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A Semiotical Study of Religious Elements in Novel/Film Pinjar: With Reference to the Society of Indian Sub-Continent, portrayed in South Asian Cinema

Abstract

Bollywood is regarded as the leading film industry of South Asia. Pinjar is a Bollywood film, based on a novel. It is having the themes of religious contrasts and cultural differences. This article studies the religious elements of different religions of the Indian sub-continent as portrayed in the film Pinjar. Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism are regarded as three leading religions of Indian Sub-Continent and this article is discussing all three in detail. The traces of all these religions can be traced in the society of the Indian Sub-continent as portrayed in the cinema. Pierce's Model of Semiotics has been applied on the obtained data from the film Pinjar to get the accurate results. In addition, this article is also drawing the religious elements from the text of the novel.

Key Words

Cinematography, Film Studies, Religions in Sub-Continent, Semiotics, South Asian Cinema, Bollywood

Introduction

The Indian Sub-Continent is termed as the multi-culture, multi-racial, multi-linguistics and the society of multiple creeds. For centuries, the people belonging to various creeds, faiths, traditions and civilizations lived there together.

1. Religious Culture in Indian Sub-Continent

According to 1961 Census of India, more than 1652 mother tongues are spoken in India (Benedikter, 2013) while Ethnologue mentions 74 languages are spoken in Pakistan (Pakistan, 2016) besides 38 languages are used in Bangladesh (Languages of Bangladesh, Culture, 2020). The cultural background of the Indian Sub-Continent got existence after a long history, varied demography and sole geography. From one region to the other, there is a contrast of customs, traditions, literature, arts, creeds, religious beliefs and languages. The land of Indian sub-continent is enriched with varied cultures and traditions of hundreds of years old exist here. Presently, the word diversity is frequently used than multiculturalism with the existing caste system (Geertz, 2017).

The mass population in Indian Sub-continent was consisted on the Hindus while the Muslims were the second majority while all other religions like Sikhism, Parsee, Zoroastrian, Judaism, Jew, Jainism, Buddhism and Baha'is religion in minority. Such diversity and

multiculturalism later led towards the division of Indian sub-continent. The majority of the areas of Indian sub-continent are diverse in the traditions, festivals, literature, customs, religious practices, music, architecture, cuisine, culture, clothing, livelihood, languages and accents (Melton & Baumann, 2010).

After the division of Indian sub-continent into India and Pakistan, the culture and the cultural values also changed on the either side. Hindi became the national language in India while Urdu in Pakistan. Somehow, English dominated as an official language in both countries. Islam was termed as the official religion of Pakistan while Hinduism and Sikhism became the major religions in India with Jews, Christians, Parsees and Zoroastrian were introduced as the minorities in both countries (Rahman, 2020).

2. Theme of film/novel Pinjar

The film Pinjar is based on the theme of the novel Pinjar by Amrita Pritam, meaning the Skeleton in English. The main theme of the film covers the time space of the partition of Indian sub-continent. The main theme of the film is focused on the life of a Hindu girl Puro. A Muslim man, Rashid had kidnapped her, who was promised to seek the revenge of his aunt but actually he was in love with Puro. This kidnapping had broken all the dreams of Puro and she was very much disappointed. Though she got a chance to escape but was rejected by her parents because according to the customs of the area and the era, she had lost her honour. Later, she tried to suicide but once again was saved by Rashid. She became the mother of a baby and in these days, the partition of Indian Sub-continent occurred and it was divided into India and Pakistan. The village of Puro was left on Pakistan side while the village of her family was on Indian side. The migration of the people had started on both sides of the border and one of the camps was near the home of Puro. She visited there to see his ex-fiancé to know about her family. Luckily, she found him and came to know about his family, already migrated to India but his sister-in-law was kidnapped by the rioters. She promised to search her and then the other day, she started her research as a saleswoman and wandered all the homes of village to seek her and at last found her in one of the houses. At the same night, her husband took her away from the village and then they took her towards the Wagha border where their brothers were waiting for them. Her brother Trilok tried to convince her to accompany them to India but she gently denied because she was already adjusted in her life.

