

VARIOUS FORMS OF THE PROTAGONIST: LAGAAN-ONCE UPON A TIME IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The Indian film industry, Bollywood, has two chapters; one is before independence and the other one is after independence. Films have been made in all the genres. Directors depict characters with different aspects and points of view. The depiction helps to understand the director's point of view through the protagonists. Protagonists carry/promote the story to fulfill its ultimate condition, movie or film. The main character and other supporting characters make a film interesting and avoid boredom while the audience sitting in the theatre. The director always tries to touch the various forms of the protagonist. He makes films and throws on a silver screen through the projector. Critics, scholars, and researchers take interest to find out the different aspects of the story, script, screenplay, music, direction, and the characters. This study depicts Bhuvan, Lagaan film, the leading character, and his forms in the particular film as well as gives references to British India.

Keywords: *protagonist, depiction, forms, film, direction*

INTRODUCTION

Filmmakers understand the main character and building his different forms and qualities through the storyline. The study discusses how different forms out step through the protagonist, his work and make its identity. It deals with the Lagaan, an Indian film that explores subconscious characters within the protagonist, Bhuvan. He breaks his own farmer identity throughout the film but he never forgets it. The paper witnesses various forms of Bhuvan as a patriot, a farmer, a vigilant tax-payer, a leader, an opportunist, an advocate, a player selector, a secularist, a social reformer, a lover-boy, a good learner, an instructor, a pitch analyst, a good captain and a best match finisher. The study touches social, political and economic scenarios too. With the help of the film, it elaborates on a cricket game step by step too.

Lagaan is directed by Ashutosh Gowariker, setup of the Victorian period of Indian colonial British Raj. The plot construction of the film is about a small village, Champaner, Northern India, which burdened by high taxes. The villagers find themselves in an irksome situation when an arrogant British officer challenges them to play a cricket match for avoiding taxes. In the situation as the tax payer's face the grueling task of learning the new game and playing for the win which changes their destiny.

The title of the movie Lagaan means tax. Tax means the burden on agricultural yielders so it gives a meaning of exploitation. The villagers of Champaner are struggling to pay the tax

due to lack of rain for two years and the physical atmosphere of the area seems like a desert. Though they are struggling to get water and feed themselves properly, they are forcefully imposed by the British officer to pay extra tax. The leading character, Bhuvan, fights against the injustice and encourages the villagers by enlightening the truth to stand against the injustice.

The study consists of the protagonist's different transformations which face the situations. The challenge builds a cricket team from the people who even don't know the play-cricket name properly. As well as it elaborates on the relation between farmers-cum-players and other characters within him. The sundry forms of the protagonist deal with the other players and his own identity as a farmer. The paper demands a narration of its way about cricket games, also explaining the situation which helps to forms step out from time to time. The paper takes the help of content analysis in nature to deal with various flavors of the hero. Simultaneously, the paper tries to learn about the cricket game and its main aspects, the personnel need to make a great team to make a winning team.

Bhuvan, whose first innings as a farmer is a failure due to lack of rain and his second innings as a cricketer is successful due to his determination and positivity.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Prithish Nandy, a reporter asks about the role of protagonist and its challenges, on the question director replies that it was not easy to convey the role to the protagonist of the film. It was tough work which made him sit and think for long period of time and persist till positive end.

The protagonist, who made this role alive, said he has not been convinced many times about the character.

Amir Khan quotes in his one of the interviews that a journey from story to screenplay through script is long and tough. The character's forms come out on screen and play their roles scene by scene at all aspects of the functions are not only challenging work but they should have convincing power to the audience also.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the protagonist role in the film
- To observe the spirit of the protagonist
- To different forms of the protagonist
- To study step by step cricket game and its levels

A patriot:

He distracts the deer five times when Captain Russell aims to hunt them. Bhuvan gets attention from the audience on his love of the animal and shows anger on Captain Russell. His kindness towards animals and anger on Captain Russell show a different kind of patriotism to the nation. His denial of the British Empire through animals favors him a great patriot.

A farmer, vigilant tax-payer and leader:

Due to heavy tax burden, Champaner people get disappointed and blame on their fates but Bhuvan believes on his action, tries to make out of their superstitious belief and convinces Sarpanch to demand justice in a democratic way and makes him to think to meet Raja Puran

Singh, the king of the region (justice), request him to lessen the Lagaan. Bhuvan appears like a leader while going to Raja Puran Singh. He leads every village folk to stand against this injustice. This act of conduct shows his leadership quality.

