

UNDERSTANDING STYLE AND ARTISTRY OF HANSAL MEHTA- THROUGH THE PRISM OF AUTEUR THEORY

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Abstract-A good director creates a playground and allows you to play. Similarly, the vision of contemporary film director Hansal Mehta succeeds in manifesting itself through all of his film capturing his style essential, which many consider phenomenal. Mehta is a contemporary director in the Hindi film industry, with ten films under his belt as a director and several other films worked in the capacity of the scriptwriter, he is known to cinema, but it has been only in very recent time that his work has been noticed, a few of them being: Shahid (2013), Citylights (2014), Aligrah (2015), and Simran (2017). Be it his earliest cookery shows KhanaKhazana on television or his first film Amrita, Hansal Mehta time and again showcased a unique perspective. A perspective that demands a study. The present research paper "Understanding style and artistry of Hansal Mehta: Through a prism of the auteur theory " attempts to get a clearer perspective of the filmmaker and his work through a close reading of his select films. The auteur theory explains the idea of a filmmaker being considered the author of his/her film. Indicating that a filmmaker with his intense contribution towards a film to be considered the author through a content analysis that theory will be tested out in the present research.

Key words: Auteur theory, Contemporary, Cinema, Filmmaking and Hindi film industry.

1. Introduction

Indian Cinema is notable for its commercial film, otherwise called Bollywood. Notwithstanding commercial film, there is likewise Indian art film, referred to film critics as "New Indian Cinema" or at times "the Indian New Wave" (see the Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema). Numerous individuals in India evidently call such movies as "art films" instead of standard commercial film. From the 1960s through the 1980s, the art film or the parallel film was generally government-supported film. Such chiefs could get administrative or state government stipends to create non-commercial films on Indian subjects. Their movies were exhibited at state film celebrations and on the administration run TV. These movies additionally had restricted keeps running in art-house theatres in India and abroad.

Films, as mentioned earlier, are going to get studied under the framework of the auteur theory. This theory will help us in understanding the styles and artistry of a director. Moreover, this will differentiate the working style of the contemporary Indian director.

Hansal Mehta as a director:

Hansal Mehta is one of the excellent script and screenplay writers who have served Hindi film industry for last three decades, but he debuted as a director in 1994 in his first film Amrita and now to his recent film Omerta in 2018. Initially, Mehta started with his cookery show "Khanakhazana", in many of the interviews Mehta mentions, cooking is his first interest yet a passion. Gradually his interest shifted towards film directing. Hansal Mehta time and again showcased a unique perspective.

He has brought out the different storylines into the mainstream of cinema. his definition of cinema seems to be different from the rest, adding to it, concepts like Capitalism, Homosexuality, Jingoism/terrorism, and Women Liberty has been portrayed well in his movies. Mostly, his movies are never a box office hit which shows that films are not a commercial success although Mehta's films are sensational in their approach

2. Review of literature:

Cinema, Affect, and Immaterial Labor in Urban India

This journal argued about how Bollywood must understand as a crucial force of immaterial labour for the active contagion of mass creativity in urban India. The concern of the research is how many elite personalities like politicians, policy maker, film stars, filmmaker, and business leader in India are diverting the attention to the infrastructure of cinema as a potential resource for infatuating economic capital and creative labour class in urban and semi-urban areas. The "film city" which has a vast and fancies infrastructure is one of the cinematic fusions with urban architecture is most of the Indian cities and towns. The globalisation of Indian film industries by creating the expensive halls, shoot locations, sets, and for that matter cities are a new way of generating the economic capital and sustainability in urban and semi-urban areas. However, what is new about the recent spate of proposals for film cities is the way the immaterial infrastructure of Bollywood is an integrated into to the future designs and architectures of urban life as a whole in India. (Kumar, (2016))

Neo-Traditionalism: Film as Popular Art in India

This research paper is divided into four approaches. It talks about the differences like institutionalisation in India and west. The emergences of these approaches are through different discourse, between India and west, at times created by western critics and finding echoes in India, at times, Vice-versa. It describes the Indian commercial cinema and its underdeveloped mass audience supplied with entertainment by a film industry that matches its quaintly pure-minded naivety. Attitudes expressed in this context by Western critics – “and backed up by less discerning critics in India - range from exasperated condemnation (It is all rubbish) to barely concealed contempt for those who swallow that rubbish”.