Literature Review

1. Muslim Religious Culture

The Muslim culture predominantly is termed as the Arabic culture after the spreading of Islam in the 7th century from the land of Arabia. After the conversion of the people into Islam in the various areas of the world, the culture of Arabic merged with the local cultures to form a group of Muslim culture. All the leading Muslim cultures like Pakistani, Indian, Turkish and the Persians have the traces of Arabic culture. The term of the Islamic culture is arguable as the Muslims are living all around the globe. Iran, Central Asia, Middle East, Egypt, Arabia, North Africa, Pakistan and Northern India are regarded as the traditional heartland of Islam and all the similarities among all these cultures are termed as a culture of Islam. This term is used when the religion is the primary part of any region while the culture varies from place to place. All the religious practices like the recitation of Holy Quran, Hajj, fasting and Prayer (Namaz) are termed as the part of an Islamic culture (İhsanoğlu, 2003).

In the three volume, *The Venture of Islam* by Marshall Hodgson, he differentiated between the terms Islamic and the Muslim. He introduced the term “Islamicate” to indicate all the cultural features of the Muslims historically. Though his definition was not accepted by the majority and the confusion yet exists (Hodgson, 2009).

Literature is also considered as the leading aspect of the culture. In this regard, Arabic literature is termed as the leading Islamic literature. Quran, the collection of the Hadiths, and the Sirah are termed as the beginning literature of the Muslims. During Ummayid Empire, the secular literature without any religious content began to compose. The book *One Thousand and One Nights* is termed as the first secular literature of the Islamic world. It was widely spread in the whole Muslim world. Later, the Persian became one of the major languages of the empires during the Abbasid Empire. It is the reason that most of the popular and famous literature is in Persian like poetry of Rumi, Saadi and Hafiz (Campbell & King, 2012). Most of the modern literature is being created in different languages but later it is translated into other different languages, like Naguib Mahfouz, Khalil Jibran and many more are being translated into international languages. The writers like Orhan Pamuk are writing in English to attract wide readers (Aslan, 2011).

During the medieval Islamic regime, Puppet Theatre including show plays and marionette productions along with puppet shows is regarded as the most popular in the discipline of Arts. Particularly, Shia Islamic plays revolved around the martyred sons of Hazart Ali (AS), Imam Hassan ibn Ali (AS) and Imam Hussain ibn Ali (AS). The most popular was ta'zieh and Akhraja. In the Medieval literature, most of the live secular plays were recorded, although not as much of popular than the puppet shows and ta'zieh theatre (Moreh, 1986).

Ashurah, Lailat al Miraj, Mawlid, Eid ul-Fitr, Eid ul-Adha and Shab-e-Baraat are the leading festivals of Muslim culture. In the religion of Islam, marriage is termed as an essential element. The number of hadiths emphasize on the importance of marriage and family. It's a bond between not only a man and a woman but a social contract between two families according to Shari'a therefore marriage is celebrated very happily in the whole culture (Kheir, 2014).

Islamic art is also considered as a significant part of the Muslim culture. Calligraphy and architecture are termed as the leading and the most authentic arts of Muslim religious culture. The Muslim artists reshaped Arabic calligraphy into art, focusing around Allah, sayings of Allah and verses of Holy Quran. They neglected portraying human figures as in Christian art but gave a new dimension to arts. In Tunisia, the great mosque of Kairouan (Mosque of Uqba) founded in 670, has a significant importance in Islamic civilization. Badshahi Mosque (Lahore), Jamia Mosque (New Delhi), Sultan Ahmad Mosque (Istanbul) and Alhambra (Spain) are the different testament of Muslim architecture, built in the era of Mughal and Ottoman empires. The design of Islamic architecture has been inherited from Masjid al-Nabawi, the first mosque built by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in Medina. The tall minarets, the central prayer hall, large domes and Mihrab are the essential elements of architecture with the elements of arts. Use of Iwans among various sections, geometric shapes, symmetry, bright colour, ablution fountains and decorative Arabic calligraphy. In addition; in the Islamic Arts, mostly the interior space of the building is more focused than the exterior one (Burckhardt, 2009).

Mostly on the shrines or the tombs of the ancient saints, the religious music Qawwali is sung or played. Arabic classical music, religious music in Iran, Indian classical music, Qawali music remained the leading music of different areas. In the region of South India, Mappila Songs and Duff Muttu are considered as the leading music of this era. In Sufis, brotherhood of Muslim mystics spread their music far and wide (Qureshi & Qureshi, 1986).

