

Mario Puzo's Anti-Hero Influence on Indian Cinema

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Abstract

Character is one of the most important elements in any work, in any fictional work the plot is a centre on the main character and the main character known as the protagonist of the fictional work. Normally a character who has a promising trait often becomes a main character, in literary works the character who has conventional Heroic qualities, courage, morality, and idealism that character is known as a hero in literary work. A character who has a bad person who has only bad intentions and who doesn't have a true moral code that character is known as a villain. Nowadays another character is very important that is an Anti-Hero.

The present study shows, how Mario Puzo's Anti-hero has influenced Indian cinema. This chapter explains what is an Anti-hero?, and various definitions of Anti-hero. This article provides information about Mario Puzo's Anti-hero and shows how he influenced Indian films. The Anti-hero genre is not new to literature, but Mario Puzo's 'The Godfather' introduced the Anti-hero to films and the same effect is seen in Indian films too. Mario Puzo has done screenwriting work in many movies viz. In The Godfather, the Last Don through these popular movies Mario Puzo introduced the antihero in movies. Like the antihero written by Mario Puzo, many Anti-heroes have been portrayed in Indian films. Movies like 'Don', 'Deewar', 'Vastav', 'Satya' and 'KGF' have played antiheroes like Mario Puzo's antihero.

Keywords: Anti-Hero, Mario Puzo, Cinema, Hero.

Introduction

If we look at Indian cinema from the beginning, we will find that the Indian film hero has always been a good example of humanity. If we think about it, the first film in Indian cinema was Dadasaheb Phalke's "Raja Harishchandra", if we think about it, this film is taken from an Indian Purana. Raja Harishchandra is shown in this movie as an example of a good personality like never telling a lie. Later many films were released in which the hero is shown as an ideal person. Many films based on Ramayana, and Mahabharata were released in which the hero was shown as an ideal person. In Indian films till 1974 the hero was always portrayed as a role model, the leading actors of that time like Dilip Kumar, Devanand, and Rajesh Khanna always acted as a role model. An exception to this is Sunil Dutt, the leading actor of that time, his film "Mother India" was very popular, but in this film, Sunil Dutt's role was not that of an ideal person.

Sunil Dutt's negative role in the film was the first time that a leading actor played a negative role, a role that was opposed to the ideal hero. Before that, Manoj Kumar also played a negative role in the film 'Jewel Thief'. Instead of calling it a causal role we can call it a villain role because Devanand is shown as the hero in that film. The first hero who played the role of anti-hero perfectly in his film was Devanand. He played the role of Bagla Bhagat in his movie 'Ameer Garib' and it is a perfect example of an anti-hero.

About Mario Puzo

A New York City native, and child of working-class parents, Puzo wrote stories as a young boy and dreamed of a life as a published author. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and saw action in France, for which he won numerous decorations (although Puzo would always scoff at any notion of his wartime heroism).

His first novel, *The Dark Arena*, was published in 1955, with the aforementioned results. He went to work as an editor and staff writer at a company that published a line of men's interest magazines, from second-string versions of *Playboy* to the sort of "true adventure" titles that featured material about crime, race cars, hunting, call girls, and lots of war stories about U.S. Marines and curvy nurses trapped on Pacific islands.

In 1968, a novel by Mario Puzo called "The Godfather" was published, the influence of this novel was not limited to literature, but also to the film industry. In the novel "The Godfather" Mario Puzo has created a new type of hero, a hero not new to literature but certainly new to cinema. In 1972, Mario Puzo wrote the screenplay and made 'The Godfather' on the silver screen starring Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan, and Richard Castellano. This film had an impact on the entire Hollywood. In 1972, Mario Puzo gave the film industry a new character called Antihero. The effect of this is not limited to Hollywood but its effect is seen in Indian films to date. Before seeing the impact of an Anti-Hero in Indian movies, it is important to understand what an Anti-Hero is. who is the Anti-hero?

What is Anti-Heo?

