

An Accolade to the Masterpiece “UDEEKAN”

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Abstract: *Punjabi Cinema of 70s Era considered as an affair of witticism. As Cinema of that era had designated unmatched veracity of Punjabi culture. Silver screen of this regional cinema was loaded with vulgarity and double meaning dialogues. But “UDEEKAN” had break this notion and dispensed the true meaning of Cinema. The masterpiece on Celluloid was bestowed by great film maker Hari Dutt ji. It was released on 6 July, 1979. The director took two year time, to give true feel of content and later he gifted “Udeekan” that is worth every bit of the two-year waiting. Hari Dutt ji took Regional Cinema to new level of excellence. Outstanding Brilliance of Hari Dutt ji can be traced through this movie. There was so unmatched ability that created depth in this movie. Right from the apt selection of eminent artists from industry to the way it has been executed was a big blow. The true essence of content was identified with the perfect amalgamation of dialogue and the way it was apprehended on camera. This beautiful woven film is the best paradigm for Cinema lovers and learners. This research writing is sketched as a tribute to this masterpiece.*

Keywords: Punjabi Cinema, Content, director

1. Introduction

On 6 July, 1979, Punjabi Cinema witnessed idiosyncratic flair of cinema with the release of Movie “Udeekan- a long wait.” Very distinctive concept was crafted by **Hari Dutt** ji with the good intention to delineate the rich Punjabi Culture. The urge to reflect benevolence of true Punjabi culture had sparked interest in Hari Dutt ji to make this movie. He put his heart in crafting this magnificent artistic cinematic presentation. The storyline is based on the ignorant pain of many unidentified army officer’s wives, who submerged their fondness of married life in the long wait of their arrival. The movie began with the idiosyncratic introduction of the core theme of the movie. This introduction was exhibited with the fact that Indian ancient epic acclaimed Ram, Laxman, Sita’s contribution. But there was one more person whose efforts remained unidentified. Laxman’s wife Urmila, who withered under pain of separation. She languished in the palace for 14 years. No one realized her pains. Even historians bypassed her. Her eyes were fixed on the path her Lord had taken. She hoped to see him return by the same path. It was the long wait... With this significant introduction to the core theme marked interesting genesis. The most fascinating part was that with this introduction, Camera was moving closer to Urmila’s painting where she seems to be waiting from window. The creative excellence of the director garnered accolades when he revealed the title of the movie “Udeekan” from the eyes of Urmila (painting). The Title advent on Silver screen was in three different language-Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu. Title appearance glared the maker’s utmost creativity. Editing was done by S. R. Sawant. There were many divergent features that make this cinematic content more realistic and compelling.

2. About Cast and role

Casting is unequivocally the most important element and it should be done efficiently. Director had chosen maximum artists from Hindi Cinema. Charismatic beauty of **Simi Garewal** was chosen as a female protagonist. She brought naturalness, authenticity and a degree of assurance to the character “**Niranjan Kaur-Nanjo**”. **Parikshit Sahni** as a male protagonist did justice to the role of “**Teja**” who is

turbaned tied army officer. Lion-hearted Teja had bravery attitude towards his nation. The role of Teja Singh, was much appreciated with his romantic charismatic character. **Bharat Kapoor** as “**Mohan**”, who played the role of Teja’s elder brother. Mohan’s unembellished role was quite impressive. Mohan is a Brahmin character who stays at Teja’s place. Teja’s mother role was played by **Mumtaz Begum**. The compelling reality broadcasted in the movie is that she was never recognized as Teja’s mother but as Mohan’s mother. Crispy comic essence was sprinkled by **Mehar Mittal**, who played the role of **Lalla Chanaan** as grocer. There was a tight hold on this character throughout although whose tone was turned, but character remains same. **Bindu** played the role of “**Gulabo**”, a sensational dancer. Her special appearance was marked by her dancing prowess. Her role was also designed to mark the connectivity to that era. There were other great actors from Bollywood who had a special appearance like **Sanjeev Kumar** and **Vidya Sinha**. Other actors were-**Mahesh Sehgal**, **Raj Verma**, **Kamla Bhag Singh**, **Avtar Gill**, **Nishi Mehra**, **Ratan Gaurang**, **Gopal Bhutan**, **Master Raju**, **Shobha More**, **Sarabjit Singh**, **Mohinder Singh**, **Bano**, **Babli**, **Usha**, **Baboo**, **Nazi**, **Pinki** and **Villagers Of Chhota Phool** (where shooting took place). The concealed fact of the movie is that one of the Colonel, who wished to hear story before shooting at army area, was so much impressed after the narration, that he himself intended to play the role of Major in this movie.