2. Hindu Culture and Religion

Hinduism is not only the leading populated religion of India but it is also the major religion of many more countries. After Islam and Christianity, Hinduism is the third largest religion of the world. Hinduism is considered as the dominating and aboriginal religious tradition. It refers to a religious mainstream, spread over a large territory marked by significant ethnic and cultural diversity (Klostermaier, 2007). It grants absolute and complete freedom of belief and worship. Its followers knew it as Sanatana Dharma (the eternal law) in Sanskrit. The word Hindu is derived from the Sanskrit word Sindhu, named because of the Indus River in the north western part of Indian subcontinent and it was firstly mentioned in the Rig Veda. By the 13th century, the word Hindustan came into being as an admired term for naming India, meant as “land of Hindus” (Marbaniang, 2015). After arrival of European colonists in the subcontinent, the term Hinduism was introduced into English in the 19th century to denote the religious, philosophical and cultural traditions native to India (Barnard & Spencer, 2002 , p. 271).

The earliest evidence for prehistoric religion in India dates back to the late Neolithic in the early Harrapan period (5500-2600 BCE), the beliefs and practices of the pre-classical era (1500-500 BCE) are called the ‘Historical Vedic Religion’. The Vedic religion shows influence by Proto-Indo-European religion. Modern Hinduism grew out of the Vedas, the oldest of which is the Rig Veda, dated to 1700-1100 BCE. The Vedas center on worship of deities such as Indra, Varuna, Agni and the ritual of Soma. Yajna, the rituals of fire-sacrifices were performed and mantras from Vedic were chanted but no temples and idols are known (Fallon, 2012).

Hinduism is a varied classification of thought with a faith, across atheism, monism, polytheism, agnosticism, monotheism, pantheism and Gnosticism among others and its notion of God is intricate and it depends on each being and the tradition and the philosophy. Sometimes, it is referred to as henotheistic. Most of the followers of the Hinduism believe that the soul, the true “Self” known as *aatman* is everlasting. The Bhagavad Gita states:

“As a person puts on new clothes and discards old and torn clothes, similarly an embodied soul enters new material bodies, leaving the old bodies (B.G. 2:22)” (Julius, 2009).

The *aatman* is reliant on God, while *moksha* depends on love towards God and the grace of God. When God is viewed as the supreme personal being, God is called *Ishvara* (The Lord), *Bhagavan* (The Auspicious one) or *Parameshwara* (The supreme Lord). The Rig Veda is one of the oldest religious texts in Devanagri (Lorenzen, 2004).

The practices of Hindu religion usually engage in quest of consciousness of God as well occasionally it is looking for blessings from Devas. Puja, Yajna, Murti, Mandir, Japa and Mantra are among the leading rituals (Ellinger, 1996). In accordance with *ahimsa*, many Hindus embrace vegetarianism to respect higher forms of life. Though, the variety of food varies from the region to region and community to community; for example some castes are relying lesser on the vegetable while mostly the coastal populations are depending on seafood. Some of the people avoid meat only on specific holy days. The cow in Hindu society is traditionally identified as a caretaker and a maternal figure, and Hindu society honors the cow as a symbol of unselfish giving. Pooja to worship the cow is conducted early morning in almost all the big temples in India. Cow-slaughter is legally banned in almost all the states of India (Fox, 1999). The followers of Swaminarayan movement also follow a diet, devoid of meat, eggs and seafood (Williams, 2001). Most of the Hindus practice their religious rituals daily at home but it varies in different regions, villages and individuals. The Hindus perform daily practices, like worshipping at dawn after bathing, recitation from religious scriptures, singing devotional hymns, meditation,

chanting mantras as well as reciting scriptures (DeNapoli, 2014). A notable feature in religious ritual is the division between the purity and the pollution. The religious acts presuppose some degrees of impurity. The performances of charity or good works are committed to reduce the sufferings in the world hereafter. In the marriage and the funeral ceremonies of the Hinduism, the Vajna and chanting of Vedic mantras are yet in practice. Mostly, the parents decide about the engagement of the young couples as well the date and time of the marriage, considering the astrology matters (Sharma, 1985). On a death occasion, cremation is considered mandatory for everyone except sanyasis, hijra and children under five. Cremation is typically performed by wrapping the corpse in cloth and burning it on a pyre (Siddhartha & Trivedi, 2009).

