

**Unveiling Marginalized Identity: A Study on the Portrayal of Marginalized
Communities in the Movie *Kantara-A Legend***

Project Report

Submitted by

Anagha .T (SB21CE004)

Under the guidance of

Ms. Sari Lakshmi

*In partial fulfilment of requirements for award of the degree
Of Bachelor of Arts in B.A English Literature and Communication Studies*

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam



College With Potential for

Excellence Accredited by NAAC with 'A++' Grade

Affiliated to

Mahatma Gandhi University

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Declaration

I do affirm that the project “Unveiling Marginalized Identity: A study on the portrayal of marginalized communities in the movie Kantara- A Legend” submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature and Communication Studies has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition.

Ernakulam

Anagha.T

April 2024

Register number: SB21CE004

B.A. Communicative English

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Certificate

I hereby certify that this project entitled Media Representation of Minorities in Recent South Indian Film by Anagha.T is a record of bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

Ernakulam

Ms. Sari Lakshmi

April 2024

Department of Communicative English

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I take this opportunity to offer my humble prayers and thanks to God Almighty for His mercy and blessings for the completion of this project.

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Anagha.T

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Chapter One

Introduction

Throughout the annals of human history, a recurring motif emerges: a profound division where select segments command power and privilege, while others dwell at the margins, marginalized and excluded from the socio-political fabric of society.

'Marginalized community' can be defined as the population or groups who experience social, economic, cultural and political exclusion due to unequal power relations across the latter dimensions. These communities are often sidelined because of their race, ethnicity, gender, culture, socioeconomic status and many more. The subaltern concept intends to shed light on the often - overlooked narratives of individuals and groups who have been suppressed historically. These multifaceted challenges lead to the eventual exclusion of these communities from the main stream society thus causing a barrier for their personal and communal growth. Marginalization can occur through discrimination, prejudice, unequal power dynamics, and structural inequality in the society. The concept of subaltern, as introduced by the Post-colonial theorist Antonio Gramsci, has become a critical lens through which one can explore and understand the marginalized communities and their historically silenced voices. The lives and voices of marginalized communities are often unheard, overshadowed by dominant narratives and power structures.

The concept of the subaltern, as coined by Antonio Gramsci and expanded upon by various theorists, indeed plays a crucial role in understanding marginalized communities, especially within the context of post-colonial studies. In India, the emergence of subaltern studies in the 1980s

marked a significant departure from traditional historical narratives, offering a critical lens through which to examine power structures, representation, and resistance.

Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Spivak, and Dipesh Chakrabarty are among the key figures in subaltern studies who have contributed extensively to the understanding of subaltern experiences. Their contribution has given a framework for not only analysing literary works but also films. Their work delves into various dimensions of subalternism, including representation, which addresses how movies which depict marginalized communities is authentic or just reinforcing stereotypes. And intersectionality which helps to explore how factors like caste, class, and gender intersect to mould the experience of marginalized character. It also helps to identify the power dynamics, by analyzing the portrayal of the power relations between marginalized groups and dominant communities. Even though the mainstream medias such as Bollywood and other major regional film areas have portrayed marginalized communities in their movies the effective representation discussing their actual concerns have always been meagre.

The portrayal of subaltern communities has existed in the landscape of Indian movies for a long time the great examples being the Tamil language films *Asuran* (2019) directed by Vetrimaaran and *Karnan* (2021) directed by Mari Selvaraj. These movies bring forth the harsh reality of oppression faced by the marginalized communities and their subsequent resistance. These film elaborates on the jarring daily life situations which the subaltern people have to navigate just for existing in the same world as the dominant communities. The movies present grating violence and ends with gruesome fights, which presents the subversion of power for a brief period of time. The director has brought forth the noticeable difference in lifestyle and other aspects of living, the unruly livelihood and sidelined need of living a dignified life shows the hegemonic societal notions. Another film which strongly pictures the adversities faced by the

marginalized communities is *Jai Bhim* (2021), a Tamil language legal drama directed by T.J Ganavel. The film is based on a true incident and the case which followed it during 1993, the movie deals with the subject of police bias towards the dominant communities and state violence against a marginalized community. The film actively showcased the extreme plight a particular marginalized community when the system and state were biased against them.