Now in India, this approach splits into two - the now relatively rare, hopelessly colonial elitism of a few, and a more common classicist attitude to art (Indian versions of Kenneth Clark) that would usually dismiss film itself as irrelevant to "high" art. The latter, too, is not a commonly-held position, although occasionally surfacing within those who run official cultural policy.

This research talks about the French new wave and French comedy or colonial cinema. The primary focus of the research was on “culture and media”. The researcher has talked about Hindi cinema, Hindi and opportunities to teach “ Bollywood cinema”.

As a unique course on a culture, civilisation, or film tradition, it cannot get gain from the "symphonic effect" that courses more important to the curriculum, such as ones on American or European” cinemas, can generate. Whereas, Bazin, Christian Metz, and Lacanian psychoanalysis, the understanding of the frenchcinema has akwayseingdiscint from the bollywood (Hindi cenima). it is an another new wave or frenchcomdey or cinema colonial.

The challenge of teaching a particular film from India, then, must be seen as symptomatic of the undertaking as a whole. To conclude, the most significant challenge – but also infotainment teaching in Bollywood cinema is that it is uncertain as an object of analysis. (Rajadhyaksha, (1986))

Society for Cinema & Media Studies

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The challenge of teaching a particular film from India, then, must be seen as symptomatic of the undertaking as a whole. To conclude, the greatest challenge – but also infotainment teaching in bollywood cinema is its uncertain as an object of analysis. (Chakravarty, (Autumn, 2007)

Lives of a Bengal Filmmaker: Satyajit Ray of Calcutta

There was an explanation behind shock when Satyajit Ray of Calcutta 250 years prior won universal honours with his first film, Pather Panchali (Song of the Road): he had never made a film, had no involvement in any branch of filmmaking, and the gathering working with him was similarly blameless of experience. His cameraman had never shot a film; a large portion of the on-screen characters had never acted. The active ingredients had appeared to be so unpromising to distributors and other potential supporters that more than twenty had rejected his recommendations. However, he completed the film, and it won wide fame and dispersion. He kept on giving amazements. In the accompanying a quarter century, frequently drawing on the first tyro gathering, he has coordinated twenty-five highlights, all of which have earned back their interest in his local Bengal while numerous additionally won foreign markets and respects.

While he coordinated these movies, he additionally composed the screenplays, in some cases constructing them concerning his accounts; outlined landscape, outfits, and posters; much of the time, created and scored the music; filled in as his chief of photography; and drew liveliness groupings for a few. To few noteworthy film craftsmen has the term movie producer been more appropriate. Notwithstanding the element films, he has made a few documentaries.. (BARNOUW, (SPRING 1981))

Problems of film making in india by Marie Seton

The researcher drew the attention “what makes an unsuccessful piece”. The relation between heroin and her co-actress are defined very well. Critical appreciation and criticism are given by the theme, aesthetics, directing and casting. The discussion on so-called New Indian wave movies is done under this research. It tells how the film needs to be looked at a technical piece than only concentrating in virtual space. The new filmmakers are capable of solving their production problems and producing films in competition with the world. The essential issue that must be understood for them, or without anyone else, is sufficient dissemination and show, so their movies have an opportunity to be seen not by a general world-class group of onlookers, but rather unquestionably broadly. Right now, the best movies delivered in India stay under an impair inside the nation. This is the best issue of film making. (Seton, April 1975)

Globalism and Indian Nationalism

“Rang De Basanti may appear a "patriotic" film, but it also has a covert discourse privileging causes, which far from being "pan-national" express instead of the engrossment of a select class, who are made believed that it is they who constitute the nation.”

Cinema is one of the best and exciting field to be studied on, today’s cinema is not “expression” and “entertainment”, essential factors like economic factors make it necessary for each film to not only capture the fantasy/ imagination of the audience but also relevantly show them. The ideological perspective of the director has completely changed the view of audience/Spectators in the mainstream of cinema. Such views and perception become the reasons for the success of the film in the audience and press both. With this example of Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra's Rang De Basanti is take into consideration, how it has been a huge success even in the metropolitans cities. (Raghavendra, (Apr. 22-28, 2006)

3. Methodology

Methodology refers to the systematic methods and principles for conducting research. In other words, it is a branch of philosophy which deals with the science of methods and producers. The methodology could vary by particular topics. We use the methodology to know the bridge gap between where we are and where we want to go to research in a particular way. Present research is focusing on Qualitative Research.

