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Munshi Premchand in Translation: A Case Study of Satyajit Ray's Telefilm 'Sadgati'

***Manoj Kumar Yadav**

Abstract

This paper explores the complex process of mediation that a story undergoes from its written version to visual recreation. As the 'source text' narrative is primarily centered around a case of caste discrimination, this study intends to conceptualize how the caste hierarchies are relocated on screen. The fact that this is relatively a less explored terrain about the films based on Premchand's fictions is also one of the reasons that I engage with this particular aspect. In order to achieve this, I have closely analyzed the visual text vis-a-vis the written text and focused on techniques/tools that the film uses to recreate the short story on screen. I hope that the theoretical underpinnings of some of the questions pertaining to visualizing caste on screen, either about this particular short story or elsewhere, would lead to more sustained investigation in this area.

Keywords: transmediality, visual text, written text, parallel cinema

Introduction

Premchand wrote the short story 'Sadgati' (1931) in the last phase of his career when he was largely influenced by progressive movement.ⁱ However, it was much before, with his shift from Urdu to Hindi, that Premchand had inaugurated realistic writings into Hindi literature. An integral part of this progressive realism was engagement with the peasant life and landscape. Realistic fiction in India was concomitant with a range of issues pertaining to the question of social reform. Illustration of the casteⁱⁱ sanctioned oppression was one of the themes that got reflected in Premchand's fiction.

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The film version of the short story was produced by Satyajit Ray in 1981 at the backdrop of parallel cinema movementⁱⁱⁱ, which had started making waves in Bengali cinema since 1950s. Some recurring subject matters of this type of cinema were—problems of religious orthodoxy, caste based discrimination, patriarchy, difficulties of the peasants and so on. Satyajit Ray was an obvious precursor of this neorealist approach to cinema. His film *Sadgati* immediately garnered attention for various reasons after its telecast in 1981. However, in this paper, I have tried to understand the implications of the differences that the story develops while relocating the caste/class relations on screen. I have organised this paper into two parts; the first part focuses on what is unsaid in the source text and how it is being articulated through the technique of contrast in the film, the second part reflects on the way certain objects, which remain negligible in the source text, are employed in the film as powerful symbols.

Relocating Caste on Screen

Satyajit Ray's telefilm *Sadgati*, set in the milieu of a north Indian village, illustrates a day in the life of Dukhi, a grass-cutter by occupation and a low caste (Chamar, or a tanner) in Hindu caste hierarchy, hence an untouchable. Dukhi goes to the Brahmin Ghasiram and requests him to set an auspicious date for his daughter's marriage. The Brahmin promises to perform the task, although not very willingly, in exchange for Dukhi slaving over household chores. Already sick and weak due to recent fever, Dukhi dies while chopping a huge block of wood in the scorching sun.

But before I embark on the analysis of the textual and cinematic versions of the story let me clarify certain issues which are pertinent to the way I approach the visual text. Even while

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investigating the changes that the multimedia text develops in the course of relocating the short story on the screen, my intention is not to give rise to a ‘fidelity criticism’ because that will limit the scope of my inquiry by looking at the film as a ‘faithful’ or ‘unfaithful’ recreation of the source text. Consequently, the discourse of ‘loss’ and ‘gain’ will inevitably attempt to reinscribe the putative superiority of one text over the other. Therefore, I rather wish to look at both the texts situated in two different socio-cultural contexts. A gap of fifty years, which exists between the written text and the movie, reflects on the changing dynamics of the society and the different modes of representation that the different artists have taken recourse to. Francesca Chiostrì’s concept of ‘film accommodation’ precisely explains the external factors like politics, religion, and society which influence the film accommodations of a particular printed text (Chiostrì 1996:149).

Like all other contemporary art forms—and yet in a more marked way, because they are a form of *mass* entertainment—film accommodations are also the product of the pressure of religion, politics, market, different preoccupations and standard of the mass media, as well as manipulators of taste (Chiostrì 1996:149).

Therefore, a number of questions could be pertinent to study an adaptation in general and transmediality in particular: What inspires an adaptation? What is the funding agency for such adaptations and what does it suggest for the adaptations? How have certain elements been omitted from the written text and how some other elements have been induced? What is the reason, role, and function of such changes? Under what socio-political context an adaptation is produced and how does it relate to the subject/s that it portrays? Under the common light of the above questions, I have majorly engaged with the issues of caste in the film, i.e. representation of caste and caste relations in the film.