These movies are considered as a catalyst for social change. As they effectively showcase the conditions of the marginalized communities, yet there exist films which has subtle yet potent depiction of marginalized communities. These movies have a very dynamic main plot yet the deeper narrative stays visible to the viewers, these narratives are at times a little hard to pick but yet has a potential impact on the film. The movie *Kantara - a legend* has a similar picturizing technique of marginalized communities, there is a considerably striking depiction of the representation of these communities underlying the actual plot. The subaltern aspect of these movies are brought to the limelight by analyzing the varied factors like narrative techniques, dialogues and visual elements. An example of movies which uses these techniques to show the extent of marginalization is *Sairat* (2016), a Marathi language romantic tragedy film directed by Nagraj Manjule. The central plot of the movie is a love story yet there is a strong portrayal of hegemonic and subaltern elements as a secondary theme which is efficiently conveyed in the movie through numerous cinematic elements. Thus these picturing contribute immensely for the understanding of the representation of marginalized communities, it also serves as a powerful tool which helps to amplify the voices of the silenced.

This paper intends to delve deep into the depiction and portrayal of a particular marginalized community, which plays a vital role in the movie *Kantara*. *Kantara - A Legend* is a 2022 mystical - drama, centering around the ideological conflicts between humans, nature and the

mystical force surrounding them. The movie is a visual treat through the portrayal of Karnataka's rich tribal culture and living traditions. The film particularly focuses on the tradition of 'Bootha Kola', the method of worshipping the demigod deity 'Panchuruli'. Even though the movie moves forward with the exploration of conflicts caused by the power dynamics between the landlord's, forest officials and the ordinary people, there are strong traces of marginalization displayed in the form of socioeconomic and culture disparity throughout the film.

The visible divide between the marginalized people and the mainstream wealthy landlords are shown in the film through the difference in their linguistic dialect of language, their clothing style, their livelihoods and many other relatively mundane aspects. Through this research thesis we gain an in-depth picture of how this disparity has been illustrated throughout the movie. This project aims to foster a deeper understanding of the intricate picturing of the marginalized communities in the movie '*Kantara - A Legend*' and a comprehensive learning about these communities. The project also intends to critically examine and illuminate how the visual grammar is utilized to showcase the same. The thesis intends to shed light on the nuanced ways in which the movie *Kantara* trace marginalization and also provide an understanding about the marginalized communities, their portrayal and the application of the concept of subalternism.

The second chapter titled “Exploring layers of marginalization” analyzes how marginalized have been portrayed in the movie *Kantara*. Through this chapter the portrayal of marginalized communities is deeply analyzed in accordance with the dialogues and picturing of scenes. This chapter explains how the deeper narrative is protruding through the cinematic techniques used to identify the marginalized communities. The third chapter titled “From subjugation to subversion” explores the picturing of resistance in *Knatara*. Resistance is an organic element resulting from extensive subjugation. *Kantara* brings out a few sequences which paves way for a determined and strong reprisal. This chapter aims to understand the strong emergence to the oppressed voice.

Chapter Two

Exploring the Layers of Marginalization: How Marginalized is Portrayed in the Movie *Kantara*.

“The bulls are running with all their might, but ironically the owner ends up getting the medal”, a villager says during the Kambala festival in *Kantara* (00:16:16). This dialogue ironically illustrates the everyday lived experiences of the marginalized communities who have been sidelined by the dominant communities.

Kantara at its core revolves around Shiva, a kambala athlete, and his carefree life while Murali, a rigid forest officer takes charge in his rural village Kaadubettu, and the friction which ensues between them. However, a hidden narrative emerges as the influence of Dvendra Suttur, a wealthy landlord comes to light. It is through the character of Suttur the movie unveils the extent of the subjugation of subaltern communities. The story line of *Kantara* navigates through two generations and ends with giving a glimpse for the third. It weaves its way through the life of Bootha Kola artist, who belongs to a marginalized community, and their oppressed life. *Kantara* subtly delves into the intricate web of factors that features the extent of marginalization. The multiple layers of marginalization are found in deeper narratives of *Kantara*.