Character is one of the most important elements in any work, in any fictional work the plot is a centre on the main character and the main character known as the protagonist of the fictional work. Normally a character who has a promising trait often becomes a main character, in literary works the character who has conventional Heroic qualities, courage, morality, and idealism that character is known as a hero in literary work. A character who has a bad person who has only bad intentions and who doesn't have a true moral code that character is known as a villain.

Anti-Hero, this world constructed with two words Anti + Hero, 'Anti' means opposite Hero, which means a character who has heroic qualities, courage, morality and idealism and the Anti-hero means opposite of a hero, which means that Anti-Hero is a villain in the literary works but there is a difference between villain and Anti-Hero, a villain is a classic bad person who has an only bad intentions, who hasn't a true moral code but anti-hero is a protagonist of the story who chooses the bad choice for a good intention, who has some moral in life that character is known as an Anti-Hero. Anti-hero means a character who chooses the wrong way for the right thing.

To understand an Anti-Hero, we need to first understand what is a hero. what is the definition of a Hero? According to the Cambridge Dictionary "A person who is admired for having done something very brave or having achieved something great". The definition of a Hero changes according to individuals everyone can have different definitions of a Hero, for whom a hero can be someone who succeeds after a difficult journey, for some people a hero may be just a main character in a book, while for others Hero may be their role model or their role model may be called

as a Hero, while for some people a Hero may be a person with a good personality, for others a Hero may be a person with a good looks, for some people a Hero can be someone who did good or shows good direction to someone.

The definition of a Hero changes according to individuals we can say that the meaning of the word Hero changes according to structure means we don't have a proper definition of the word Hero. A person or a character who is a Hero to one person is not necessarily that he is a hero to another person, the Hero may also be a villain to another person and a person who is a villain to one person can be a Hero to another person. An example of this is the "Ramayana" written by Maharshi Valmiki. In Ramayana Ram and Ravan, these are the two main characters but these characters are very different from each other. Ram is shown as a Hero while Ravana is shown as a villain. Ram is a hero and he has all good qualities he is worshipped everywhere but Ravana is shown as a villain but he also has some heroic qualities, he also has a good side of personality but he is shown as a Villain. But Ravana is also worshipped in some parts of India which means for some people Ravana is not a villain Ravana is a Hero for them. We can say that a person who is a Hero for one person may be a Villain for another person and a person who is a villain to another person may be a Hero to one person.

The anti-hero, this concept is not new for literature as time passes this concept is divided into more specific subtypes according to various conditions of the period of a time and literary genre etc.

The ancient notion of the character Anti-Hero was quite different from contemporary work. The Anti-hero of this time was a rather rough and simple object of satire and irony rather than a unique and individualistic figure a character standing in opposition to the majority was known as an Anti-Hero in the literature for a made viable time but the bloom of an Anti-Hero is concerned with the end of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, the period of romanticism in which we can find the origin of a modern type of Anti- Hero, an Anti-Hero is typical for a work of angry young man.

There are many examples of Anti-Hero in Literature. The well-known Anti-Hero in Literature is Robin Hood, from folklore to Howard Pyle's "The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood". Robin Hood is a protagonist in the work, he has heroic qualities and chooses the wrong way for the right thing. Robin Hood steals from the reach to give to the poor, so he is helping poor people, Robin hood is oppressed while breaking the law at the same time he chooses the wrong way for the right thing. He is a hero for the poor and villain for a rich people so he has both qualities of a Hero and a villain Je has some moral codes in his life. He did charity work so we can call him an Anti-Hero. After World War II, the angry young man literature flourished and Pulp literature also flourished. In this literature, there are many Anti-Heroes. Mario Puzo is known for his Mafia novel, he created some Anti-Heroes in Literature through his work, and he defined Anti-Hero. "The Godfather," "The Last Don", and "Omertas, in these novels he created some Anti-Heroes.