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If we look at the socio-political context in which the film was produced, we perceive that the decades of 1970s and 1980s were marked by increasing debate on the issues of caste and Naxalite uprising. When the Dalit Panther Movement started questioning caste establishments at various levels in the society, cinema was also witnessing a change as it engaged with caste oriented issues more than ever. *Jait re Jait* (Win, win), a Marathi film which came in 1977 and the Hindi film *Ankur* (1974) were efforts in this direction. In the 1980s and 1990s, Doordarshan and National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC) produced/directed/subtitled a number films which engaged with contemporary socio-political issues: *Jaane bhi do Yaaro* (1983) focuses on the issue of corruption in the Indian politics and bureaucracy, *Mirch Masala* (1987) reflects on the exploitation of villagers in the hands of landlords, and *Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro* (1989) deals with the aftermaths of communal conflict, especially its effect on the youth from Muslim minority. It seems that Doordarshan and NFDC had an objective of including the most pressing issues as a subject matter for the parallel cinema. *Sadgati* (1981), produced by Doordarshan, seems to endorse this ideology of the above mentioned two organizations. It is in the backdrop of such developments that the film *Sadgati* should be seen.

As we look at the film, we perceive that the narrative proceeds with a number of contrasts, for example—Dukhi's home and Ghasiram's home, Dukhi's wife and daughter and Ghasiram's wife and son, the low-caste folks and the Brahmin folks in the village. In the very first scene, the camera notices the ramshackle shed of Dukhi's house followed by the arrival of his wife. In the background, one can see other houses of the similar kind, and most of them are located beside a drain. This introductory scene insinuates the kind of area is occupied by outcaste people in the village. In this early phase of the film, two significant signposts are given: first, Dukhi's stumble (Part1/5. 02:45) under the weight of the bundle of grass,

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prompting Jhuriya to speak about his recent illness; and second, Dukhi's haste in going out (Part 1/5. 05:24) asserting that he does not have the time to eat.

As Dukhi arrives at the Brahmin Ghasiram's house we observe the scene—half of the frame covered by Ghasiram's well-built house and the other half covered by clay shed in the neighbourhood. When Ghasiram, who is almost of the same age as Dukhi, catches sight of him, Dukhi prostrates himself on the ground and stands up with folded hands. At this juncture, the camera notices the arrival of Ghasiram's son (Part 2/5. 02:02), wearing a white *dhoti* and *kurta* and books in his hand. Here, one might be reminded of Dukhi's daughter Dhaniya who is almost of the same age as Ghasiram's son. These two characters are hardly present in the source text. There is only a passing reference to these two characters. It is narrated that Dukhi gets exploited by Ghasiram because he wants an auspicious date to be set for his daughter's marriage. The readers are also left with numerous questions about the girl in the source text: for instance, what is her age? What does she think of marriage? Whether the marriage is taking place as per her will or not? Similarly, the son of Ghasiram is also not part of the source text narrative except a passing reference that Ghasiram used to beat his son. It remains unknown to the readers whether the approach of the boy towards the untouchables is similar to his father's or not. In addition to this, he is made completely unfamiliar with the scheme of events between the life of his father and Dukhi. But these unarticulated aspects of the source text are articulated in the film text with a framework of contrast between the two. The first appearance of Dukhi's daughter Dhaniya occurs when she is shown playing with other children in the neighbourhood. On the contrary, the son of Ghasiram appears well dressed holding a book in his hand. This contrast renders the broader question of the different castes and their access to education. From a thematic point of view, it can be said that through their specific behaviours these two characters make the audience visualise how a

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mindset shaped by caste-system impinges on succeeding generations. Equally remarkable portrayal in the film is the age of these two characters—both being between eight and ten years. When the source text does not give any clue to the age of Dukhi's daughter why does the film presume her not to be an adult? Does the film intend to encapsulate child marriage system as a frequent phenomenon among low caste Hindus? Or is it a certain kind of liberty that the visual text takes, and consequently attempts shaping its own identity? Or as the film is set in the 1930s should we assume that it is the manner in which the film perceives the period?