The movie opens with a king who begins a journey in search of peace and solace in the 18th century, he eventually finds it in a tribal demigod deity Panchuruli. In exchange of Panchuruli the king agrees to grant a piece of land for the tribals. Several decades later, in 1970s, one of the king’s decedents returns to claim the land and threatens to get the land back from tribals through legal terms. He meets with a tragic death. The film then shifts to the present time in the 1990’s where the plot of Shiva and his dynamic life unravels.

The Kambala festival pictured in the film (00:11:39 - 00:20:05) has a pivotal role in showing the subaltern subjugation, during the scene the wealthy landlord Devendra Suttur arrives

at the festival in an expensive car and is welcomed with a grand commotion; he shows his commitment and compassion towards the people by generously offering money to buy ice candy for the children present there, through this scene it is evident that the buying a simple ice candy is difficult for the villagers. “He has a heart of gold” (00:12:44) exclaims one villager during this scene. Right before the Kambala race, the traditional bull racing competition, he tells his henchmen “It doesn’t matter who wins, they are our people after all” (00:14:50). This ironically states that for the landlord the effort put by the villagers for the race doesn’t matter, he just needs to image himself as a savior in front of the villagers. The festival also serves as an introduction to the protagonist Shiva and his wayward lifestyle. The background score of Kundapura folk song (00:14:59) during the festival gives a holistic view towards the lifestyle and culture of the marginalized communities. The dialect spoken by them is raw and rough, so is their attitude.

Devendra Suttur, the landlord, epitomizes the hegemonic nature of dominant communities. He manipulates the villagers by showing them fake kindness and seeks to utilize them for his own gain. During multiple scenes the landlord appears as an overly generous and benevolent person who is sincere about the well fare and well-being of the villagers but at the same time he follows the tradition of oppressive behavior. This practice is evident in scene where the land issues arises as the newly charged forest officer Murali takes it up to evacuate the tribal’s living in the forest area, as he claims; according to the law, forest areas are not meant to be populated by humans. Thus the landlord hires a lawyer to take the side of the villagers to fight from their part. During this scene (01:02:04) the villagers appears to be sitting outside in the bare land in front of the landlord’s bungalow whereas the lawyer and the landlord sits on a chair. It is noticeable in this scene that the villagers are largely uneducated, it is humorously pictured as the lawyer gets frustrated because of their lack of knowledge and scolds them calling “illiterates”

(01:02:11). The landlord is also seen using his connections to secure a job for Leela (Shiva's love interest, who later becomes his wife) upon Shiva's request. This practice of the dominant communities occupying a savior role is discussed audibly in the article 'From Joram to Kaala Paani' by Anuj Kumar. The article examines how indigenous and marginalized communities are often portrayed as barbaric who needs to be saved by a hero.

The movie brilliantly incorporates different narrative elements to focus on the multifaceted effects of marginalization. *Kantara* as a mystical drama makes use of the metaphysical elements for picturing the extent of subconscious marginalization. The multiple instances where Shiva facing internal conflicts are depicted effectively through the recurring presence of a divine entity in the form of a wild boar. The film also weaves in elements of mythology and folklore, grounding the narrative in the community's cultural identity and highlighting the potential loss of heritage due to marginalization. As the film is set in a rural village in Karnataka the camera often lingers on the beauty of natural landscape thus, creating a sense of organic connection to the simple and rustic way of life lead by the villagers. This is effectively showcased through the song 'Sringara Siriye' (00:48:34 - 00:52:03) while the song celebrates the love between Shiva and Leela, its visuals transports viewers to the heart of the realities of village life. With the timely addition of folksongs, the film ensures its focus on the traditions and heritage of the marginalized community. Like the Kundapura folksongs, which appears in multiple instances in movie, and the 'Rebel song' (01:08:38 till 01:12:01), which is actually a symbol of feud between Shiva and the forest officer Murali, gives the movie a coherence in depicting the cultural significance.

