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# Envision Future India, Technology, From Monologue to Visual Narrative by Prayaag Akbar's *Leila*

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## Abstract

*This study on Prayaag Akbar's Leila examines the intersection of the drastic technological change that transformed India into a dominant country, one ruling in the name of purity. As technocratic systems become more prevalent, novels are being made into films, which facilitates information gathering. Nevertheless, the greater dispute is an unexplored to every meticulous detail given in the book when it was adapted to a motion picture, as culture, identity, and emotions. This research pointed out how the cultural transformation is expressed when the author handled the community clash through the character name "Leela" or "Leila." The chosen novel explores the thematic element of Spatial segregation in Leila, where social class, religion, and purity are not merely concepts but are integrated into the physical layout of the city, with barriers transforming geography into a system of dominance. This research relates the theory of Marxist dominance in society through the Narrative hook of "Purity Pills" and false apprehension, illustrating this within the textual parameters. Structuralism and semiotics gave rise to Narratology theory, which is re-imagined for the screen to analyze anything from novels to films. Through this study, the truth of dominance in society is revealed in the name of adapting to modern ideology. Despite India gaining independence in 1947, it remains under the dominance of certain cultural and identity influences in the present era.*

**Keywords:** Technocratic Systems, Spatial Segregation, Purity Pills, Structuralism and Semiotics, Narratology Theory

Among the few technocratic novels set in India, one presents the truth about authoritarian rule that will prevail in the future era. The novel *Leila* explores many meticulous details that were not adapted into the movie version. In the contemporary field of Indian English Literature, *Leila* promotes a powerful critique of technocratic governance and purity-based nationalism. Set in a near-future India, this concept visualizes a society where technological advancement coexists with regressive ideological control. Using many Technocratic systems in motion picture novels is

inadequate to deliver their originality. The chosen novel of Prayaag Akbar delivers the community clashes between the character of Shalini, the protagonist, who is from the Hindu community, married to a Muslim, Rizwan Chowdhury. His own community influenced him to write this novel, *Leila*, with his family identity of a Muslim father and a Christian mother. Later, sixteen years of research. The female narrator and protagonist face harsh treatment and punishment at the hands of the council in the dystopian city of New Rules, which enforces love and marriage.

This study focused on how characters were affected by the class dominance and religious conflict. For example, the author uses both the community names in the novel, as the novel name is delivered as Leela and Leila. Infusing both communities, he uses this name classification as Shalini, a Hindu, she calls her daughter Leela, and Riz calls his daughter Leila. In the tag name of purity, Community members shout, “Unity! Purity! Unity from Purity!” (*Leila*, 97). This decision was taken by grouping all the neighbors. Nevertheless, Shalini was not interested in the decision and motto as she believed in the individual rather than the community.

The paper explores the totalitarian regime of India as depicted in *Leila*. This novel is set in an unspecified and unnamed Indian city of the near future, late 2040s. The sector walls serve to segregate individuals based on caste, class, community, and religion. Women thereby preserve their identity and purity. This segregation strictly prohibits any form of human relationship, including love or marriage, within both the Hindu and Muslim communities that transcends community boundaries. Schools are also established sector-wise to prevent intermingling among children. Low-caste servants are required to present identity proofs and undergo physical examinations before entering any sector.

The city is governed by a new set of laws aimed at maintaining order, peace, and safety, as dictated by the Council from the panopticon of the Purity Pyramid, under the motto Purity for All. The Council employs vigilante enforcers known as Repeaters to uphold societal rules through violence. Lawbreakers within the city’s sectors are exiled to The Towers outside the city, where they undergo moral purification in Purity Camps. “*They call it the first brick of purity one.*” (*Leila*, 2). In Selected, work the Importance of Purity Pills functions as a central metaphor through which the author interrogates the mechanisms of authoritarian control in a technocratic future India. Rather than presenting medicine as a neutral instrument of care, the novel exposes how pharmaceutical intervention becomes a key tool for ideological regulation, transforming political conformity into a matter of bodily compliance for every individual women characters. Example introducing pills. Within the narrative, Purity Pills are administered to individuals identified as impure, a classification rooted in religious mixing, social nonconformity, and deviation from state-sanctioned norms.

Through The Purity Pills also exemplify how power in *Leila* operates through normalization rather than spectacle with the totalitarian regime. “*I was introduced to the pills at Purity Pills*” (*Leila*, 21). Than many punishments, violence, and pharmaceutical control are quiet, repetitive, and intimate for the characters to use pills every day. The act of swallowing a pill for every woman in society was a mandatory, becoming a daily ritual in everyday actions of submission, fostering internalized obedience rules maintained by the authoritarian society to the impure woman that they selected with their caste. Through the Character Shalini’s fragmented interior monologue, the author reveals how fear and compliance are gradually absorbed into the everyday life of the people who live in that city, illustrating how technocratic governance reshapes subjective rule in society.