Qualitative Research Methodology

It is a type of methodology which deals in the scientific method of observation to collect non- numerical data. It type of research talks about the “meaning, concepts definitions, characteristics, symbols, metaphors and descriptions of things” and not in the parameters of counts and measures. The present research has focused upon the qualitative style of approach where the movies from three different genres are deconstructed under the framework of Auteur theory. These movies are the production of contemporary Indian film director Hansal Mehta.

3.1 Research Design

The research design indicates the type of research methodology undertaken to collect the information for the study. It includes the data collection modes and methodology taken up for the research.

3.2 Absence of Hypothesis

Since the study will be descriptive, the researcher is using qualitative methods to conduct the study. So, therefore, we see an absence of Hypothesis in this research.

The study will be conducted by deconstructing the four films of the Hansal Mehta.

3.3 Research Theory

The theory suggests that the filmmaker or director is the author of the film. The theory mentions that the film is a complete reflection of the director’s artistic vision, so, a movie directed by a given filmmaker will have recognisable, recurring themes and visual cues that inform the audience who the director is and shows a consistent artistic identity throughout that director’s filmography. This theory critics the French film journal Cahiers du cinema, due to which a lot of became the directors of the French New Wave.

“In the French New Wave, people developed the notion of the filmmaker as an artist. They did not invent the idea, but they did popularise it. A German filmmaker who started as a German theatre director, Max Reinhardt, came up with the idea of the auteur – the author in films. He came up with that around the teens....So, [director François] Truffaut and the French New Wave popularised it, or they revived it.” – New York University Professor Julian Cornell(hustle, 2017)

The theory helps us to understand the obsession that is showed up repeatedly in his films and the distinct imprint of his personality that appeared in all of the directors works and made him a prime candidate for critical focus within the context of a theory that nurtures of a singular, distinctive vision that can be seen clearly throughout an entire film. (hustle, 2017)

This theory will help in having a better understanding of style and aesthetics of the exclusive movies of contemporary film director Hansal Mehta. Under the framework of the auteur theory, the four particular films will be deconstructed.

3.4 Data Collection

3.4.1. Content analysis

It is a style of research for analysing documents and communication artefacts, which are in different formats, pictures, audio or video. This style is often used to analyse the pattern of communication in a replicable and systematic manner.

3.4.2. Deconstruction

It refers to critical dialectical processes. In this pattern, the subject is thoroughly scrutinised, investigated and assorted in the various parameters. This style of the methodology will be used in the research to have a critical understanding of the movies. This is one of the sources to collect the primary data in the research under the framework of the auteur theory.

3.4.3. Expert In-depth Interview

It refers to the formalised or semi-formalised interview. This includes a systematic pattern of questions to be asked to the expert. Generally, the duration of an interview is an hour or more than that. It depends on the researcher how he/she plans it. The in-depth interview will be conducted in the research in order to have valuable insights into the research topic.

4. Content analysis

The current research is analysed based on the four parameters under the framework of the Auteur Theory.

4.1. Cinematography

“Cinematography is an art of photography and camera work in filmmaking”.

In the film *Citylight*, the cinematography is very convenient in approach in terms of location. The filmmaker has used lots of wide angles in the film to show a sense of isolation on the screen. After being in massive debt, Deepak, the protagonist of the film, was helpless as his shop was taken away by money lenders. The scene when Deepak along with his family members was leaving for Mumbai from Rajasthan has captured a moment of isolation when they walk all alone in the vast desert with a little ray of sunshine in their hopeless minds. Similarly, in the film *Aligarh*, the use of still shots has tried to showcase the numbness that has overtaken life. It seems as if time knows no bounds and that every moment has been lulled to a sweet sleep. The scene where Professor Siras is inebriated, the portrayal is through his reflection from the lone mirror in his room trying to depict his loneliness metaphorically. It gave a reality check to the protagonist and made it more realistic for the audience.

The cinematographer through the film *Simran* has shown a lot of chasing sequence which gives a legitimate sense of running behind a cause. The 'point of view shot' has been utilised to give the audience a sense of the emotion that Praful goes through as she robs multiple banks and continues running for dear life. This entire sequence establishes a sense of helplessness and intoxication of the protagonist. Similarly, in the film *Shahid*, the use of hand-held camera technique has tried to manifest the sense of poverty and inappropriate living conditions in the film. Often this camera technique is used to showcase the reality of the scenario.