Kantara avails itself to show marginalization in a more commanding manner by subtly structuring multiple scenes which depicts the extent of subjugation. An important element in

effectively picturing this are the huts where the villagers live and the landlords lavish bungalow, the Keradi ancestral house. The houses are a symbol of visible disparity in living condition between the villagers and the landlord. The landlords' bungalow stands as a mark of superior heritage and standard. Where the people of marginalized communities are not allowed to step inside. This is powerfully illustrated in the scene when a villager unknowingly wanders to the landlords' bungalow, he is slapped and humiliated by one of the landlords' henchmen; 'How dare you step in? You mongrel' (01:03:05). The bungalow also serves an integral element in unpacking the heinous motive of the landlord and his pretended commitment towards the villagers. The landlords aid to the villagers ultimately serves as means to acquire their land and displace them. A dramatic scene unfolds the deceitful nature of the landlord within the opulent confines of the bungalow. Suttur reveals his true intentions and his involvement in Gurava's (Shiva's cousin brother who performs kola, later killed by the landlord) death to his young son through a story (01:46:26). The privileged settings of the ancestral house are a stark indictment for showing the landlords greed and oppressive nature. The all white attire, white shirt and white dhoti, of the landlord contrasts his darker mindset.

The villagers live in huts and tree houses which are small and unruly. They sleep and eat on the ground. It is evident that the people from the dominant communities doesn't enter their huts as well. But during the scene of Gurava's funeral the landlord enters his house, the turning heads from the people present there shows the uncommonness of this act (01:39:11-01:39:17). The magnitude of treating and considering the marginalized communities as outcasts is powerfully shown through the scene where the landlord washes his hand after touching Shiva: "Sudhakar give me some water, I just touched a rabid dog" (01:54:22).

The movie also brings forth the pitfall of being uneducated. In the film marginalized people are shown to be largely illiterate except for the Leela, who completed her forest department guard training. Due to illiteracy the villagers are unable to maintain accurate land records and are unaware of crucial laws and paperwork requirements. On the other hand, Leela is also unable to help as she meddles with the inner turmoil of being a forest guard on duty and her personal life as a villager. The villagers refuse to ask Leela's help, as they have a wrong notion that Leela has betrayed them. This leaves them vulnerable to the landlord's foray into their land and lives. The inability to get required education traps the marginalized communities and people in disadvantage. The scene where the landlord himself recounts this condition to the forest officer Murali shows the reality of the villagers; "You know our people right; their livelihood depends on this forest. They are uneducated" says the landlord (00:36:34). There are multiple scenes which depicts the detriment of being illiterate, these scenes are humorously pictured yet shows the vulnerability of the villagers. During the scene where the forest officers comes to raid the village for encroachment the villagers are visibly confused; "Officer what is the matter now?" asks a villager the officer replies "Its encroachment" the villager confused, turns to another fellow villager who is equally confused and says "Attachment it seems" (00:54:57).

Land politics appears as central theme in *Kantara*. It also caters to the hegemony displayed by the landlord. From the beginning of the film land plays an important role in depicting the power structure. The king in the beginning of the film agrees to the word of Panchuruli to give a piece of land for the marginalized community. The land is shown as the possession of the kings and it marks their power. *Kantara* unpacks subalternism and hegemony through the land being an integral element. The marginalized community, the landlord, and the forest officials are in dispute for the land. For the villagers the land is their livelihood whereas for

the forest officials it's their job. But for the landlord it's his wealth and sign of power. It is shown that it was Devendra Suttur's father who died tragically after trying to claim the land in 1970s after defying the word of the demigod. Suttur delicately shapes the villager's belief overtime, by making them think power is a birthright for certain groups, and land plays an immense role in it. Land acquisition was the landlords motive to kill Gurava, Shiva's cousin who performs Bootha Kola. When Gurava refuses the offer put forward by the landlord to ask the villagers to leave Kadubettu by faking it as the words of Panchuruli in exchange of a piece of land, it enrages the landlord. The land again plays a superior role, by promising land the landlord indirectly promises wealth and power. When the landlord kills Gurava he states "for those fools who are freeloading in my land for years. This will serve as a warning." (01:50:02). As the film nears to the climax, land greed drives Suttur to reach grave extent to acquire the land. This is vividly pictured during the final resistance struggle when he was ready to mercilessly kill a child, when one his henchmen Sudhakar says "Landlord that's a child" he replies "Is it yours. If it survives, tomorrow child too will claim its share of land" (02:13:36).