An opportunist:

One of the crucial turns in the film is Bhuvan's decision to accept the challenge posed by Captain Russell. Captain Russell challenges Bhuvan because he calls cricket as a *sadiyal Bhadda* (a stupid game) when he is impatiently waiting for speaking with Raja Puran Singh regarding the extra tax issue. Offended by his words, Captain Russell demands him to play and win the game against them with some conditions. If Bhuvan's team wins the game, the village would be free from paying the tax for three years. If they lose, they bound to pay three times more tax than actually, they are paying at present. Sarpanch calls this challenge as a calamity. Bhuvan doesn't feel it the same. Bhuvan feels it is an opportunity. He doesn't frighten and take any decision in bravado. Accepting the challenge seems his daring nature and never stops until getting it done. He talks about the weaker points of his side but never forgets to mention it's a kind of a flicker of hope which has to turn into reality. Losing thoughts never touches his mind while making understand the villagers who have lost their exuberances. The game is not easy but the seriousness of the situation makes him able to catch it as an opportunity for avoiding the tax. He makes all the necessary preparations to achieve it.

An advocate:

The villagers of Champaner oppose the decision taken by Bhuvan who accepts the challenge on behalf of all villagers and provinces. He defends it as a case. The atmosphere in Champaner looks like a mini court and he argues his case like an advocate in front of all villages and sarpanch. Lakha puts a case, saying, an impossible condition has been agreed by Bhuvan, as a public prosecutor behalf of sarpanch and villagers, since all folks support him. According to him, the game is not easy but not impossible either. He lights up villagers' minds on his love for the land, saying, throughout the year farmers work hard in the field but don't get two times food properly. Through this argument, he makes an understand sarpanch to realize the reality and the difficulties of the villagers. He shows the rebellion nature to stand against the unjust and raise his voice, at the same time his calmness to convince his village people to accept challenge impresses to the audience.

A selector:

The protagonist, Bhuvan, is endowed with so many positive elements in his character. He selects players as per their ability which shows Bhuvan as a perfect selector. Bagha- a muscle man, batsman; Guran- a god-man, all-rounder; Goli- a slingshot man, medium faster; Ishwar Kaka-an old age person, a keeper, unable to run fast in the field; Bhura- a good catcher and fielder; Ismail and Deva- all-rounder and Kachara- a perfect hat trick taker spinner. For instance, the villagers of the Champaner take doubt about Lakha's honesty because, on his past acts, he solves the issue by a healthy discussion. While testing his physical fitness, Bhuvan shows his smartness by making him run up and down on the temple staircases for three times. He fills faith and courage in the hearts of the players and motivates them to reach the winning goal.

Sometimes, he sings songs and pumps their hearts with hope. He holds fraternity as he calls them friends.

A secularist and social reformer:

Lagaan team consists of different religions and castes people, cobbler, potter man, blacksmith, Sikh, untouchable and woodcutter, respecting all religions and castes finds him a secularist. His personality attracts and inspires every player in the team. Ismail blames him for accepting the challenge initially but later requests him to take him in the team after watching Bhuvan's hard work and intention. Bhuvan is a sensible and meticulous young man.

Kachara is a skillful bowler, just because he is an untouchable, other team-mates show a resentful attitude towards him. Untouchability is an evil system in India. Realizing the situation, Bhuvan condemns their action by telling them the importance of humanity and he is not playing it for anyone's entertainment. The match is important to everyone's benefit, untouchability is like a curse of Indian society, and it's a diffusion of a nation's development. This action portrays him as a social reformer. Along with these kinds of hurdles, he selects the team, trains them, motivates them and deepens the knowledge of cricket. But he never forgets his own identity, as a farmer. His decision making, judging and analyzing the situation and the characters are impressive throughout the movie.

A lover-boy:

Gauri and Elizabeth attract by his mannishness. Both fall in love with Bhuvan. His abnormal thinking and influential personality make him a lover-boy. Bhuvan's ignorance about cricket makes Elizabeth a good teacher and spends some time with him. In the middle, Gauri misunderstands his relationship with Elizabeth. As a good lover, he clarifies the issue and gains her trust. The film has more focus on Bhuvan as a successful cricketer but it touches the lover-boy image slightly.

A good learner, good coach & an instructor:

Being a student of a cricket game he learns the game properly from Elizabeth. The same quality reflects from him in the training towards teammates. He checks the abilities and capabilities of the players from time to time and pushes them by his instructions. The observation makes him set a good batting order for the match. The day of playing, cricket match against British officials is the core facet of the film. The players of Bhuvan's team ridicule themselves due to their foolish act on the fielding; Bhuvan accounts on it and becomes an instructor. It signs his good captainship too.