In the film *Citylight*, Mehta draws the lens to a parliament of birds that get scattered from the trees to the skies drawing a sense of uneasiness rather than focusing on the violent scenario; while Deepak's shop eased out of his grip as the film switched to the next sequence. In the film *Simran*, margarita pizza, a bottle of beer, and some peanuts represents the lifestyle of the middle class. A parallel can be drawn between the association of certain commodities to different classes of the city. Praful, the protagonist, is always in a sense of complacency as she cannot afford to fulfil her desire of purchasing an apartment in the marvellous city of Georgia.

Similarly, in the film *Aligarh*, the obsession of the professor towards his books and the music of LataMangeshkar has portrayed his loneliness. The constant tune of lata in the entire film has represented the love towards the art of music. The professor is repeatedly seen tapping and swaying to the music while humming to her songs. He is trying to fit himself into the context of the melody. Giving a connotation that art flows through his veins.

Another aspect of the movie that can be looked into is the lighting, attempting to focus on the unkempt Mumbai. In the film *Citylight*, Mehta has used low key and ambient light throughout the movie. Hence, the film is contrary to other masala movies in Hindi cinema. Generally, when a new city is painted, the landmarks of the place is highlighted, but Mehta decides to go in the opposite direction by showing the most infamous places in the city. As the film reels on Deepak discovers his wife's new job as an orchestra bar dancer and rather than addressing the situation, he decides to keep mum. It is interesting to note that Mehta steers clear of violent scenes and tries to depict it peacefully. In this scenario, both husband and wife are portrayed with hunched backs leaning on walls and cupped hands trying to wipe away streams of tears. Hence, the chemistry of the characters on screen are justified.

In the film *Shahid*, hand-held camera techniques have been used to give the image of imperfection on the screen. As the Hindu-Muslim riots take place in the film, the sequence tries to depict the imperfection of the scenario with the help of chasing sequences throwing more light on the incident. Secondly, the usage of close up shots are incorporated to emote the expressions closely. The use of dim light throughout the film shows the dark reality of the slum and their class struggle. A stark difference can be noticed in the lighting as *Shahid* along with his wife move out of the slum. The screen looks vibrant with high key lights to portray the change of the lifestyle in the film.

4.2. Social/ complex issues

4.2.1. Citylight

Poverty is a disease, says the protagonist in the film. Poverty is like working in a coal mine, you can clean yourself as much as you want, but it is engrained in your DNA. The same can be witnessed with the protagonist and his family who has recently migrated to the city of dreams, Mumbai. They come carrying bundles of hope in their eyes. The reality of Mumbai hits them hard when they get duped in the hands of a fraud. This incident gets them down to the streets and makes their life miserable.

The objectification of women is addressed through the film, as there is a shift from a typical woman that covers herself, to one that is required to wear scanty clothes in order to fulfil the requirements of her new found profession. The reality of women having to sell themselves in order to bring food to the table is painted through this scene.

Smuggling is another dark profession that has been highlighted, portraying a highly ethical and moral Deepak, willing to sacrifice himself to earn for his family. The director aims to portray the vicious cycle of exploitation, through the eyes of the protagonist. He has efficiently shown the entrapment of people from small villages into this cycle.

4.2.2. *Aligarh*

Aligarh is one of the few works on the LGBTQ community in Hindi cinema. Mehta has manifested the undiscovered sexual minority group of society in mainstream cinema. The film shows the impact of the social construct in society, and how people fail to acknowledge the efforts of people of different communities purely because of naivety. The film *Aligarh* captured real-time functioning of the media in society and portrayed how media sells their news, no matter how authentic and significant it is to the audience.

Rajkumar has been an aspiring journalist in the film, who discovers the abandoned professor and fights for his justice. Mehta tries to bring out a humanistic angle to the film through the portrayal of an elderly professor who was suspended because of his sexual preferences. The violation of an individual's fundamental right to life and privacy is depicted well in this film. The hierarchical structure of society is well recognised in Mehta's work through the oppressor and the oppressed. The *Aligarh* Muslim University suspended the professor as he was found making love with a person of the same sex through a sting operation that was conducted. He was socially humiliated and his personal space violated. The film's strength lies in capturing the personality and psyche of professor Siras. This scenario only depicts the happenings on the outside. However, he is quite lonely after his betrayal and humiliation.