Pilgrimage is not obligatory in Hinduism but many people perform it. The famous sites of Hindu pilgrimage are; Char Dham, the famous four holy pilgrimage sites are Puri, Rameswaram, Dwarka and Badrinath in the Himalayans towns of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri. Kumbh Mela (the pitcher festival) is one of the holiest of Hindu pilgrimages in Allahabad, Haridwar, Nashik and Ujjan. Shakti Peethas is another set of pilgrimages, where the mother goddess is worshipped, the two principal ones being Kalighat and Kamakhya (Eck, 2013). Symbolism and iconography has a significant role in Hinduism for representation of sacred things in art, architecture, literature and worship, indicating different scriptures, mythology and cultural traditions. The symbol of OM represents Parabrahma, Swastika symbolizes auspiciousness, Tilaka identifies a follower of the faith, while many symbols like Lotus, Chakra and Veena are associated with different deities. Mantras are invocations. A devotee focuses his mind on the holy thoughts by their meaning, sound and chanting style. This is a way to express devotion to God or the deities. While chanting the Gayatri Mantra or Mahamrityunjaya Mantras, many devotees perform morning ablutions at the bank of a sacred river (Rao, 1998).

According to the Guinness world records, the Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple located in New Delhi is the largest Hindu temple (Hatcher, 2015). Ganges River is considered as the most sacred river in Hinduism while Vedas as the most authentic and religious book. The plant of Tulsi is also considered as sacred. The holy Mount Kailash in Tibet is regarded as the spiritual dwelling of Lord Shiva. Varanasi (Kashi), Allahabad (Prayag), Haridwar- Rishikesh, Mathura-Vrindavan and Ayodhya are regarded as the most holy and sacred cities according to Puranic text. Puri is regarded as the major temple (Chatterjee, 2001).

Traditionally, the Hindu society has been classified into four classes, called Varnas (Sanskrit: "colour, form, appearance"). The Brahmins are regarded as the teachers and priests. The Kshatriyas are considered as warriors, nobles and kings. The Vaishyas are considered fit for the job of farmers, merchants and businesses. The shudras are considered as the most minor people of society so they have to serve as the servants and labourers. The caste systems became a reason to create a rift among the Hindus and different conflicts among the people of different categories. This class discrimination was criticized by many social reformers like Mahatama Gadhhi and B.R.Ambedkar (Sagar, 1975).

Hindu festivals beautifully intertwine individual and social life to dharma, symbolically. Some broadly observed Hindu festivals are Holi, Durga Puja, Diwali, Ugadi, Bihu, Guru Purnima, Gudi Padwa, Chhath, Vasant Panchami, Dussera, Raksha Bandhan, Gowri Habba, Vishu, Ram Navami, Pongol, Ganesh Chaturthi, Maha Shivarathi, Onam, Rath Yatra, Bonalu, Thaipusam, Krishna Janmastami and Shigma (Frazier, 2015).

3. Sikh Culture and Religion

During 15th century, Sikhism was founded as a monotheistic religion in the region of Punjab by Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539) and later on, it progressed with ten successive Sikh gurus Guru Angad Dev (1504-1552), Guru Amar Das (1479-1574), Guru Ram Das (1534-1581), Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606), Guru Har Gobind (1595-1644), Guru Har Rai (1630-1661), Guru Har Krishan (1656-1664), Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675), and Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) ending on the last scripture Guru Granth Sahib (Mann, 2001). Sikhism is considered as the fifth religion of the world with the population of over 25 million, mostly found in the Indian Punjab (Yaden, Zhao, Peng, & Newberg, 2019). Millions of Sikhs used to live in Pakistani Punjab who migrated after the partition. The system of the religious philosophy is known as Gurmat. A follower of Sikhism symbolizes the qualities of a saint soldier (a saint-sipahie). The person must have control over his internal desires and should follow constantly all the practices according to the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib. A true Sikh is considered as the one who had guts to guard the rights of everyone, regardless of differences of caste, creed, colour or the religion. The major beliefs of Sikhism are justice and faith. For the sake of God, it encourages the quest of salvation through personal meditation (Parrinder, 1971). The followers of Sikhism are ordered to follow the teachings of Guru Nanak and his nine Sikh gurus as well as to follow the Holy Scripture entitled the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikh traditions and teachings are associated with the history, society and culture of Punjab and emphasize the principal of equality of all humans and rejects discrimination on the basis of caste, creed and gender. The beginning of the Sikh scripture, signifying the predominance of God, narrates that God is omnipresent and never-ending. Sikh believes that before creation of the universe, only God and his order existed. With the will of God, the vast and wide universe was created. Baba Guru Nanak defined God as; “God is omnipresent in all creation and visible everywhere to the spiritually awakened (Singh J. , 2009).”