Apart from the evident take on marginalization existing in the movie there is another layer of marginalized humans; the double marginalization of women is yet another vital element in showing the extent of subjugation. *Kantara* combines a nuanced and powerful visualization of the marginalization of women's. The film consolidates not just the suppression faced by the females of the marginalized communities but also the females belonging to the dominant communities. Ammakka, the landlord's wife, is the symbol of the marginalization faced by the women's of dominant communities. Ammakka is quietly present with the landlord during multiple instances, her silence represents her shadowed life under her husband. Throughout the film Ammakka has only one dialogue, yet her presence is noticeable. Even though it appears that

Ammakka leads a seemingly comfortable life as the wife of the landlord, she is a silent witness to his unfaithful deeds. This is evident in the scene where the landlord is shown having an affair with his maid; during this scene the landlord is shown to be dressing himself to go out late in the night while Ammakka is shown looking at him through a mirror. There is no exchange of words, but the scene brings out the lucid pain in Ammakka (01:04:29). It is during this sequence Ammakka is pictured with a dialogue; while the landlord gets ready to leave with Shiva by lying to her, she calls out to Shiva “Shiva take this flash light, Careful” (01:05:12). It is evident that Ammakka knows about her husband being unfaithful yet she has no voice to confront. Towards the end of the film when Shiva turns against the landlord there is an impactful symbol of resistance which unpacks in the landlord’s bungalow during this sequence an exchange between Shiva and Devendra Suttur, the innocence of Ammakka is pictured: “Eat that sukka, Ammakka cooked it. Its tasty.” says the landlords. Shiva after taking the sukka replies “If one’s heart is good everything turns out well” (02:01:54). “Its nice Ammakka” Shiva replies after tasting the sukka (02:02:06).

Leela, Shiva’s love interest and a forest guard, also faces a certain extent of compelling from the dominant community and marginalized community. Leela being a person from a marginalized community, faces sidelining from the dominant communities along with it she faces the same from her own community. On the first day of her job Leela is forced to be a part of an encroachment raid which causes the villagers to treat her indifferently. When she joins the forest guard the head officer Murali also looks down at her as she was recommended by the landlord; “The one who used influence to get this job” (00:53:16). It is evident that the help she sought from the landlord to secure the job has swallowed her hard work, especially when she hails from a largely illiterate marginalized community. The villagers believe that her education

has made her turn against them “You are still wearing that uniform, girl? We thought you will get educated and help us. But you back stabbed us.” (01:00:49). Especially Shiva who was tied down by the forest guards as he resists their advances of encroachment raid; considers Leela as a betrayer. During this scene Shiva violently pushes her down when tries to make peace with him. When Leela speaks out her deep inner turmoil is brought out; “How would I know that they would ask me to do this on the first day at work?! None of you understand my situation!” (01:01:47).

Kantara with its dynamic plot covering the underlying marginalization shows the structured elements of subalternism and hegemony. With its evident take on subaltern culture the film makes use of very mundane aspects to show the extent of subjugation and hegemonic nature from the dominant communities.

Chapter Three

From Subjugation to Subversion: Exploring Resistance in *Kantara*.

Resistance is an eventual and gradual result of excessive subjugation. *Kantara* also follows the path of decisive resistance from the marginalized community. The films evidently picture the need of marginalized communities to fight for their voices to be heard. During the Kambala festival (traditional bull racing competition) the result is wrongly published by giving the first prize for the landlord's racer even though the real winner is Shiva. He was consciously denied the winning position because he belongs to a marginalized community. It ends in a violent brawl between Shiva and Sudhakar (who wrongfully published the results) (00:17:37 till 00:20:05). It shows the reality of deserved opportunities being denied to them because they are deemed as people of lower social strata. As the film closes to the end, impending resistance gathers momentum.

