

# Kaaka Muttai: The Reflection of the Society.

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## ABSTRACT

Storytelling is an art of sharing and describing the social and cultural activity. To make it entertaining, people used many techniques in the older days. Story telling is an oral activity. But the trend has been changed and stories are told through media. Filmmaking is a wonderful art to tell a story to the mass audiences by using so many ways. Films reflect the reality what we never care for. Kaaka Muttai is one such film which reflects the real society especially the lives of the slum people. This film is a Tamil neorealism drama. This is written and directed by M. Manikandan. The story of Kaaka Muttai deals and revolves around the two slum boys and their desire to taste Pizza. The director exposed the condition of imbalance and he focused on injustice which is levied on the culturally and economically backward people. This paper deals how Kaaka Muttai reflects the society in a different way through its story.

## 1. Introduction

A story has its own origin. Each man/woman is a storyteller. They tell stories every day to themselves and they are the first listener of their own stories. The story which they share to others or to themselves comforts them. Many times, one must understand that the story is a series of events which is created, remembered or imagined. Later it becomes an entertaining tool and it keeps the human mind in balance. Some feels that story is as essential as food, air and sleep. The word story has its own meanings such as “ a factual or fictional narrative”, “an account of facts”, “a falsehood”, etc., story has its possible shapes like novel, short story, poem, play, memoir, oral, audio, visual, and film. Oliver Sachs said that he felt that the

...telling of our life stories is perhaps one of the most powerful therapeutic tools available to man... (The Man Who Mistook his Wife and for a Hat).

Storytelling is an art of sharing and describing the social and cultural activity. Conveying the facts in a unique situation and way is a great storytelling.

Many films bring out social realism to the world and it reflects the reality what we never care for. Many such films are there. Though some events might have been exaggerated in films, they mostly dealt with the real fact. Some abnormal scenes must be there in a film to attract the audience. After seeing a film, the audiences used to compare it with their lives and they discuss 'tone', 'mood' and 'situation' of that particular film. They relate the imagination with the reality. Moreover, they talk about the aesthetic sense and approach of the director. The visual images always attract the audience. When the movement like Marxism, colonialism, neorealism, realism, etc... happened in the world, film are the great media to bring it to the eyes of the audiences through its story. Now a days, many films are produced with good theme and reached the audiences very easy.

“Kaaka Muttai” is one such film released recent years and received appreciation from the public and the government. This movie reflects the culture of a particular society especially the lives of the slum people and children. This movie is a Tamil neorealism drama which is written and directed by M.ManiKandan. The story of “Kaaka Muttai” revolves around the two slum boys and their desire to taste pizza, the food which is the economically upper class used to taste. The economically upper class people marginalized the people, those who are not known about the economy of India. In this film, the story opens in Koovam River which becomes a filthy river. People around this river are called slum people by the society. The two boys live with their mother and grandmother. Their father is in prison. The boys named themselves as Periya Kaaka Muttai and Chinna Kaaka Muttai. They do not go to school due to money problem. They survive by getting grocery from the ration shop. This film director M.Manikandan focused much on the children of slum and how they started doing robbery. The surrounding or the situation makes them to do all sorts of crimes. The two boys have a habit of collecting eggs of crows and eat from the big tree near the ground. They are shocked by seeing the big tree is out by the man and he tells that they are going to build a pizza shop. After few months, there is a pizza corner opened by a Tamil film star Simbu, Surrounding the slum children around the shop, while Simbu was eating the pizza, these two boys looked to Simbu to induce to taste pizza. Two to three days later, government provided TV. In that TV channel telecasting pizza advertising induces the boys to get pizza to eat. By collecting the coal from the track, they started saving money for buying pizza. Finally these two boys planned to go to the shop to buy pizza. After these boys were collecting enough money for eating pizza, they went to the pizza shop to buy pizza. But they are not allowed and also ill-treated by the security and shop supervisor. This is shot by mobile video form by other slum boys. And it is mushrooming through social media. This gives a turn in the life of these two slum boys.

## 2. Review of literature

Both the leads are, in a sense, playing their characters; they also live in a Chennai slum. Though they've not ever acted before, you'd never be able to tell, such is the ease of their onscreen manner. J. Vignesh, playing the elder brother, reminded me at times of Shafiq Syed's Chaipau in Salaam Bombay, another young boy forced to make grown-up decisions. Ramesh Thilaganathan, the younger brother, is a more frank charmer, flashing the kind of smile that would make a mother forgive bed-wetting. The two were jointly awarded Best Child Artist at this year's National Awards the movie, along with Elizabeth Ekdashi, won the Best Children's Film award. You'd do well to catch it while it's still in theatres.