The novel’s spatial mechanisms of control, women’s bodies with pills, such as Purity Camps and segregated zones. While camps discipline the body externally through segregations, Purity Pills extend discipline inward, completing a cycle of biopolitical regulation that they be maintained as pure in all ways. This system highlights the regime’s comprehensive reach, through authoritarian control over the people, where both space and biology are organized to sustain ideological purity based. This study relates structuralism and semiotics to examine how *Leila* constructs meaning through recurring narrative structures and symbolic systems rather than isolated events or characters and scenes. From a structuralist perspective, the novel is organized around binary oppositions inside/outside, compliant/deviant, healthy/pathological, Hindu/Muslim,

which shape social hierarchy and govern individual existence, which is maintained by a particular society. “He put two fingers of his right hand on his heart. ‘Purity for all,’ he said.” (*Leila*, 36). These oppositions function as the underlying grammar of the dystopian society, revealing how ideology is stabilized through repetition and systemic organization.

Semiotically, *Leila* encodes power through a network of signs, including Purity Pills, surveillance mechanisms, bureaucratic language, and segregated spaces, which operate as signifiers of technocratic authority. Medical and administrative symbols, in particular, transform ideological control into seemingly neutral practices of health and order. Through this structuralism with semiotic analysis, the study demonstrates that *Leila* represents authoritarianism not merely repression but as a self-sustaining sign system, where meaning, behaviour, and bodily regulation are produced and maintained through structured patterns of language and symbols maintained by the community.

Every scene in books and Picture motion will have a change when it is adapted in the form of a narrative structure. By focusing on elements such as narrative voice, focalization, temporality, and narrative order, narratology enables a systematic comparison between the novel *Leila* and its screen adaptation, the Netflix series *Leila*, and the book. This approach reveals how shifts in narrative structure alter the representation of power, subjectivity, and technocratic control in the future imagined by the author, which is a key in this study. This research analyses the Narrative Voice and Interior Monologue of character Shalini. The novel employs a close third-person narration that often merges with Shalini’s interior monologue. For example, in a book, the character talks to her husband as an imaginative character, but in a picture, it is not shown. “*Riz died the same night they took our daughter. Yet here he is by my side.*” (*Leila*, 9).

The series adaptation of comparative movies and books translates this interior, fragmented narrative into an audio-visual storytelling mode, necessitating significant narratological shifts. Through this study, using many digital technologies, the thesis can also be transformed to movie to give a better understanding of cinema and television, by their nature, tend toward external focalization, privileging what can be seen and heard over internal thought, which is conveyed in the movie. Focalization: While the series remains centered on Shalini, focalization becomes more distributed. The camera frequently adopts an observational stance, showing institutions, crowds, and state rituals that the novel only implies. This shift expands narrative scope but reduces psychological depth between the characters. The audience gains a clearer picture of the ruled structure, yet loses access to the sustained interiority that defines the novel’s critique of the essentials, such as food and water. This study introduced the theory of Narratology, which represents a movement from internal focalization to variable or external focalization, altering how power is perceived. The fragmented experience of living under authoritarianism is replaced by a coherent narrative of oppression and resistance, which may reduce ideological complexity.

**Voice and the Loss of Interior Discourse:** One of the most significant narratological losses in adaptation is the reduction of interior monologue. Although occasional voice-overs appear, they cannot replicate the sustained internal discourse of the novel feeling and emotions cannot be shared as we read in the novel. As a result, ideological mechanisms, especially pharmaceutical and bureaucratic control, are conveyed visually rather than linguistically. This transformation aligns with narratological observations that cinema externalizes narration, relying on scenes, performance, and symbolism. Pills, uniforms, and walls become narrative signs, but their discursive rationalization is less explicit. Power is shown rather than thought.

This research study focuses on how the novel *Leila* and its screen adaptation *Leila* together demonstrate how dystopian meaning evolves from verbal interiority to visual narration and finally to critical creative intervention. The novel forms the conceptual and theoretical foundation of the article. Its importance lies not only in content but in form. In this study, the author’s use of internal focalization, fragmented temporality, and bureaucratic language enables a deep exploration of technocratic power as something internalized and normalized. This research article explores how the novel can be treated as a discursive system, a text that constructs biopolitical technocracy through language, memory, and medical metaphors such as Purity Pills.

This section establishes how ideology operates at the level of narration and subjectivity, making it ideal for narratological and semiotic analysis in comparison to movies and books. For example, many characters change their gender when it's adapted to movies. This research ends with the screen adaptation, then functions as a case study in intersemiotic translation. Rather than evaluating it through fidelity, this article can analyze how the shift from verbal signs (interior monologue, medical discourse) to visual signs (architecture as walls and boundaries built around costume, pills as props) transforms meaning. And many cultural changes are happening in the novel. The series makes technocracy spatially and visually legible, but often externalizes what the novel renders internal. This comparative move allows the article to argue that cinematic narration privileges visibility and emotional immediacy, sometimes at the cost of ideological density.

The adaptation section thus demonstrates what is lost, altered, or intensified when dystopian power is narrated visually rather than narrated verbally. The idea of creating the adaptive movie concept helps us to understand the future concepts better than the verbal novel versions.

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