Kantara embodies the strong resistance of the marginalized communities through an organic yet potent picturing of sequence where Shiva, who blindly believed the landlord, becomes hostile. The gravity of this scene is vividly pictured by encompassing Shiva's shift towards calm nature in contrast to his impulsiveness. This scene unpacks in the landlord's bungalow, the Keradi ancestral house, which was an integral element in picturing marginalization exuded by the landlord. Shiva enters the landlord's bungalow after learning about his real heinous acts and motives, this shot; accompanied with a folklore in background effectively conveys a sign of resistance. Initially presented as a symbol of hegemony, the bungalow undergoes a transformation by the conclusion of the film. From a space of exclusion for the marginalized communities, it becomes a locus of resistance and empowerment. During

this sequence, the landlord is having his dinner sitting at the head chair of the dinner table. Shiva enters the bungalow, draws a chair from the dining table and gets seated at the other end.

“What’s up Shiva? Your soaking wet” says the landlord as Shiva enters “I am not just wet, landlord. I have been cleansed” “Wow looks like the squatters have a lot to feast on” replies Shiva as he draws a chair and sits at the table “Now that your squatting in here too join me” the landlord exclaims hastily “Well you walked into my house, why can’t I?” “Times have changed landlord I can come.” Shiva replies in a calm and composed manner as he takes a plate and serves himself some food (02:01:26). This scene shows the stark contrast to the scene where Shiva and his friends are pictured eating food sitting on the ground in a leaf outside the landlord’s bungalow (00:35:16).

Through Shiva the film foreshadows the unified resistance of the villagers of Kaadubettu. “Looks like you’re here to settle scores, right” says the landlord as Shiva serves food for himself, “Not really!” “We eat boiled rice and pickle sometimes we can’t even afford that. Yet we are satisfied with what we have. Today I’m unable to eat this fancy food. It refuses to go down my throat.” replies Shiva (02:01:48). Shiva’s reply is the realities of being marginalized and subjugated subconsciously, as the marginalized communities forget their true identities, the manipulation is tactfully ingrained in their mind and utilized by the dominant communities. The sign of potential subversion and re-appropriation of power is pictured constructively through this sequence, notably with the dialogue which implies the period of subjugation is over: “what’s the time?” “Well, looks like time is on our side too” says Shiva to the landlord (02:02:27) as he turns back to look at the clock behind him. The time also plays a pivotal role in this sequence “It’s twelve o’ clock” (02:02:30) says Shiva looking at the clock behind him. The clock on his side and twelve at midnight symbolizes the arrival of the new dawn for the marginalized

communities. Another instance is of the presence of alcohol, which is an integral element in showing the subjugation and subversion. Throughout the film alcohol is presented as the generosity of the landlord, Shiva is offered alcohol multiple times by the landlord to show his fake kindness. It shows the manipulation done by the landlord to make use of Shiva for his needs. But the reprisal begins when the landlord asks Shiva to have some alcohol and he denies it; “Shiva have some scotch” “I’ve been cleansed, landlord you have it.” (02:02:10).

The landlord through Shiva realizes that the villagers have understood his real motive “Looks like everyone has united against us” (02:06:01). The landlord’s bigotry to the hegemonic practice driven by his land and power greed is realistically pictured as he says “Let me show you the reality, gather our men” when his one of his henchmen Sudhakar says “Seems like our good times have come to an end.” (02:06:10). During this sequence, in the background the bungalow was undergoing a cleansing ritual performed by priests, it is evident that the landlord felt the need of purifying the house because Shiva, a person from marginalized community has entered it: “Has the house been cleansed yet?” orders the landlord (02:06:00). The marginalized community being treated as outcasts is adequately understood through this scene.