A pitch-analyst:

Though Kachara has all the abilities as a spinner but couldn't able to spin the ball, Bhuvan inspects the pitch and analyses the nature of the pitch. His sense of analyzing the condition of the pitch makes Kachara to bowl well and get wickets after pitch getting rough. This shows the ability of the pitch-analyst of the protagonist.

A cool-captain:

He never disturbs his mind for an unnecessary-nonsensical talk which may take him away from its ultimate target. He tries to curb unwanted arguments between Lakha and Ismail which may disrupt other teammates. Lakha, an unfaithful character, tries to demolish the loftiness of Bhuvan. Lakha loves Gauri but she loves to Bhuvan. Lakha tries to make Bhuvan down in her eyes, for this he hands with Bhuvan's opposite team, British. Bhuvan spares him from the villagers' attack on his treachery. He forgives Lakha generously, even though he is helping the opposite team Lakha gets a chance by Bhuvan to prove his loyalty like a good player and friend. His successes to keep the team intact, if it is not so, serious trouble will occur as a result of this unwanted action. The effect in play helps to win the opposite team and lose the motive of his play.

British batting line shines for a huge target, Bhuvan's bowlers fail all the attempts to take wickets. In the middle of the play ball gets rough, starts to spin, Bhuvan calls Kachara for the very next over. Kachara takes a hat-trick and proves Bhuvan's decisions and calculations are correct. Kachara recognizes at international level after getting a hat-trick, when a higher authority British personnel keenly watches his game. After the first half of the play, he motivates his teammates by saying, "Come on brothers! Get rid of Lagaan!" These words portray his never relaxing nature until the goal is reached. Being the captain of the team he never let down the team's aim.

A match finisher:

Bhuvan's captaining team chasing down the total posed by the opposite team, Bhuvan takes the responsibility to carry the game till the end. He understands the importance of wickets and instructs his opening partner, Deva, to stick with him. It helps other players to get prepared mentally and have positive intent. After Deva's dismissal, Arjan plays with Bhuvan but his emotion falls for the bowler's instigating words, though Bhuvan advises him to keep his temper down. Arjan, Bagha and Lakha throw their wickets away carelessly. But Bhuvan builds a good partnership with Ismail. They almost take the game towards the victory. But Ismail's unfortunate run out after scoring fifty offers a dramatic turn in the game.

Bhuvan makes the maiden century with a huge six and proves his determination to win the game time and again. Both teams need to win. British colonial officials play for their prestige, and the villagers of Champaner plays to change their destiny. At the 10th wicket, Kachara in the middle but unable to bat with cripple hand, on three balls team needs five runs but Kachara doesn't make any run on the first two balls and on the third-last ball he takes single. British team celebrates their victory until umpire announces no-ball. Bhuvan gets a final chance, on strike, looks in the eyes of Captain Russell as a real competitor. On strike, Bhuvan connects all the ups and downs of his life with the last ball and hits a six like a seasoned batsman who makes British out of the boundary of the Champaner. After all the drama, Bhuvan's courageous effort and Kachara's timely support in bowling lead to a glorious victory to the village folk of Champaner. Each individual of the village celebrates the victory; the flamboyant and festival atmosphere surrounded the place after the glorious victory. It is like a dream comes true for all villagers getting a concession from tax burden for three years.

A farmer:

As he says the game is not easy but not impossible either. Determination and positive thinking towards the game make him a victor. After the victory, Bhuvan first touches the land for

which he played hard. Bhuvan loves the land enormously since his first shot on screen. He gains tax-free land back. Fortune with Bhuvan, there was no for a couple of years, it rains heavily shows a permanent form of Bhuvan-farmer.

Conclusion:

Timely individualize births of the leading character, Bhuvan, impact everything necessary. They have states of having to do something because it is their duties or what their original character, Bhuvan-farmer, does promise to villagers, friends, love-Gauri, mother and himself. His opportunist nature not only benefits his villager but the entire province also. In the duration of the film hero always misses his farmer identity. His disposition mind throws quality character like social reformer in the context of Kachara-untouchable takes him forward to break the social caste system. Bhuvan has a clear story impact in terms of a cricketer and a sensible tax-payer. The number of forms governs all the teammates skillfully during the building team to win the match. Wherever, he meets the villagers, reminds them as all are exploited and should get freedom from it through this battle-match. Bhuvan carefully touches social-political-economical and sports areas.

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