

Author of the Week : Kamleshwar



Kamleshwar was a prominent 20th-century Hindi writer, and scriptwriter for Hindi cinema and television. Among his most well-known work are the films *Aandhi*, *Mausam*, *Chhoti Si Baat* and *Rang Birangi*. He was awarded the 2003 Sahitya Akademi Award for his Hindi novel *Kitne Pakistan* (translated in English as *Partitions*), and also the Padma Bhushan in 2005

He is considered a part of the league of Hindi writers like Mohan Rakesh, Nirmal Verma and Bhasham Sahni, who left the old pre-independence literary preoccupations and presented the new sensibilities that reflected new moorings of a post-independence India, thus launching the Hindi literature's *Nayi Kahani* ("New Story") movement in the 1950s.

Career

In his early days, he worked as a proofreader, growing up to become, the editor of '*Vihan*', literary magazine in the late 1950s. This was followed by editorship of many Hindi magazines, like '*Nayi Kahaniyan*' (1963–66), '*Sarika*' (1967–78), '*Katha Yatra*' (1978–79), '*Ganga*' (1984–88) and weeklies, '*Ingit*' (1961–63) and '*Shree Varsha*' (1979–80), besides this, he also remained the editor of Hindi dailies, '*Dainik Jagaran*' (1990–1992), and '*Dainik Bhaskar*' (1996–2002), and helped revive the Hindi magazine, '*Sarika*', as its editor by bringing focus on new and emerging voices of modern India, an effort which reflected his encouragement to Marathi Dalit writers and Bohra Muslim litterateurs, thus opening new vistas for Hindi readers.

Films

He moved to Bombay in the 1970s and started writing scripts and dialogues for Hindi films, in the next decade or so, he worked for over 75 feature films, which include films like Gulzar's *Aandhi*, based on his novel *Kaali Aandhi*, *Mausam*; Basu Chatterjee's *Rajnigandha*, *Chhoti Si Baat*, *Rang Birangi* and Ravi Chopra's thriller, *The Burning Train*. In fact, reminiscing his works noted poet-director, Gulzar said that "in '*Kitne Pakistan*'... there is a description where a handkerchief falls off the bridge; I always used to tell him that I could write a complete short story on this one line only." He won the 1979 Filmfare Award for Best Screenplay for *Pati Patni Aur Woh*, directed by B. R. Chopra.

He was awarded the 2003 Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel based on the Partition of India in 1947, *Kitne Pakistan* (literally *How Many Pakistans?* but translated in English as *Partitions*), which explored the way nations fracture, through an allegorical court trial, wherein historical and political figures are present as witnesses, and the Padma Bhushan in 2005.

Important Links

<http://www.abhivyakti-hindi.org/lekhak/k/kamleshwar.htm>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamleshwar>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2L1E2b-Y1U>

Books by Kamleshwar

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