4.2.3. *Simran*

Simran is a women-centric film, where Praful Patel has shared the screen space as a protagonist. In this film, Mehta has tried to reverse the roles of the social structure and showed how a woman (divorced) could chase for her dreams and manage to live a happy, prosperous, and single life. The stereotyping attached to the character is portrayed in the film. Prafulis always looked down upon for being a housekeeping staff. Praful is continuously looked down at by her parents, as she works as help in a hotel.

The film sees the world from the lens of a feminist, showing Praful continuously fighting against the stereotypes of this patriarchal society. She is a divorcee, and her family does not appreciate her singlehood and constantly chides her to tie the second knot. They cannot fathom their daughter purchasing a new apartment and moving out, but would rather have her stay at home and give them all her earnings in order to fund her next marriage. If she does get an apartment for herself, she is seen as a woman of despicable character. In many of the scenes her father has tried to show how both the women are a burden for the family. Her father chastises them saying, "Tum logo komaitheessaal se khilarahahu". Such dialogues have a connotation of women being just a burden to the family.

Mehta has tried to show a piece of reality in the film through some or the other references. Praful is caught in a situation where a rich man attempts to force himself upon her although she denies sexual intercourse as he was not carrying a condom. Through scenes as such, Mehta tries to focus on women's liberty. The film also addresses one's addiction to gambling, and the severe hazards of being a slave to it, as Praful loses all her savings to a game of poker. The game is seen as an easy way to attain more cash, and also how a person's lifestyle changes once they get lucky. Praful is seen winning money, after which she dresses up in an elitist manner and conducts herself accordingly — depicting how the influence of money can leave one wanting more all the time. A Marxist perspective of the power equation can be established as the rich get richer and the poor become poorer through the constant urge of Praful to make more money.

4.2.4 *Shahid*

I am pained; the heart bleeds when I hear what they have endured. But, in spite of all that, it will never be easy for me to see an innocent being sent behind bars or to the gallows only because the crime alleged was a bomb blast. —ShahidAzmi

The film through its protagonist depicts a world of injustice, where a Muslim is automatically equated to a terrorist — portraying the effects of a stereotypical mentality in different professional spaces. ShahidAzmi, a Muslim lawyer, has a balanced relationship between his personal and professional life, fighting for the justice of only those who are right in the eyes of the law and not showing favour to those of his community.

The director tries to show the audience the film through the lens of the wrongly accused on the terms of terrorism as well as those who are trying to fight for their cause. The film links Shahid's story to many others who were framed and arrested for no crime of their own.

Another aspect of the movie shows the never-ending conflict between the two religious groups - Hindus and Muslims.

The movie shows a clear division between being found guilty and being suspected of a crime committed by one, but unfortunately, as soon as the words 'anti-national' or 'terrorism' is attached to a person, there is no way his name can be cleared. Eventually, the person is found guilty, if not in the eyes of the law, but in the eyes of society.

4.3. *Characterization of Protagonist*

4.3.1. *Citylight*

In order to search for a better future the protagonist, Deepak migrates from Rajasthan to Mumbai. The director, Mehta has tried to change the definition of a protagonist in this film. The series of being masculine in the movie is not followed here by the director. The protagonist meets his death at the end of the film which is very rare, unlike conventional movies with happy endings. The lead actor has been shown as a dull, weak, and unattractive man. Mehta does not dramatise the reality making it unrelatable for the audience. He believed that the hero may get exploited, be weak, may not be good looking and that the traits of a man's personalities are not always the same. The portrayal of capitalism in the film rejuvenates the idea of modern Marxism on how the upper class dominates the lower class. The disparity of the class issue is never-ending. To an extent, the vision of presenting the life of a rural man is unique in itself. In the film, the screen space is majorly shared by the protagonist.

The needs of the family make the protagonist perform uncertain actions where he decides to steal the key from the office. The narrative and portrayal of the movie seem to be different from the other conventional movies, as Deepak, the protagonist had the traits of being both a hero and a villain. It was just an issue of circumstances which turned him from being an honest man to a dishonest one. Mehta has not anticipated the reality to save the image of the protagonist but has given a reality check to the audience.

4.3.2. *Simran*

In the film, Praful Patel has shared a significant role in the screen space. Mehta has shown her as an independent Gujarati woman. She is in her early thirties and belongs to a typical middle-class family surviving at Georgia. The characterisation of the protagonists is very simplistic yet real. Mehta has tried to show how a real-time middle-class woman would be, from just having a margarita pizza, a bottle of beer and some peanuts in fancy restaurants or being of a bargaining nature. This is the typical representation of being a middle-class working woman.