Furthermore, another important addition in the film is a scene where the Brahmin Ghasiram is counselling, with well-worn platitudes from the *Gita* (Part5/5. 09:10), a person who has recently lost his wife. It is quite apparent that the speech of Ghasiram does not contain any sympathy for the dead woman. The source text narrates that after finishing his daily rituals Ghasiram would go outside the house where few clients would be waiting for him (Premchand, 1931: 664). But it is silent about what kinds of matters he would generally deal with. The readers do not know whether these issues are concerned with family, marriage or religious rituals. The film uses this incident to highlight two things: first, giving the audience a clue of Ghasiram's daily business; second, his approach while dealing with clients. The first objective of the addition of this scene can be accounted as a result of the limited time space of the film, whereas the second objective can be adjudged as a consequence of film's impetus to give the audience an understanding of Ghasiram's character.

Another significant shift in the movie is the character of Chikhuri the *Gond*.^{iv} His character does not get as extended treatment as in the source text, though he is present from the time Dukhi starts chopping the block of wood. The look of astonishment on his face is his first

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response, shocked that a man should be engaged in such a futile task in the scorching heat. The very presence of Chikhuri provides the viewers with a third perspective, apart from the world views of the Brahmin and the 'untouchable'. The viewers may or may not share his perspective but his look is significant in prompting the viewers to recapitulate a sequence of interconnected precedents that have led to Dukhi's present distress: the scene indicating the poor health of Dukhi, Ghasiram eating a fine lunch inside his comfortable home and moreover, over-riding responsibility of Dukhi to his daughter and the delay by Ghasiram without any obvious reason. When Dukhi tells Chikhuri that he could have cut the wood had he eaten, he tells Dukhi quite reasonably to go and ask for food. In telling Dukhi to ask for food, he is in effect telling him to stand up to the Brahmin Ghasiram. In the short story, Chikhuri makes very significant observation on caste and labour:

He (the Brahmin) took pride in twirling his mustache as he had his lunch, and slept peacefully, while he has assigned you the task of cutting this huge log of wood. A landlord too gives at least food (to a hired worker). A *Hakim* also pays a minimum wage for the labor. But he has gone one step ahead, still he claims to be a religious person^v (Premchand, 1931: 666, emphasis is mine).

Chikhuri's narrative in the short story seems to project a world highly determined by caste hierarchies, i.e. higher castes exploiting the untouchables, though the degree of exploitation might differ. However, the film chooses to erase this section as we do not see Chikhuri making any reference to the issue of labour and wage. In fact the character of Chikhuri seems to perform a different function in the film. He rather plays the role of a catalyst who instigates Dukhi to rebel. And that is why the film doesn't make Chikhuri help Dukhi, as it happens in the short story, in cutting the wood. Perhaps he doesn't consider Dukhi worth his assistance. Chikhuri is equally angry with Dukhi for being too humble to carry out the orders of Ghasiram, but this segment remains unsaid in the source text. He simply throws the axe down and goes away. Again, after the death of Dukhi, when he sets off to inform other villagers,

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the narrative in the written text does not record his emotional responses. He is rather concerned about the legal consequences of certain actions (Premchand, 1931: 667). But in the film, he expresses his resentment as Dukhi refuses to go to the Brahmin to ask for food— ‘Then carry on with the axe! Carry on!’ (Part 3/5. 02:26). But when Dukhi dies, his approach seems to have softened towards him. He immediately comes and takes Dukhi in his arms and says in a furious sarcastic tone— ‘Brahmin Devta! Sadhu-Mahatma!’ (Part 4/5. 07:10). His anger towards the Brahmin gets an expression here. Later he tells other tanners not to remove Dukhi’s dead body, since the tanner’s death is a ‘police matter’, implying that they should not let Ghasiram escape from his offence. On the whole, arguably, the film seems to juxtapose the Gond’s decency and justice with the Brahmin’s callousness and self-interest. However, the movie doesn’t show anything to suggest the kind of relationship a *chamar* and a *gond* share in the larger caste structure. And that is why Chikhuri and Dukhi are shown confronting each other individually. This change in the film is in sharp contrast to the narrative of the short story, where Dhukhi is recounted to have visited the *pura*^{vi} of *gonds*.

