

An Odyssey of Indian Railways through Cinematic Lens

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Abstract

Cinema is related to trains from the time of its inception. Both inventions brought world closer and introduced newer aspects of modern world to mankind. They are more than century old and have heritage status. Trains shown in films have many connotations including physical, commercial and philosophical. There had been something about trains that makes them irresistible to film-makers including in that of India. The concept of train and cinema in India could be categorised into different genres such as romance, thrillers, social drama and so on where many momentous twist of plot in films has taken place as a train winds its way passing fields and forests in India. The following paper will explore some aspects of Indian Railways in Indian cinema, especially made in Hindi as canvas of Indian cinema is very large. The trains have adorned movies ranging from romance to action, and entertained Indian audience. Indian Railways had different type of representations in pre-independence India then called GPR (Grand Peninsula Railways). In the Raj era railway companies often used the print and cine medium to attract passengers and to educate them in proper utilisation of their services. In post-independence period this became more subtle and sublime. The various aspects under consideration here includes Railways as a messenger of new beginning, Trains and Veerangana movies, Train and Partition, Trains and Swadesh, Railway professions and films, romance, commercial aspects and so on. A special reference will also be made on the train songs which are almost a genre unto itself, with the locomotive serving as a veritable orchestra with its piercing toots and the *chuk-chuk* of its wheels. Thus, the paper aims to see the dynamic history of cinema and railways shaping India through narratives of mobility.

Ke Words: *Commercial, Indian Cinema, Indian Railways, Genre, Train songs.*

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