Mehta has reversed the role of social construction in this film and tried to see the world from the feminist point of view. Praful is a very confident yet hard-working character in the film, working for an elite hotel as housekeeping staff. She is proud of herself, her profession, and of course her singlehood. She believes that women do not need any manly - support to live her life; she will steer her life the way she desires to.

Mehta has shown the varied stereotyping typing of the society in the film through the help of the character named Praful. In a scene, when Praful's in-laws come to her home, her future mother in law says "since she is a housekeeper, it will not be difficult for her to keep the house clean and tidy".

Secondly, her father continuously judges his divorced daughter for the thought of purchasing her own house. Thirdly, Praful is a money minded women and always aimed for pockets full of cash, and she has been a ruthless character in the entire film. Mehta's vision of showing an obsession with the money and leaving everything behind has been well nurtured in this film.

4.3.3. *Aligarh*

In this film, RamchandraSiras an elderly professor and a homosexual person has been humiliated and stigmatised for his sexual preferences. The director, Mehta has shown the protagonist as a closeted "gay man". The entire story revolves around his suspension from Aligarh Muslim University and the struggle as a Queer person in this primitive opinionated society. Siras is an obsessed lover of his books and LataMangeshkar's songs. He is shown as a soft yet down to earth man in the film.

Siras has been a great lover of art like music, language, and poetry. His silence in the entire film has depicted the social and verbal violence that he has been a victim of. He has been a little awkward when it comes to talking about his sexuality. The Autumn of loneliness can be seen well in the film. Mehta has shown the protagonist in a very modest approach, in one of the scenes Siras says "I spent two decades here. I love my University. I have always loved it and will continue to do so no matter what. But, I wonder if they have stopped loving me because I am gay". This dialogue shows how dedicated, yet loyal he was to his University.

The chemistry between the young journalist (Raju) and an elderly professor is not less than a student and a teacher. The aspiring journalist held the responsibility to get justice for the professor. He maintains affiliations with a young journalist who shows him sympathy and is determined to get the professor justice. Fortunately, the film shows the court ruling in favour of the professor and Siras suspension is revoked. Although in the eyes of the law he was given justice, the society was never able to accept him, leading Siras to poison himself before his date of joining; making it impossible for him to taste his sweet victory.

4.3.4. *Shahid*

Names do have a strange power. The root of the word Shahid comes from Arabic, and in Urdu, it has split into two pronunciations: shaahid meaning 'witness' and 'shaheed' meaning 'martyr'.

In the film, the protagonist ShahidAzmi was both witness and martyr. Mehta chose a different manner to portray his characters. He did not turn the protagonist into a saint like other traditional films rather chose to have both the traits of a hero and villain comprised into one. The depiction of the early years of Shahid in the film has been different which includes his jail time with Omkar Shaikh, who has been a turning point in his life by establishing the significance of education in his life. Perhaps, the education Shahid inculcated during his jail time turned him into a wholly different and ethical person. The depiction of his profession as a lawyer is to believe in defending the innocent, irrespective of any societal labellings, unlike the other lawyers who believe in serving the client irrespective of them being guilty or innocent.

A little grey area of the film has been acknowledged as well by the director, on how Shahid's portrayal is that of a misogynistic man. He did not allow his wife any freedom after marriage and forced her to change her lifestyle by covering herself with the abaya. Moreover, he made sure that the reality of his wife being a single mother should not be revealed to society.

4.4. *Storyline*

Hansal Mehta has always manifested the different genres of the storyline in mainstream Hindi cinema. Mostly the issues are taken from societal context which usually remains undiscovered. His practice of showing such issues has helped in enlightening society as an audience. These are the various pattern in his storylines which could be studied and understood.

4.4.1. Atypical Storyline

The atypical storyline where Hindi cinema is well known for its masala magic creating films on big screens and box offices has seen Hansal trying to contextualise the hidden dark reality of society through his work. From showing the rigid capitalistic approach through “Citylight” to “Women's liberty” through the lens of feminism in “Simran” to human rights violation and jingoism in “Shahid”, and eventually to homosexuality as a taboo in “Aligarh” proves that the choice of the director is varied and contrasting from mainstream Hindi cinema. Though the films are not box office hits, they are sincere in approach. Generally, Bollywood is well known for its Romeo-Juliet love, and the complicated relationship shared between a mother and her son. Mehta has tried to create a parallel cinema through his work and drew the vision of showing the reality on the screen. To a lay audience, he might have failed as a director since his plots are twisted and full of suspense, which is different from the real-time narrative of the Hindi cinema.