3. Shooting Locations

Shooting was initiated in 1976. Majorly shooting took place at **Chhota Phool**, near Ropar to shoot village portion. It was scheduled for 29 days there. Military portion shooting was done near Pune. Some of the portions of movie were captured at Ranjit Studios like “**Gulabo’s dance**”

3.1 Dialogues were not just dialogues but a true feel

After implementing depth analysis of this movie. One of the fact revealed about the richness of movie was dialogue. Every word that fabricated to compute dialogue was harvested magnificently to mark its sense on screen. Screenplay and dialogues were written by Hari Dutt ji.

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Although complete movie is enriched with such true feels but certain extreme beautiful dialogues picks are listed below:

“Kyun Gulabo asprin de goli hai” (Is Gulabo a asprin medicine?)

“Niranjan Kaur ji dekho,....Niranjan Kaur, Niranjan Kaur, dekho ji tuhada naa bahut lamba hai te chhutti meri thodi hai. Mai tuhanu. Nanjo keha karanga. Nanjo”

(Niranjan Kaurji, Niranjan kaurji see your name is so long and my leave is so short. I will call you Nanjo.)

“Tu Sohni hai..ehda te pata mai lagwa liya si. par tu ehni Sohni hai, ehdi mainu khabar nahi si”

(I had found that you were beautiful but I was not aware that you are so beautiful.)

“Saade wele deeva hi gul ho gya” (during my time, light turned off)

“Meri taar kitho aa gayi.Teri taar ayi Marrhiyaan cho” (From where my telegram is?Your telegram is from grave)

“Fauji nu Bulwa ayeya aey, hunn lagu ladayi, te saadi vadhu kamayi.Kuch taan bhaa wadhna hi hai.. te baki assi aape vadha laange” (recall of soldiers is a sign of war. Price will rise and rest we will manipulate)

“Nanjo,faujia nu gharon roke nahi tori da”(Nanjo, never bid soldier farewell with tears)

“Mai bass ladayi jiteya te vapis aya” (I will win the war, and will back soon)

“Assi kathe challe haan te kathe hi awangee” (We are going together and will return together)

“Yeah tau to jaag raha hai, iska paon to soya hua hai, ghadi ka alarm bajake jaga raha hun. Shut up. Goreyon ke zamane mai koi munda hamko Mazak nahi karta thaa. you yesterday ka munda, tu today hamko mazaking. Morning, morning.”

(His feet went numb. i am trying to revive them with the alarm. Shutup. During the British rule, no one dared to joke with me. you a new boy, today dares to do so early in the morning.)

“Tum hamko XYZ samjta hai. hamare naal ke sipahi lieutenant, Captain, Major, general ban gaye.”(You think I am XYZ. My ex-soldiers are now captains, Lieutenants, Major, Generals.)

“Chore! Goreyon ki yehi ek palecy (policy) thi, jo sirf hamari samjh vich ayi hai.” (Boy! thats exactly what British policy was and was understood by me only)

“Agar sabke sab sipahi afsar ban gaye toe sipahi kaun rahega” (if every Sipahi becomes an officer, then who will be Sipahi)

“Pind de bare sara kuch likheya, sara kuch likhiya. par apne bare ek lafz nahi likheya. ik lafz nahi likhiya. Mahesh yaar ehna nu samajh nahi aundi assi ehna de ik ik akhar vaste tarasde haan. par apne bare kuch likheya hi nahi.mai..mai bass bahut ho gya. mai hunn chithi nahi likhni.”

(She has written all about village, nothing about herself. Not even a single word. Mahesh they don't understand that I have been longing for a word about her. I won't write to her.)

“Fauji aadami ki janhe, kadar lugayi di” (soldiers don't value their wives)

“Main dassan bhabhi, je tere jiha roop mainu mileya hunda na,main sare jahan nu pagal kar dendi.” (If I had your beauty, I would have drive the whole world crazy)

“Hunh jinniyen rotian rakhi jandi a na, ehne diyan chwanian vadh diyaan jandiyan ne.” (The amount of chapattis you are placing in my plate, will increase their money.)