In the short story, after the death of Dukhi, readers scarcely get to know the response of other Brahmins in the locality. The author narrates the reaction of an old lady, whose caste or community is not known (Premchand, 1931: 667). Dukhi’s dead body on a road that leads to the well, raises the immediate question among all Brahmins—how to get water? Nevertheless, this concern of all other Brahmins has not been given extended treatment in the source text narrative. But the film deviates from the source text in this respect; there are two scenes where the audience confronts with brahminical stereotypes: first, immediately after Dukhi’s death a neighbouring Brahmin exclaims—‘What! A *Chamar* has died?’ (Part 4/5. 07:30), with a stressed countenance as if Dukhi’s death had ‘polluted’ the entire place. Secondly, the same person is seen discussing with fellow Brahmins about inaccessibility of

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water through the road (Part 5/5. 01:31), as the corpse was lying on the road. In contrast to this, another scene records low caste folk's expression after hearing the news of Dukhi's death (Part 5/5. 01:09), it focuses on dumbstruck faces with outraged red eyes. It makes the audience see the unspeakable anger of the low caste people.



Figure 1 The shot showing the expression of the untouchables as Ghasiram reveals the news of Dukhi's death

The character of Dukhi himself has undergone a major change in the film. In the source text, Dukhi has been portrayed as an individual who has accepted normative roles as assigned in the caste hierarchy. In fact, he is mesmerized by the charisma of the Brahmin's personality. He is full of respect for the Brahmin and perceives him as superior in every sense. He

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observes: “Brahmins do not smoke like us, the low caste people. These people are very sacred. And that is why they are respected and worshiped everywhere”. He further observes: “People get tricked in the financial matters, but if someone dares to trick a Brahmin, his/her entire family will be doomed” (Premchand, 1931: 665). It is quite obvious that the stereotypes of the caste hierarchy seem to have gone deep into his psyche. His words emphasize the degree of inferiority and subjugation that is engrained in his mind.

On the contrary, a conversation between Ghasiram and his wife in the film reflects on the way they perceive the low caste Hindus. Having heard the *chamar* women mourn after Dukhi’s death, the following dialogue occurs:

Brahmin’s wife: Mourning of a *chamar* is an ominous sign.

Brahmin: Yes, very ominous.

Brahmin’s wife: The body has already started stinking.

Brahmin: It was a *chamar*, isn’t it? They don’t have any idea about purity or impurity.

Brahmin’s wife: Nor do they feel disgusting.

Brahmin: They are all impure.

Furthermore, in the source text, there are also derogatory remarks made by the Brahmin on the food habits of the *chamars*. Nevertheless, the above perceptions as articulated by either Dukhi or the Brahmin and his wife are not just individual perceptions, they also demonstrate the way a caste sanctioned society functions and the way people from certain castes perceive their respective counterparts. Now, if we look at the cinematic representation of the story, we notice that the observations of Dukhi (about the Brahmin caste) and the Brahmin and his wife (about the *chamar* caste), are not articulated in the film. The character of Dukhi in the film is not shown to offer his views on the Brahmins. His angst and frustrations seem to portray a case of exploitation of an individual predicament. Similarly, the Brahmin also does not articulate his thoughts on the untouchables. The short story also succeeds in illustrating the

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geographical space occupied by different castes in a village. The word *pura* is used by the author to designate a village/part of a village where Brahmins reside, which conceptually demarcates a line that differentiates Brahmins from the other caste groups. The narrative in the written text seems to have convincingly demarcated the world that Dukhi and Ghasiram inhabit. This demarcation seems to have been omitted in the film. Although, there is one scene (figure 2) with several houses in the background and Brahmins discussing about the removal of Dukhi's dead body at the foreground, which probably indicates that it was a *pura* of Brahmins, the film does not show anything to suggest that *chamars* or *gonds* too had different *puras* to reside. The visual representation seemingly fails to convey that there were different *puras* for different caste groups.



Figure 2 Ghasiram speaks with other Brahmins in the vicinity about the removal of Dukhi's corps

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The two female characters, i.e. Jhuriya and the wife of the Brahmin, are slightly submissive as far as source text is concerned, and more specifically, they are less concerned towards each other. When Jhuriya goes mourning to Ghasiram's door, the response of the latter remains unarticulated (Premchand, 1931: 667). Although, she curses all the women, who were lamenting in the far off village, readers never happen to see these two characters juxtaposed in parallel to each other. But the film succeeds in showing them with a kind of contrast; both characters are contrasted as the camera captures their emotional responses in at least four scenes that appear after Dukhi's death. For example, when Jhuriya tends towards Ghasiram's door, his wife rushes towards the door and closes it. Jhuriya cries and asks from the outside: 'Maharaj! What harm had he done to you that you turned so merciless?' (Part 5/5.05:02). Her laments move the wife of the Brahmin sitting inside, the camera notices her face as she exclaims, 'How hard you made him work!' (Part 5/5. 05:37). The film uses this contrast to articulate the sympathetic attitude of the Brahmin lady which remains unsaid in the source text.