Maya described as a delusion or futility in Sikhism is one of the central deviations from the quest of God and salvation. The worldly attractions always gave only illusive satisfaction and Guru Nanak termed it as the unreality of the world. Lust, greed, attachment, anger and Ego are regarded as five evils in Sikh religion, considered as the symbol of separation from God (Singh N. , 2008).

In the Pakistani village of Rai Bhoi di Talwandi, now known as the city of Nankana Sahib, Baba Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was born. His parents originated from the Khatri Hindus of Bedi clan. In the young age, Nanak was attracted towards God and religion. He did not participate in religious rituals and was mostly lost in his own meditations lonely. He wished to discover the mysterious paths of life therefore he left his home and had long journeys (Dhillon, 2014).

In the teenage, Guru Nanak attracted the local landlord Rai Bular Bhatti, amazed by his intelligence and heavenly character. He was the witness of many incidents in which Nanak captivated him due to which first of all Rai Bular and Bibi Nanki, the sister of Guru Nanak recognized his godly character. The encouragement of both made Guru Nanak to travel and study. He was thirty years old that he was disappeared. It was supposed that maybe he was drowned in the local stream Kali Bein during his early bath of the day. A day, he got back and then announced; “There is no Muslim, there is no Hindu.” It was the moment that Nanak started the spreading of new teachings, termed as the beginning of Sikhi and travelled around the globe to spread his teachings (Singh N.-G. K., Sikhism: An Introduction, 2011).

The term Guru took root from the Sanskrit. It means a teacher, guide or a mentor. The ten definite gurus from 1469 to 1708 established the philosophy of Sikhi. Each of them spread the

message, conveyed by the last one, establishing the religion of Sikhism as a community faith to be followed (Singh D. , 1968).

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth guru of Sikhism created the Khalsa meaning, 'Akal Purakh de Fouj' meaning as the army of God instead of an army of Sikhs or an army of Punjab. He carried two swords; one for worldly affairs and the other for spiritual matters. The main aim of this army was the security of the whole humanity without any difference of religion, colour, race and faith (Singh N.-G. K., 2012). In the 17th century, during the Mughal Empire, the Sikh Khalsa began its assaults against the Muslims. The Sikhs started to capture over the lands to give a shape to a Sikh state. The Muslim rulers declared a holy war (Jihad) against them but they lost many battles with dismay and disappointment. In many areas, the people accepted Sikhism as their religion and the amount of Khalsa lovers increased within days (Syan, 2013). All these movements helped to bring Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a new king. In 1799, he captured Lahore and established first Sikh kingdom of Punjab and later the Sikh population got the military and diplomatic power. The Sikh population began to rise. The vast empire of Mahraja Ranjit Singh was consisted upon almost 200,000 square miles (520,000 square kilometers), the present Afghanistan, Pakistan as well Northern India. The surrounding Hindu, Muslim, Persians and many other Asian countries were afraid of this vast empire. Many battles continued between the empire and the native pathans but Mahraja Ranjit Singh defeated all and the empire of Sikhs was the biggest challenge for the British Empire. Both the sides lost many lives and materials. Firstly, the British remained defeated by Mahraja Ranjit Singh. Mohanlal Kashmiri, secretary to Sir Alexander Burnes narrated the reply of Mahraja Ranjit Singh to the British: "As long as I'm alive, the British will never conquest here (Lafont, 2002)."

After this statement, there were many wars between the British and the Sikhs with a huge blood-shed on both sides. In 1939, the death of Mahraja Ranjit Singh became a reason for fall of Sikh territory. Afterwards, his 11 years old son Mahraja Duleep Singh became king but he could not strengthen his falling empire (Syan, 2013).