An Anti-Hero is a character who is equivalent to a main hero, a character who may play the main role in a book or movie. An Anti-Hero is a character who is not as heroic as the hero and tries to get their rights or needs by choosing the wrong way. The audience creates an emotional connection with the Anti-Hero, connecting the character with the people. Generally, heroes are liked by everyone and villains are disliked. But when we see a hero, what if we do not like him as an ideal hero? What if we watch a movie and feel sorry for the villain? In that case, shall we say heroes and villains? because heroes are liked by everyone and villains are disliked. So what to call that character? We can call him an Anti-Hero which means we have no love and no anger towards the hero we have only sympathy.

Mario Puzo was one of the best writers and screenplay writers. He wrote some masterpieces of novels like “THE GODFATHER,” “THE LAST DON,” “The Family Man” and “OMERTAS. In 1972, Mario Puzo wrote the screenplay and made ‘The Godfather’ on the silver screen starring Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan, and Richard Castellano. This film had an impact on the entire Hollywood. In 1972, Mario Puzo gave the film industry a new character called Antihero. The effect of this is not limited to Hollywood but its effect is seen in Indian films to date.

In Mario Puzo’s movie ‘The Godfather’, Mario Puzo depicts the life of the underworld. ‘The Godfather’ is a story about Don Corleone and his family. In this movie, Mario Puzo shows the life of the Mafia. Mario Puzo shows courage and presents a mafia don as a hero in his novel and movie. It was the first time in cinema that a person with a criminal background was cast as a hero. For the first time, criminals were seen shooting in suits in movies. Even though the hero of the film belongs to the criminal world, people do not feel angry towards him, on the contrary, people have a kind of sympathy towards him. This kind of experiment was first done in Hollywood but its influence was seen in the Indian film industry within a few years.

“Don ka intezaar to ghyara mulko ki police kar rahi hai.....” We all know this dialogue, This dialogue is from the movie ‘Don’ written by Salim Javed. Don was the third highest-grossing Indian film of 1978 and was categorized as a Golden Jubilee by Box Office India. The film generated the Don franchises; Javed Akhtar’s son Farhan Akhtar made a remake of ‘Don: The Chase Begins Again (2006)’ and its sequel ‘Don 2 (2011)’, both starring Shah Rukh Khan. It also encouraged several South Indian remakes, including the Telugu film ‘Yugandhar (1979)’ and the Tamil film ‘Billa (1980)’. Don is also known for its theme music, which was used in the ‘American Dad!’ episode “Tearjerker” (2008). The intro “Yeh Mera Dil” was sampled by the Black Eyed Peas for the song “Don’t Phunk with My Heart” (2005).

The movie ‘Don’ is one of the best movies in Indian cinema. If we look at the screenplay of this movie, we realize that the hero of this movie has a criminal background. At the beginning of the film, we are shown the criminal background of the hero and then the drama dies and another person who looks like him is shown as Don and the whole story depends on this. The most important aspect of this film is that the hero has a criminal background, never before has a hero with a criminal background been portrayed in Indian films. For the first time in India, a hero with a criminal background was cast in a film and it was well received by the audience. If we look, the hero of the movie ‘The Godfather’ written by Mario Puzo is also a hero with a criminal background. The movie ‘The Godfather’ was released in the year 1972 and was well received by the audience, it had an impact on Indian films and became a success like Don.

Even before ‘Don’ was released, criminals were shown as heroes like ‘Mother India’. The film ‘Mother India’ featured Sunil Dutt in the role of a robber and he was also shown as the hero of the film. Don was an antihero before the movie but it was portrayed differently. Sunil Dutt’s role in ‘Mother India’ was that of a robber, but he had no criminal background Sunil Dutt played the role of a person who tries to get his rights in a wrong way due to moneylender system and discrimination in the society. The ancient notion of the character Anti-Hero was quite different from contemporary work. The Anti-hero of this time was a rather rough and simple object of satire and irony rather than a unique and individualistic figure a character standing in opposition to the majority was known as an Anti-Hero. Sunil Dutt’s character who is played in the movie ‘Mother India’ is similar to the ancient antihero’s definition because in ‘Mother India’ Sunil Dutt also stands against the majority and chooses the wrong way to get his rights. We can also say that he chose the bad way for the good thing.