4.4.2. Unusual treatment to the storyline

Mehta's work has always been critically acclaimed and reviewed since it has much sensationalism in its content. From the analysis, the researcher found the unusual treatment in Mehta's work. The story's plot is often twisted in such a manner that it fades away the sense of reality in the Film. In the film, Simran Mehta chose to show the protagonist Simran – 'The Lipstick Bandit' who robs the banks to pay her debts. Initially, the approach of robbing a bank is unrealistic and gives a sense of crime being not less than a comic, yet the protagonist surrenders herself at last far from her place stating that her family would feel ashamed of her deeds. Similarly, in the film Citylight, the protagonist chose to sacrifice himself for the money and asked his wife to return to the village with the money and live their life. On the other side, the wife is shown as a woman of morals and values; still, she chose money over her husband.

In the film, Aligarh, the professor is shown as a divorced man, he claims to be married under the societal pressure but never agreed upon the fact that his wife left because of his sexuality. Siras being such an educationist could not take a stand for his cause, and eventually poisoned himself. He then gives a depressive and a narrative of self-pity to the story. Mehta could have shown him as a bold man fighting for his rights and holding his victory than dying of shame.

In the film, Shahid, the jingoism and the conflict of the jihadi have carried forward much sensation. Mehta drew the timeline of the protagonist (Shahid) where he did not forget to mention the wrong deeds of the protagonist and then sent to jail for his crime. The struggle of fighting with the stereotype is nevertheless real. Choosing his profession as a lawyer depicts how education changes an individual's mind and allows him to reason. As a director, Mehta has shown both the sides of the coin.

4.4.3. Multiple Narratives

Mehta's films have got multiple narratives in a single storyline. Each film talks about the varied, and complex issues. The film, Aligarh, tries to portray the story of the loneliness of an elderly professor and parallelly the story of an aspiring journalist trying to climb the professional ladder. Similarly, in the film Simran, who isn't just fighting from the diabolical patriarchy of society but is also, trapped in the darker side of the world of gambling. Contrasting to it, Citylight is the collaborative storylines of the protagonist Deepak and his wife in a hellish materialistic world. Shahid explains the concept of jingoism, fundamental rights violation, stereotyping, and an unusual love story. The multiple narratives made this film look more socially complicated.

4.4.4. Unconventional Closure

The Hansal Mehta films are observed to be very unconventional in their closures. The films never have a happy ending note, unlike the rest of the Bollywood films. The mandatory death or inconvenient ending is well recognised in the films. In the case of Aligarh, Citylight, and Shahid the protagonist was shown dead or murdered. Similarly, in the film “Simran” the protagonist surrenders herself to the cops.

Generally, the victory and survival of the protagonist is the primary narrative which we have seen in typical Hindi cinema. However, Mehta chose to show the ground reality to the audience, perhaps by changing the narratives in his films. This makes Mehta different from the rest of the directors.

5. Expert Interview

B. Suresh is Kannada Movie Producer & TV serial Director Suresh worked in theatre for twenty years before entering the cinema. He is the writer and director of the highly acclaimed film 'Artha'. He has also directed many successful TV serials. Suresh worked in theatre for twenty years before entering the cinema. He is the writer and director of the highly acclaimed film 'Artha'. He has also directed many successful TV serials.

5.1. Change in the story Narratives

Every change in the economic policies of the world has always influenced cinema, specifically the parallel film movement. However, there was always an influence of Hollywood cinema on the mainstream cinema of India. This influence has brought American Melodrama to Indian popular cinema. The popularity of westerns also brought in our own dacoits stories. However, surprisingly the favourite musicals of Hollywood have not been remodelled here. Music has always been part of Indian popular cinema.'

5.2. Multiple narratives in a film

Multiple timelines are the main construction pattern of Indian mythology. However, as the west profoundly influenced our film narratives, the multiple timeline usages were almost non-existent in Indian cinema. With the open market economy and the advent of consumerism, which has also become one of the primary cause of the increase in crime and terrorist activities world over has made filmmakers move from linear stories to multiple stories and many times multiple timelines.

5.3. Entertainment and infotainment in Hindi cinema

I have not seen much of info in any popular Hindi cinema. Most of them are constructed to entertain alone. However, there are very few examples of Hindi cinema also which can be placed in this group. Like the works of Meghana Gulzar, Soojitsirkar, etc.