In 1947, after the partition of Indian Sub-continent, a huge number of Sikhs were killed during migration from Pakistan to India and millions had to leave their ancestral homes in West Punjab. Initially, they had a problem from the Indian government to declare East Punjab as a linguistic state (Noorani, 2012).

The practicing Sikhs hold long-standing traditions and practices to reinforce the expression of their creed. They recite from the Guru Granth Sahib as a daily routine. The hymns are suggested instantly after getting up and bathing. The family customs include both reading passages from the scripture and attending the gurdwara. Many gurdwaras are notably constructed across India, open to everyone apart from the race, caste, status and the religion. The creed of Sikhism believes on Langar or the community meal. Free meal is availed in all the gurdwaras to everyone despite the differences of faith. There are a number of religious prohibitions in Sikhism like, Cutting hair, intoxication, adultery, blind spirituality, sacrifice of creatures, non-family-oriented living, worthless talk, priestly class, eating meat killed in a ritualistic manner and having premarital or extramarital sexual relations are prohibited in Sikhism (Parrinder, 1971).

There are festivals in Sikhism. However; the events mostly centered on the lives of the Gurus and Sikh martyrs are commemorated. Gurburabs are celebrations or commemorations based on the lives of the Sikh gurus. The occasion of Baisakhi is celebrated on 13th April. On this day, which fell on March 30, 1699, the 10th guru Gobind Singh launched Khalsa (Kuiper, 2010). Bandi Chhor is celebrated as Guru Hargobind's release from the Gwalior Fort. The Mughal emperor Jahangir had imprisoned him on 26th October 1619. This day mostly falls with the day

of the Hindu festival of Diwali. The festival of Hola Mohalla is celebrated the day after Holi (Thursby, 1992).

Gobind Singh gave a collective name of Khalsa to all Sikhs, baptized by taking Amrit in a ceremony, regardless of their gender. This ceremony was termed as Amrit Sancar. Firstly, this ceremony took place on Vaisakhi on 30th March 1699 at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab. The baptized Sikhs are bound to wear the 5 Ks: which are kes (uncut hair), kangha (a small wooden comb), karra (round steel or iron bracelet), kirpan (sword/daggar) and kacha (special undergarment) (The Five Ks, 2009).

Research Methodology

This is a qualitative research. The Pierce's model of semiotics has been used as the main framework to withdraw the religious signs in the society of Indian sub-continent as portrayed in the film Pinjar. Semiotics is the study of signs, symbols, colours and the language. The signs of religion in the language have been withdrawn from the text of the novel while the religious signs and symbols in the film have been withdrawn from the film.

Data Analysis

The film Pinjar is enriched with many religious elements of many different religions but mostly three religions Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam are dominated in the film, which are the major religious practices of the society of the Indian Sub-continent.



Figure I



Figure II

The film begins with the scene in which the Golden temple (Figure: I) is apparent. Golden Temple is regarded as the most sacred place of Sikhism (Kerr, 2011). As the film moves forward, a group of Sikhs appear on the scene. They are chanting the religious mantras in the streets of the city (Figure: II).

This scene in the film is full of religious signs; the entire group of people is wearing yellow and orange dresses. These colours are termed as the religious colours with big turbans, flag and signs of Sikhism on their turbans. This symbol of Sikhism is termed as the Khanda (Sikhmuseum.com, 2011) and mostly it was adorned on the top of the turban. Later on, when the riots started between the Hindus and the Muslims, we see the Muslims with the beards (Figure: III) as beard is termed as a significant part of the Islamic religion (Sondy, 2016). Urs is termed as a sort of religious festival in the tradition of Muslims. Mostly it is celebrated as the death

anniversary of any Sufi saint on his tomb or the shrine in the South Asia (Boivin & Delage, 2015). One of such Urs has been shown in the film. The banner of such an Urs has been adorned outside on the shrines of any saint (Figure: IV).



Figure III



Figure IV

On such occasions and the festivals, the chaplet or the sheet of flowers is considered mandatory to adorn the holy shrine. This is a way to tribute the Sufi saint for his services for the sake of the religion and the humanity.