“Jee mai ese mauke ghar turr gaya,taan main fauj vich bharti kade layi hoye si.” (If I'm at home at such a time why did I join the army?)

“Baanhiya da putt hoke baanhiya wali gall nahi samjhda (being trader's son, you don't know the tricks of the trade)

“Jina chir ladayi, onna chir kamayi.” (the longer the war, the greater the profit)

“Jammanh wali te marke sukhi hogayi, par mainu chhadd gayi dukhi honn vaste (his parents died leaving him in my charge)

“Mainu Viah di nahi teri lodd hai.” (I don't want marriage, I need you- mother)

“Soch raha thaa yeah log apne kaam se kitne imaandar hai, behoshi ki halat mai bhi fire, fire chila raha hai. Rajani, agar har admi apne kaam se itna imaandar rahe toe yeah duniya kitni khushahaal ho sakti hai. (I was wondering how sincere the soldiers are, though he is unconscious keeps shouting, fire, fire! Rajani, if everyone get so sincere about his work, the world be very prosperous)

“Main to kehti hun agar har koi itni imaandari se sochne bhi lagee tab bhi duniya itni khushhaal ho sakti hai. (Even if people think sincerely the world would be prosperous)

“Ehde dil de ubaal, ehde dil diyan sadraan, sariyan ehde dil vich han. lakdi vi te jalanh to pehlee shaa..shaa kardi hai, par ehh nimani sii vi nahi kardi (she's under great stream. Burning wood emits a sound. but she doesn't even do that.)

“Khaa-makha kayi loki angreji bolke apne aap nu superior dikhana chahnde ne (Unnecessarily some people try to speak English to show their superiority)

“Thik hai tai, je tu tyaar hai na ..te jiss din fauji chutti aun ohh din gulabo pind vich zarur nachegi (if you agree, gulabo will perform her dance when soldiers will return home)

“Gulabo aaj iss tarah dharti ch addi marke nach, fauji jithe vi honn, pata lag jaye pind vich Gulabo nach rahi hai (Gulabo, dance in such a way that, even soldier may now wherever they are that you are dancing)

“Jab tak yeah dushman ka jhanda niche nahi utrega na sahib, tab tak yeah jaat ke chore ki jaan nahi niklegi (till the flag of the enemy is not lowered, this son of Jaat will not die)

“Kambhakhat ne kaha thaa mai apko dubara chance nahi dunga. Vakeyi usne chance nahi diya (he said he would never give me another chance by coming here. Really he gave no chance)

“Veera mai tenu keha si halle take eho jiji koi goli nahi bani.. jehdi ess fauji nu maar sake (I had told you brother there is no bullet that can kill this soldier)

“Tu aine saal nahi aya main udeekan kardi rahi.. phir mainu ik buri khabar mili, na janhde hoye vi main ohnu seh Na payi. Par tu Aina laage aake baitha rahe..te mainu na mile...eh main nahi seh sakdi...eh udeekan maitho nahi hundiya. Eh udeekan maitho nahi hundiya.”(You didn’t come for a long, I waited for you. then I received a bad news. It was not acceptable, but I had to bear that bad news. But now after coming after a long, and not meeting me. its not acceptable. I can’t wait now.)

“Nanjo.. aaj vi mere naal gal nahi karengi? Hain..main samajh gya...main hale tak tainu pasand nahi.. meri kismat vich ehi likheya.”(Nanjo, you won’t talk to me today? ok I got your point. you still don’t like Me. i think this is my destiny.)

“ Nanjo Loki eh nahi samajhde ke foujiyan diya kurbaniya naalon. Ohna diyan gharwaliya diya qurbaniya vadhke hundiya ne. (people don’t understand the fact that sacrifices by soldier’s wives exceed then the sacrifices made by soldiers.)