As the film draws to the conclusion the impending resistance is showcased through an extensive fight sequence which accurately symbolizes the long existing inner turmoil of being marginalized, manipulated, and utilized. The friction between Murali and Shiva is resolved and is united as they both recognize the landlord as the real source of their problem; “Our beliefs may differ Shiva, but we are part of the same existence” (02:08:11) says Murali, the forest officer. The looming scuffle breaks out between the landlord and the villagers supported by the forest officials. During this sequence the unified villagers and the landlord comes to face each other, at the beginning of the fight the villagers are standing below the landlord it represents the lower

power plate which the marginalized people occupy and they gradually move forward with strong resistance. In the moment of long-awaited resistance, the villagers found their voice and challenged the landlord which sent him into a rage: “I think you’ve forgotten who I am.” replies the landlord as Kamala (Shiva’s widowed mother) questions him “Who the hell are you to ask us to leave our land?!” (02:09:19).

The clash initiated by the landlord is met with strong retaliation. This is symbolized by Leela throwing a spear towards the landlord when he instructs his henchmen to burn the village (02:10:16). Which represents the determined reprisal of the marginalized people, also from the women in the community. *Kantara* effectively utilizes the mystical and divine elements to navigate the strong reprisal of the marginalized people. The film intertwines the metaphysical for the effective portrayal of the powerful counteraction resulting in the triumph of the marginalized community. *Kantara*, already navigated through two generations, ends with giving a glimpse towards the third; with the accurate placement of mystical elements the film generates a genuine curiosity for the viewers.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

Kantara – A legend (2022) directed by Rishab Shetty unarguably portrays the fine layers of marginalization through its striking visuals and impressive dialogues. The film tackles marginalization followed by strong resistance through a coherent sequencing of story line, by adeptly adding the mystical elements at the right place.

Even though the central theme of *Kantara* is the land politics and the interplay of the transcendental elements, the picturing of Bootha kola tradition and divinity, there is a fine underlying subaltern and hegemonic concept. Which is hidden in between the core narrative line. This narrative is unveiled through the character Shiva, his friends and family. Through the analysis of cinematic techniques, the film unpacks the deeper and intricate existence of marginalization. This can be viewed through the lens of subaltern thought, where people of different social plates are treated and considered to be inferior by a certain segment of people in the society. The villagers of Kaadubettu are the descendants of the indigenous community, who were given the land by a king in exchange of their demigod deity. It is visible that they were socially excluded and the land belonged to the king as a sign of power and superior heritage. The historical power structure persists with the king's lineage holding the position of wealth as landlords, while the descendants of indigenous people remains marginalized. The movie cleverly depicts the harsh realities faced by the people who are marginalized, controlled and taken advantage of through its picturing of scenes and dialogues. The dialogues in the film functions as a strong narrative tool, which meticulously traces the marginalization experienced by the villagers of Kaadubettu and their subsequent resistance.

Even though the film through its main plotline shows Devendra Suttur, the landlord, is driven by land greed. His characterization subtly reveals his hegemonic nature and power dynamics at play. When delved deep into the landlord's obsession with acquiring the land one can notice the oppressive authority. Thus throughout the film multiple elements surrounding the landlord tries to bring forth his subaltern mindset. By analyzing the scenes in *Kantara* one can effectively understand the presence of these subaltern elements. The movie also efficiently shows the resistance which resulted from the extensive subjugation and deception by the landlord. The determined resistance is also portrayed with adequate sequencing of scenes, which gives deeper insights into the need and cause of the reprisal of the marginalized community. The movie also very subtly traces the double marginalization faced by the women in the marginalized communities and the sidelining faced by the female's in dominant communities through the characters Leela and Ammakka.

Kantara ends with the poetic justice being served; as the landlord, Devendra Suttur, and his men lose to the determined villagers of Kaadubettu. The right intervention of the mystical and divine element gives a more dramatic and poetic end to the film. Through *Kantara* the voices of the marginalized are amplified. The sidelining and exploitation of the marginalized communities are firmly layered through the scenes of the movie. The songs of the film also play a vital role in emphasizing the cultural and traditional heritage of the marginalized community. The right placing of the folklores in the film does an impressive role in featuring the marginalization and resistance of the villagers of Kaadubettu. Thus the story line of *Kantara* goes beyond the land and ideological conflict; it consists of a deeper narrative which contains the strong presence of the hegemonic and subaltern point of view. Thus the film unveils realities of

marginalized community being considered and treated inferior while being utilized by the dominant communities.

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