Figure V



Figure VI

In the (Figure: V & VI), the people are carrying the chaplets of the flowers. They are going to adorn the grave of the Sufi saint with it. In the very next scene of the same Urs, the protagonist of the film Rashid can be seen there. He is praying on the shrine to get rid of his miseries (Figure: VII). Not only Islam and Sikhism, in the film there are also signs of Hinduism.



Figure VII



Figure VIII

In one of the scenes, Puro's father is reciting the sacred scripture (Figure: VIII). In this scene, Puro is demanding from her father for the money because her brother Trilok needed the money. Most of Hindus enchant the Mantras early in the morning or with the start of the day (Roy, 2018). In the middle of the film, we see Ramchand and his sister Lajjo are singing a Bhajan (Figure: IX). They are playing Sitar and harmonium along with the singing. Such singing of the Bhajans is regarded among the Hindu practices of the daily routine (Howard, 2012).



Figure IX



Figure X



Figure XI

Later, after the kidnapping of Puro, Rashid decides to marry her. In this scene of the film, though Rashid wants to marry her but Puro was having a dream of her marriage with Ramchand (Figure: X). They are circling around a flame of fire while both bride and the groom are tied to each other with a piece of cloth. The first three circles are always led by the groom, representing three of four goals of life, considered very important in Hindu life- Dharma, Artha and Kama. The fourth circle is completed by the bride and it represents the fourth goal of life, Moksha (Srinivasan, 2009). Later, we see the wedding ceremony of Rashid (Figure: XI). The Nikkah of Rashid and Puro is being recited. It the religious element of Muslims as Nikkah is termed as a significant element of the wedding ceremony of the Muslims. It is a termed as a contract, a sacred bond between the husband and the wife (Shariah, 2020).

In the text of the novel, there are also few religious elements of Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. In the beginning pages on the text of the novel, we read about a ceremony. The mother of Puro is pregnant. She is desirous to have a male baby. The number of the women of the village gathered to sing Bhajan to celebrate a party. She wanted to make the goddess happy so that the goddess might grant her a male baby. Such tradition is the representation of Hinduism. All the women of near and far villages were assured that Budh Matta comes herself on the birth of every baby. If Budh Matta comes happily with her husband then she makes a girl within moments because she has hurry to get back to her husband. However, when Budh Matta comes after being angry with her husband then she had no hurry to get back. She sits there for a long and makes a boy comfortably. So the women again began to sing (Zaman, 2009).

As the boy was born then once again the ceremonies had started. Now all such ceremonies were termed as the way of prayers for the safety of the child. The gathered women from the surroundings, performed different rituals and sang different Bhajans to make the goddess Budh Matta pleased for the future of the boy.

As the baby was born after the birth of three sisters, therefore the mother of Puro was much worried that the boy should be alive. In case, he remains alive then do not become a burden for parents. The women gathered again to make happy Budh Matta and crossed the boy from a bronze platter after breaking it from the middle. They kept on singing; The buffalo milked after three days (Zaman, 2009).

As there are many myths in the Hinduism and different symbols and the signs are taken for different predictions. In the very next pages of the text, we come to know about one of such myth, narrated in the following way.

Puro remembered that, once a bangle of girl was really broken while wearing her the bangles then the nearby women began to pray for the safety of her husband uttering, 'Ram Ram' (Zaman, 2009).

In the given extract from the text of the novel, the event of the breaking of the bangle of the girl is termed as a bad fortune and in the Hindu society of the South Asia, this myth is meant

as a bad fortune. In addition; we read about the words, “Ram, Ram”. These words are mostly used to seek safety from any bad omen or bad fortune.

In the middle of the text, after the kidnapping of the Puro and then after her false attempt of fleeing away, she again got back to Rashid. We read about the wedding ceremony of Rashid and Puro. In the text, we also come across the scene of the Nikkah between Puro and Rashid. Take shower and be ready tomorrow morning. Molvi will come and recite our Nikkah (Zaman, 2009).

Conclusion

Though research has no conclusion because it has different aspects and dimensions and none of the research work can be termed as complete but the researcher has tried his level best to bring the exact result from the concern film by applying the Pierce’s model of semiotics. This research article is only discussing about the religious signs in the film Pinjar, maybe the future researchers can find the religious signs from any other film or any other aspect of this film.

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