The removal of Dukhi's corpse by Ghasiram seems to be given a short treatment in the source text narrative (Premchand, 1931: 668). It emphasizes more on the despicable removal of Dukhi's body and focuses less on hypocritical mindset of Ghasiram. His struggle in dragging the corpse has remained largely unexpressed. But the film offers some ten shots to show the removal of the corpse of Dukhi (Part 5/5. 06:20-08:25). There is a close shot of Ghasiram's head and shoulder, played on by a flash of lightening with the sound of thunder in the background. There is also another shot where the evening sky on the horizon is largely filling the background of the frame, and Ghasiram is seen performing his task in silhouette. However, what remains unsaid is whether it is a technical strategy of the film to depict the

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alter ego of the character, or the film intends to give some abstractness through this scene where there is no inherent relationship between the character and his actions. All these ten shots seem to be more a comment on the Brahmin's hypocritical mindset than the deplorable settling of Dukhi's corpse, whereas the case with the source text seems to be vice-versa.

Symbols in the Visual Text

There are many objects in the story which form an insignificant part of the source text narrative. But these objects become important images in the film. For instance, the log of wood becomes a virtual character in the film, a formidable counterpart with whom Dukhi has to fight. As Dukhi surveys it, the camera focuses on his face. His unsuccessful attempt to roll it over is some indication of its weight and the arduous task that lies ahead in chopping it. The scars on it indicate that other people also have tried their strength on it, but all in vain. Dukhi has a blunt, small-headed axe. The odds are well in favour of his counterpart, but Dukhi has no choice but to complete the task. Dukhi offers a couple of swings of the axe, which only skids across the surface of the wood, making no impression on it at all; even after he puts all his energy it merely scratches and never penetrates the surface of the log. Dukhi shows all his annoyance, outrage and despair as we see him hurling abuses at this immovable log. But eventually, Dukhi succumbs to death. The camera notices the face of the Gond who was witnessing all this. The film ends with the sight of the block of wood with the axe still hung on it.

When Dukhi enters the Brahmin's locality, the camera sets him in a frame alongside a statue of Ravana. Although it is slightly puzzling to see a statue of Ravana in the Brahmin's locality, Dukhi is certainly projected as an 'intruder', a 'permanent evil' like Ravana who should be abandoned in all probability.

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The scorching sun is another symbol in the film, which troubles an already frail Dukhi. Although it is present from the time when Dukhi starts the task of chopping the log of wood, it is in his final attempt that it appears in the frame of the scene. It becomes instrumental in bringing the climax. As soon as it appears, accompanied with a shrill background music which starts slowly and then intensifies, it gives a sense of trepidation to the viewers with each blow that Dukhi makes on the wood. It comes to be true as Dukhi falls on the ground and dies.

The axe can also be viewed as a symbol in the film. Along with the log of wood, Dukhi is equally frustrated with the axe too. The way it skids over the wood, indicates its bluntness. It does not seem an appropriate cutter keeping in view the size of the wood. It is already blunt and is used to execute the task which probably suits a saw. While smoking, Dukhi beholds it and the camera notices his face and his perceptible helplessness. He seems to be despondent and quite hopeless about the execution of the task, but he sees no other way out. After a long exertion, he throws it away in utter disappointment and frustration. But in turn, he faces the rage of a Brahmin who got scared as the throw was tending towards him. The final scene in the film, as we see in the figure 3, where an axe still hung on the huge log of wood as Dukhi lies dead, seemingly declares the defeat of Dukhi in the hands of destiny.

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Figure 3 Dukhi falls on the ground and dies while the axe is still hung on the huge log of wood

While Dukhi is leaving for the Brahmin's place, a herd of cattle is shown in the background. It indicates that it is early dawn, as generally it is in the morning that cattle move towards fields to graze. Again, when the Brahmin comes to the place of untouchables a similar herd of cattle is shown in the background and at the fore, the camera notices Jhuria sinking to the ground on hearing the news of her husband's death. The scene is an indicator of the cycle of the day—from sunrise to sunset. This scene also seems to be emblematic of Dukhi's condition. He, like animals, is a puppet in the hands of destiny.

