and this conveys that an individual is of no value in front of the Party.

The State also subjugates the Individual. The film’s ending is bleak just like the novel’s. The substance of the novel can be seen to have seeped through the film. The message is clearly there. The performances are impeccable. John Hurt as Winston Smith totally fits the bill.

Apart from staying faithful to the novel, the techniques used in the film are brilliant. The film uses lighting and colour as an aid to the theme of the story. The lighting in the film is dull throughout. It seems to go with the flow of the theme of the novel.
Radford is said to have used a technique called as bleach bypassing. This is an optical effect. Owing to the use of this technique, a black and white image is superimposed upon the original colour image. The reduced saturation and underexposure gives a definite type of colour scheme to the film. This dullness of colour in a way stands out brilliantly. It works with the theme of the film.

Light, sound, colour, image composition, framing, *mise-en-scene* (Merriam-Webster An Encyclopædia Britannica Company) are some of the important elements to consider when analysing a film as a text. *Mise-en-scene* is the physical setting of an action (as of a narrative or a motion picture) according to the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. These tools aid the filmmaker to convey the story using the cinematic medium. Thus the importance of understanding the usage of these tools is vital to analysing a film under study.

### 4.5 Ritual Framework and Narrative in Samskara

A film, based on a novel that received Jnanpith Award, makes all attempts to remain as faithful to the original novel as it can. Made a mere four years after the actual novel was written, this film is black and white. It is made in Kannada, the language the novel is originally written in. The film does have English subtitles for the viewers who do not understand Kannada. The film probably completely follows the original novel, which is in Kannada language. As for this research, the English translation by A. K. Ramanujan has been referred. (Ananthamurthy). The screenplay for this film was written by Girish Karnad, a famous playwright, actor and director from India. He read the novel and was so fascinated by it, that he immediately wrote the screenplay.
for it. Ananthamurthy too read the screenplay and was present on location during the film shooting. Girish Karnad played the protagonist in the film.

This film, begins with title slides, that quote a hymn from the Atharva Veda and poses questions pertaining to the themes of this novel such as morality, life and death. This somehow seems very apt. It is not known, if the absolute original copy of the film, without the subtitles has these title slides in it or whether it has the slides in Kannada. But the fact remains, that this film is unavailable commercially. The copy of the film referred for the purpose of this research was passed down from a literary scholar and critic who himself received it from Karnad himself.

Plate 43 - Samskara. Directed by Pattabhi Rama Reddy. 1970. The Title Slide in the Film, with a hymn from Atharva Veda, setting the theme and thus the narrative of the film.
There is no narrator in the film, rather it relies largely on dialogues of the characters and heart stirring music. The day to day life in an agrahara is very aptly picturized. The first scene of the film is that of Praneshacharya bathing in the river early in the morning and returning home to carry on with the daily chores. The Brahmin wives are shown carrying about their daily chores of taking care of children, washing clothes while they banter on about the deceased Naranappa and nag their husbands to cremate his body and get hold of his gold. These scenes are shown so realistically, that one does not realise it is made up. After certain intervals, there is a shot inserted of rats moving around in circles and dying. This shot is accompanied with fast paced music that has drums beating.

This scene may not make much sense to an ordinary viewer, but it does thwart one back from the ongoing story. Finally, it is revealed that the rats are from plague and so did Naranappa. There are also shots of vultures hovering over the agrahara, which is very unusual. The superstitious Brahmins, make loud noises to scare them away, but they keep returning. They are symbolic of the impending end of it all, the people, the thoughts, the superstitions, the traditions. This film does deviate a lot from the original novel. The most striking part of the film, is the end. In the end, Praneshacharya talks to Putta about how he has flouted all the norms of Brahmanism in secrecy. He slept with a Shudra woman, he left his home and ate at a temple, and he shouldn’t have as his wife died the previous night. In the novel, there is no such dialogue between Praneshacharya and Putta. Both simply go their own ways. Praneshacharya is shown walking away. It is not revealed where he is going. But in the film, he hitchhikes a ride on a bullock cart back to Durvasapura. He is shown standing and overlooking the agrahara, cut to a shot of flames of fire with the end credits. The film ends here. One can possibly say that, he opens his heart to Putta, and in that manner, gives himself away. He accepts his mistakes and hypocrisy. It is only then that he gathers courage to go back to Durvasapura. The lonely, depressed and guilt driven Praneshacharya in the novel, transforms into a man walking with a tall gait and head held high in the last scene. He has washed himself of his sins, guilt and hypocrisy. The last scene probably also signifies, his determination when he looks over at the agrahara. The flames may be interpreted as signifying, the cremation of everything that is old, rusted and immoral. The change is about to come, with the cremation of the dead, that which was mediocre and false in not just thoughts but also deeds. Thus, the narrative structure of this film is very interesting, if one can
overlook, the black and white, grainy film texture. The film is so much a text in its own right and opens new avenues for thinking.

The use of flashback has been done in this film too. It was there in the original novel as well. But in this case, it is the demand of the story. The story begins with the death of the antagonist of the novel and at certain points in the novel when references have to be made to important events in the past, the flashback sequence comes to use.

Plate 45- Samskara. Directed by Pattabhi Rama Reddy. 1970. A Flashback sequence in Samskara, depicting Praneshacharya talking to Naranappa about mending his ways while he was still alive

When a novel and its film adaptations are chosen for a study, the narrative techniques in the two cannot be ignored. The differences in the narrative techniques of the two
cannot be ignored either. A novel may have a first person narrator shifting to stream of consciousness. But in a film adaptation of the same, the treatment of the narrative may be absolutely different. It does not have to adhere to the technique that is prevalent in the novel. Cinematic medium is more responsive and therefore, the use of voice-over or on-screen narration can be very meaningfully employed. It may help in divulging flashbacks or emphasising a sense of past. The way camera moves and shots are captured also aids in narration. As we see in The Metamorphosis of Franz Kafka, The Old Man and The Sea and Samskara that close ups are such a interwoven part of the narrative, we realise that frames and individual shots all form an intricate part of the narratives. The use of sound and lighting aids the narrative in ways that can be creatively actualized. Narrative can make or break a text and how a narrative is developed depends on what medium an artist has at hand. A same text in two different media would probably have totally different narrative structures, according to the need of the media. Thus, understanding narratives is vital to study of adaptations.
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