But Mario Puzo’s film ‘The Godfather’ influenced Indian films in such a way that Indian films began to feature criminals or criminals as heroes. Films began to feature heroes who transcended

our definition of a hero, heroes who were not ideal heroes but who played the role of a hero in films. The audience was confused about such heroes because they liked the hero but did not like the evil path chosen by the hero. The best example of this is Shahrukh Khan's 'Bajigar', in the movie Shahrukh Khan played the negative character, when we see the movie we like Shahrukh Khan as a hero but we do not like the way he took revenge for some murders. Many films like 'Dar', and 'Dewar' featured antiheroes and received good responses from the audience.

'Vastaav: The Reality' is a famous and important film with a crime background similar to Mario Puzo's 'The Godfather'. The only difference we can see between 'The Godfather' and 'Vastav' is that in The Godfather the hero already has a criminal background whereas in reality, the hero becomes a criminal himself. An important similarity between the two films is that both films feature a criminal as the protagonist. 'Vastav' stars Sanjay Dutt in the lead role and is directed by Mahesh Manjrekar. Vastaav attempts to show how a boy from a normal family enters the world of crime and becomes a criminal in this film. Although the backgrounds of the protagonists in the two films 'Vastaav' and 'The Godfather' are different, both the protagonists belong to the criminal field.

As time went by, the influence of 'The Godfather' also increased in Indian films, with many films in Indian cinema where the hero had a criminal background. 'Once Upon a Time in Mumbai', 'Shootout at Lokhandwala' and 'Shootout at Vadala' are the best examples of cinemas in which we find the antihero. 'Once Upon a Time in Mumbai' starred actor Ajay Devgn in the lead role and also starred Emraan Hashmi, and Prachi Desai. Actor Ajay Devgan played the role of Sikandar in the film, which depicts the hero with a criminal background. The hero of the film Once Upon a Time in Mumbai is similar to the hero of the film The Godfather. Like Don Vito Corleone Even though he is portrayed as a criminal, his good qualities are also portrayed well by Mario Puzo in the movie 'The Godfather'. Just as Don Vito Corleone stands against drugs and thinks of people in the movie The Godfather, Ajay Devgan plays the hero in Once Upon a Time in Mumbai. In the movie Once Upon a Time in Mumbai, We see the hero Sikandar risking his life to save the lives of the people on the train. This means that we can see morality in both the heroes.

In both 'Shootout at Lokhandwala' and 'Shootout at Vadala', the hero is shown as a criminal. 'Shootout at Lokhandwala' starred Vivek Oberoi in the lead role and featured Sanjay Dutt, Sunil Shetty, and Amitabh Bachchan in important roles. The film shows how a criminal ends up. The film 'Shootout at Vadala' has also been shown in the same manner in which actors John Abraham, Anil Kapoor, and Tusshar Kapoor played roles. In both the films 'Shootout at Lokhandwala' and 'Shootout at Vadala', the hero is presented as a hero even though he is a criminal.

The influence of antiheroes can be seen in Indian films today, an example of which is the recently released movies Pathan' and KGF series. Both movies have different storylines and different characters but the similarity is both heroes are anti-heroes. In the movie 'Pathan' Shahrukh Khan played the main role and in the KGF series, Yash played the main role. The protagonists of both movies belong to a criminal background, both are not the ideal heroes but they show some morals and ethics in their lives like Mario Puzo's Anti-Hero.

Conclusion

Mario Puzo wrote novels like 'The Godfather', 'The Last Don', And 'Omerta' and he tried to create a new type of hero through his screenwriting and novel writing. Mario Puzo's portrayal of the hero in his screenplays and novels had an impact on Indian films. A good example of this is the film released in India after the novel 'The Godfather', in which the protagonists are similar to Mario Puzo's. 'Don', 'Dewar', 'Vastav', Satyaa' and KGF series all the heroes shown in these movies are similar to Mario Puzo's heroes which he presented through his novels and screenplays. So we can say that there is an influence of an Anti-Hero by Mario Puzo in the Indian Cinema.

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