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Another important issue, pertaining to the mode of representation, is the issue of caste and language. The terms used by Ghasiram in the written text such as *sasura*, *sala*, *neech* for Dukhi, are derogatory in nature. Similarly, certain words used by Dukhi seem to be slightly different from standard Hindi. In the course of their general conversations, Dukhi and Ghasiram seem to use slightly different registers of Hindi. Dukhi's language consists of words from 'dialects' of Hindi (notice the words such as □□□□□, □□□□□, □□□, □□□□□, □□□□□□□), whereas Ghasiram uses a more Sanskritised form of Hindi. The film seems to neutralise this aspect of the story, as we do not notice any such usage in the course of Ghasiram's conversation with Dukhi. However, the movie chooses another route by using Sanskritised Hindi for the Brahmin's conversations with clients and other Brahmins. An example of such language can be noticed in a scene where the Brahmin Ghasiram is counselling a youth by citing couplets from the *Gita*. But both of the above instances probably give two different implications. While the former can be viewed as a tool to highlight the differences between two castes in terms of language, the later instance shows the social status of the Brahmin in a caste hierarchy. The later instance seems to me to be a representation of a person of a particular class rather than a caste. This class of people is educated and is capable of speaking standard Hindi. It is interesting to observe as to why the film deploys language, in a particular way, i.e. giving a careful treatment to the language of the Brahmin and not being able to grasp the nuances of the language of the chamar? This question has perhaps something to do with the view of the translator that he/she has about the caste system^{vii}. Satyajit Ray himself was not a great advocate of caste based engagement with art and had also opined at times that untouchability and caste based segregation was not prevalent in Bengal (Zutshi, 2012: 251). Hence, as far as the issue of language is concerned,

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it is not surprising that the film treats the two central characters as belonging to two different classes.

Conclusion

It can be said that the representation of different incidents coalesced with corresponding symbols formulates the artistic representation of the story in the film. However, the manner in which Premchand and Ray approach the subject and transmute the content seems to be different. While Premchand's short story attempts to narrate the plight of an untouchable vis-à-vis the caste system, the film seems to portray an individual's predicament in isolation. More often than not, sequence of events have been limited to individual perspectives, and therefore the segments which could have brought forward the caste stereotypes, seem to have been undermined in film. The film uses high angled shots for the *chamars* probably signifying their inferior social status and low angled shots for Brahmins to designate their comparatively higher status. Premchand's story seems to criticize a social system through the demonstration of a particular case, whereas Ray renders an aesthetic treatment of an individual plight detached from the larger social structure. Both the texts, however, correspond to the characteristics of the respective media at two different periods.

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ⁱProgressive movement was a prominent literary movement in Hindi-Urdu in the 1930s. The participants of this movement were left oriented and propagated bringing in social reform and equality among the different classes. Premchand, along with many others, was a precursor of this movement. He inaugurated the Progressive Writers Association which was formed in 1936 in Lucknow.

ⁱⁱThe word 'caste' could designate a number of inferences such as—caste as a community, caste as a relationship that exists between difference communities, and caste a system of social hierarchy etc. However, in this study, I have used the word caste to look at both the community and the relationship the representative members of two different communities share.

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ⁱⁱⁱParallel Cinema, which emerged in India as an alternative to and obverse of commercial cinema, was initially influenced by Italian and French neo-realism and was initiated first by Bengali film makers such as Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Ritwik Ghatak and Tapan Sinha.

^{iv}The Gond is a caste in north India. They are not considered, in the caste hierarchy, as lowly as *Chamars*. And according to tradition, they are considered fit to offer food and drink to Brahmins.

^v Though there are different translations available for Premchand's short story *Sadgati*, here and elsewhere, I have chosen to render my own translations of the excerpts derived from the short story.

^{vi} A *Pura* in a north Indian village set-up generally stands for a geographical area occupied by a particular caste or a group of castes. The occupation of the area in all likelihood is determined by the caste hierarchy; the upper castes occupying the most fertile and rich area and the rest being left to the lower castes in the hierarchy.

^{vii}For an extensive discussion on the question of caste and language see the article 'Caste and Language: The Debate on English in India' by Tharakeshwar V.B.

***About the author**

Manoj Kumar Yadav teaches at the department of English, Satyawati College (Day), Delhi University. He completed his PhD in 2017 from the Department of Translation Studies, EFL University, Hyderabad. His research interest includes postcolonial translation, function oriented translation studies, adaptation and European classical literature.