5.4. Art of cinematography

Cinema has many extremes. If we list out Indian cinema has as many varieties. Directors of Hyder (Vishal Bhardwaj) and Bajirao (Sanjay Bhansali) are another contrast. Both of them work on perfect composition and colours, yet both the filmmakers stand in opposing ends. Likewise, Zoya and Meghana stand in opposite lanes. We can take many more examples. However, every narrator is influenced by his childhood and acquired a political stand about life. This keeps on working on their films.

The cinematography is the essential tool with which semiotic senses and also the beautiful detailing is put on the screen. The composition of a frame, use of colours, use of light and shadow make a frame look glamorous or realistic. The Director always provides most of the metaphors of visual language with the help of cinematography.

The camera is the pen with which a story writer writes his film on the screen. It is also a brush in the hands of an artist, with which someone creates a painting on screen. A story is a literary tool, and a camera is a visual tool.

5.5. Critical analysis of the films

5.5.1. Simran

Simran is not just a feminist approach, but a realistic presentation of the life of an innocent person. Just place a male in the protagonist's place, the narrative would be no different. Of course, as the protagonist is a female, there are sure railings like how she is used by a gambler or by the money lenders which is female-centric. Addiction to gambling is not gender-centric. However, the details between the father and daughter, the groom proposed by the patriarchal system, the scenes between the divorced girl and the boy have a lot of feminist details. Can anyone abolish Patriarchy? No. In this man made society, patriarchy leaves on.

5.5.2. Citylight

Migration is not new to Indian Cinema. Every fifth film made in India talks about migration. The film has shown the uglier side of the dream city Mumbai. The closure of the film seems to be more realistic in approach to how a moral driven individual has to chose the wrong path in his life. The moral and values of an individual are just used as a defining feature in the film by Director.

5.5.3. Aligarh

The film is not just about the violation of individual rights following his sexual preference but more of fundamental human rights violations. Being a queer or not is always secondary but being a beautiful human is always primary. The reality of societal labelling and stigmatising individuals for being the real to self has shown very well in the film. The justice knocked to the doors of the Professor; unfortunately, by then he dies of shame and humiliation is an essential message of acceptance in the film.

5.5.4. Shahid

This is a biopic of a young lawyer who fought for human rights violations. He was shot down to death at his late thirties. The film represents the jingoism and jihad movement to the mainstream cinema. The stereotyping towards a specific religion and association with terrorism has left many questions for the audience to differentiate between the bad and good. The sensationalism of the film gives the reality check to the audience.

6. Conclusion

Hindi cinema has a varied genre of films with numerous narratives in it. The treatment of these films entirely depends on the director. The director is the sole author of the film, and his vision decides the functioning of the film. The present research paper "Understanding style and artistry of Hansal Mehta: Through a prism of the auteur theory" researcher has focused the working style of the contemporary film director Hansal Mehta. The present research tried to draw the draft of the understanding of style and artistry under the belt of varied parameters. Indeed film and its studies is a personal study. The analytical study of the films Simran, Shahid, Aligarh and Citylight have shown the undiscovered dark reality of society in the mainstream of cinema. The unique treatment of the stories shows how the director has adopted the western concepts to his films, multiple narratives in a film with unexpected closure. After studying the films, Mehta has tried to create a parallel cinema in the mainstream cinema. In contemporary narratives, the gap between popular and parallel cinema is fast reducing. This has made way for films like City lights, etc. This is also because the popular trends in Hollywood cinema have changed considerably.

Though at the outset we can say that most of the accessible content churned out in our universe is influenced by the Hollywood, we can certainly say that the parallel cinema of our own country has also influenced the popular cinema. The treatment of the stories by the director has been very unusual; the representation of comic crime and close-ended closure made it different from the rest Hindi cinema films. The films are prone towards infotainment with the futuristic approaches in it. The work of this contemporary film director proves how there is another side to the side to the mainstream cinema. The style and artistry of hansalmehtacan be understood as a modern approach to the Hindi cinema by targeting the new segment of the society.

Limitations

1. The research focused on the single contemporary director and his work.
2. The analysis of the films are based on the selected parameters since film studies a subjective point of view it may keeping changing with the changing time.
3. The research has considered the latest films by the director.

Scope

1. The timeline of films of the select director could be shown in future research for better understanding.
2. The study of multiple contemporary directors could be shown for drawing the comparative analysis.

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