Last but not least, a crux of the movie was given on screen- **“Ohna ghumnaam shurveer bhenha de naa, jinha apna suhaag kurbaan honn te vie sidaq nahi hareyaa”** (A tribute dedicated to army officer’s wives who don’t lost their patience even after losing their husbands)

Song and Music

The songs of the movie were so heart-touching. Lyrics of the songs were written by Naqsh layalPuri. Lyrics were so meaningful. Songs of the movie are sung by eminent singers like Asha bhosle, Jagjeet Kaur, Narender Chanchal and Mohammed Rafi. Music was composed by Sapan Jagmohan. Movie began with traditional Punjabi Gidha and song was- “Gidhe vich nach kudiye tu maar maar ke addi. ke Chann pardesi ne kal aunha e pehli gaddi.” Second song also touched the depth of situation when Teja left for his joining, immediate after the second day of his marriage. Song- “Tayne mehne bhanddi...Dil yaar wali takkdi ch tolke, khaata ishqe di wahi vich kholke, Lekhe mool na kari” It was

based on the pain of a newly wedded Nanjo, when her husband left to join army. The third track of the movie is romantic track expressing Nanjo’s happiness when she received letter from her husband’s side- “Aagayi rutt saunh di, Baaghi peengha paunh di, Hanhiya..mainu udeekan teriyaan.” This track raised to popularity during the era of 70s. The fourth track of the movie reflected patriotism “Teri azadi di shamaa nu hai khatra, Vaar de apne laho da katra katra sathiya, tera jism desh da, teri jaan desh di, Tu maut naal khed ke bachale aan desh di”. Gulabo dance number was- “Hath jod jodke te, hauke bhar bharke, asaa mahi nu manaya, masaa marr marr ke.”

At certain point of time background lines were played to give full justification to the scene. Like- “arsh de taare ton pyara. hai ohh katra khoon da. jehda vatan di khak te dulle, Watan de vaste, zindagi da es to vadke, koi maqsad nahi...phul kumlaye te kumlaye, watan de vaaste, Tu marke vie rakh layi e, aaj shaan desh di, aaj shaan desh di..Tera jism desh da si, teri jaan desh di si, Tu maut naal khed ke bacha layi aan desh di.” There were situations where the maker felt to explain the depth of long-wait pain of Nanjo. These lines were played to showcase her hidden feelings “Eh takle uttey kattley, Jind nu poonhi poonhi, Yaar de bajhon kaun bujhaye, Dil di dhukhdi dhoonhi, Agg la layi na hanjhuya nu dohlke, Khata ishqe di wahi vich kholke Lekha mool na kari”

4. From creative hat of director

• Director’s Vision behind making this movie

Hari Dutt ji had a comprehensible vision behind this movie. He genuinely want to showcase true and rich culture of Punjab. He wish to erase all the false acceptance that was presented by Punjabi Cinema during the era of 70. Usually movies were enveloped with double meaning dialogues, that reflect vulgarity, loud characters were portrayed. He want to take Punjabi Cinema to new level of excellence. True rich culture of Punjabis was lost in the stray of commercialized cinema. So, the urge to bestow truth of Punjabi Culture fabricated the idea of making “udeekan- a long wait” to Hari Dutt ji.

• His Working Style and creativity

His sincerity towards this movie was reflected in a way that he was well organized in his work. According, to every scene he organized boxes; every necessary requirement was packed in each box according to scenes. So, there was no last moment rush. He did shooting in 1976 at Chotta Phool, near Ropar. He did shooting for 29 days there. He took prior permission from Military to shoot army portion of the movie. The shooting took place near Pune. While narrating the story of his movie, Colonel Kuldeep Singh was so convinced with his working style that he wishes to do role of Major in this movie. Hari ji gives beautiful and very unique introduction to the concept in the beginning that aroused the interest of audience to see further movie. He majorly selected the cast of movie from Hindi Cinema like-Simi Garewal, Parikshit Sahani, Sanjeev Kumar etc and many more to give content worth.

• Some Untold incidents revealed by Director

To make Simi Garewal fit to Nanjo’s character Hari Dutt ji asked local tailor to stitch Simiji’s dresses. It was intended

to give organic connectivity to Nanjo's character. Once Hari ji, did demonstration to make understand Simiji, the importance of customs. Hariji asked Simi ji to sit among the villagers crowd and asked to observe villagers reaction when he passes to nearby that crowd. When Hariji did khangura (violent release of air by mouth accompanied by distinctive sound) village women cover their face with Veil as a due respect. Simiji was so moved after seeing this tradition; she said to Hariji, that she felt glad to present such culture. Simi Garewal blazed the silver screen with her intelligence and skillful acting as a strong army officer wife. Simiji did justice to the role of Nanjo. Hariji made local villagers also to be a part of this movie. Hariji told Local villagers were so innocent as initially they were not knowing film shoot is going. Old ladies literally sat around Simiji and used to ask her "Fauji kadd ayega?". One singing incident told by Hariji that when Ashaji was recording -Aagayi rut saunh di song, she asked Hari ji -aap mujse gande gane record karwa rahe isme sone jaise shabad aa rahe".Hariji clear the air Saunh means Sawan in Punjabi. As whole team was from diverse backgrounds and Punjabi language is also divided into four parts-Majha, doaba, malwa, paudh. Hariji asked whole team to speak Doabi boli (doabi language) to give uniformity to the content. Last message in the movie the, main crux thought he got while he was travelling to Jabalpur. His train stopped some kilometers before Jabalpur, while blowing smoke from his cigarette. The last message was stuck into his mind. Hariji showcased his creative potential as he put his true heart dedication in this movie whether its dialogue, scene, cast selection, songs, lyrics etc. Every ingredient of this movie was best on its part.

• **When a Scene was not just a scene but a whole convincing package**

Hari ji did justification with the scenes. A perfect amalgamation of video with dialogues was crafted in a convincing way. Like-when army officers were going on holiday, truck was passing through green lands but when one bike arrived to forward message about cancellation of their holidays, bike shot was taken on barren land. This was done to justify that suddenly, something jumped from day to night. One more scene, where Nanjo's praise was the matter of praise among village crowd, blossoming of popcorn was sync with the dialogue. This was also an example to implement positivity of character in the movie. There were many such scenes that justified the scene. Last scene of the movie, when Nanjo heard news of Teja's arrival, light was introduced in the movie where electric pole shot was taken. Otherwise since beginning diya was used, It means no light and it conveyed Nanjo is in the rhythm of long wait. But Teja's arrival brings light in the life of Nanjo. Hariji always worked on the fact where camera is not giving justification, use dialogues where dialogues doesn't justified the scene, use poetry. Although Hari ji faced some financial challenges but he never lost his patience and was very clear in his goal.

X-factor that make this movie a worth watch

- To make cogent cinematic presentation following efforts were done :

- Use of Diyas (small lamps) as during that era light supply was very limited (it was also done to convey the darkness of pain of Nanjo)
- Use of Bullock Cart in Doli Scene(bridal arrival)
- Mehar Mittal's wife was not revealed throughout but her voice-over was a part to depict conversation
- Common villagers were involved to give more connectivity
- Traditional attire wore by main leads
- A veil as an important part of attire showing respect reflecting tradition and custom
- No Villain in the movie
- A very positive message of brotherhood(Brahmin and Jatt were staying together)
- A very unique message enriched with positivity -how daughter-in law loves and respects her mother-in law. Main lead Nanjo give her heart to serve her mother in law.

5. Conclusion: Film is not just film but a school

'Udeekan' movie left no stone unturned. This movie is not just a source of entertainment but for Punjabi Cinema lovers and learners it's a school. This movie is enriched with so much depth that every scene was crafted with deep sense of acceptance to that situation. Perspicacious selection of cast. Above all the concept of the movie was so different that was based on the hidden pains of the wives of army officers that they go through while a long wait of their home return..A long wait pain of such wives was never discussed before this movie. Meaningful message was woven as a tribute to such wives at the end. Movie is full of positivity. No villain is there in the movie. Every song in movie is heart-touching that sow the seeds of connectivity to further content. Costume was simple and gives connectivity to that era. Eminent singers from Hindi Cinema sung the song. Simplicity, positivity, connectivity to culture were the parameters where whole movie was constructed. Window had a special meaning in the movie. Movie starts with introduction of painting where Urmila appearance in the window, Nanjo is peeping from window as a wait of her husband, End was also wrapped up with the message displayed on window. Movie is full of messages. Messages based on beautiful relation of daughter-in-law with her mother-in-law, friendship of Jatt and Brahmin was a message of brotherhood reflected on Celluloid. A flawless movie of late 70s is not less than any school to understand the true meaning of what content is, how scene should have depth, camera movements, a perfect editing, an amazing beginning with unique title appearance on screen from the eye of painting, a perfect wrap up of the content with message on celluloid is not less than any cinematic school.

References

- [1] Telephonic interview with Hari Dutt ji (Director/Writer of Udeekan)
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- [3] Telephonic Discussion with Bhim Raj Garg (Great film historian &Analyst)
- [4] YouTube link of movie-"Udeekan".