A different film might have used all these elements to give us a heavy-duty social drama that would have only ended up as the 836th time a 'socially-conscious filmmaker' holding a mirror to our society and hectoring us for our callousness.

### 3. Methodology

For this study use the qualitative and data were collected as secondary sources, to apply the Auteur Theory. This theory was derived from 'Astruc's' elucidation of the concept of camera pen, holds that the director, who oversees all audio and visual elements of the motion picture, is more to be considered the "author" of the movie than is the writer of the screenplay.

### 4. Analysis and Interpretation

The director M.Manikandan wants to project the injustice forced on the culturally and economically poor people. The same happened during Italian neo-realism age. "The Bicycle Thieves" is a great neo-realism movie which shows the inability of the poor and needy. Here, in "Kaaka Muttai", the director perfectly picturizes the sufferings of the needy people. They have a single room to dwell without any facilities. Manikandan is the first person who initiates his art in Tamil film industry like the directors of Italian neo realism.

The culture of India is praised by the world, but at the same time India is the country which has many slums and economically backward class people those who do not know what is culture? The director boldly expresses his view on the injustice which is levied on the poor and culturally backward class people that is the people of slum. He did not add any artificial background to the movie. When we see the dressing, conversation, face without having makeup, uncleaned environment, etc., we can understand the creativity of the director. This kind of creativity and the using of camera are mentioned in "Auteur Theory". This theory was derived from 'Astruc's' elucidation of the concept of camera pen, holds that the director, who oversees all audio and visual elements of the motion picture, is more to be considered the "author" of the movie than is the writer of the screenplay. M.Manikandan is such a director who has his own camera pen to make his films a wonderful one. He followed the same technique here in "Kaaka Muttai" to show that our society is contaminated by the economically upper class people and also by the political parties and leaders. In this film the director used the fundamental visual elements as camera placement, blocking, lighting and scene length to convey the message to the audience in an apt way. The reality brings success to this film.

The concept of neorealism is applied here in "Kaaka Muttai". The concept says that power is the most important factor to have relations. Many political leaders come to each slum during the time of election and promise the people to clean the drainage, providing proper water facility and doing all good deeds. But, after the election got over they never turned to the slums and they do not want to meet the people to do their promised duties. These kinds of situations we could see in this film "Kaaka Muttai". Neo-Realism came to the world to emerge discipline in politics. But, the politics in India is crippled and became lame. It cannot even walk properly. The people those who want to survive started doing all sorts of work. And sometimes they become criminals. The criminals are not created by god; they are made by the society.

The film director M.Manikandan says, "The concept of the film "Kaaka Muttai" invited mostly negative comments when embarked on the project". He adds, it is not done based on my passion towards the subject or anything, but purely by methodical analysis"

"Children of Heaven" is an Iranian film which shows the related concept of "Kaaka Muttai" and "Children of Heaven" is very closer to "Pathar Panchali", which is the classic movie of Satyajit Ray. As Satyajit Ray, the director of "Kakka Muttai" also used non-actors to make his film a real and capture the simplicity and purity of the characters. Films like "City of God" and "Slum Dog Millionaire", had their uniqueness, in its story and in its projection, but they deals with the slum culture.

Television is the responsible for all the problems in the family of boys in "Kaaka Muutai". The director wanted to have a TV interview scene in his film, but he avoided and mentioned indirectly that, it is an idiot box which brings problems and spoils the life of the children. The Brazil film "City of God" and "The Slum Dog Millionaire" in Hindi had the scene of TV interview. That movies needed the scene to make it to reach the audience. The film director M.Manikandan wishes to capture the simplicity of the boys and also the families of the slum. The public realized what is happening around them after watching this film. They started thinking about the poor and needy. These kinds of films bring awareness among the audiences and realize their fault. The people in slum have their own culture, rituals, happiness, etc.,

### 5. Conclusion

Subagunarajan VMS, editor of the magazine "Kaatchi Pizhai" says,

"Kakka Muttai" brings out the impact of globalization in a metropolitan city. This film criticizes mostly politics, media and reverses the quest for pizza into a symbol of consumerism which is shunned at the end. The ending leaves an indelible impact and funds resonance with the middle class movie going audiences irrespective of their cultural background".

Film industry is a very big industry which satisfies the people through bringing everything to their close vision. Human beings have the mind of getting, knowing and listening stories through oral or pictures, sometimes through visual media. Films are in the first place in attracting the minds of the human beings. Invention of cinema is a boon for humans. They come to know the evils happening in the society and want to do something for the society. Mr.Manikandan is also learnt

many things from the cinema and he wants to do his best to the society through his films and he wants to bring awareness among people on culture of the downtrodden. He proved himself in his film “Kaaka Muttai” that he is also one of the social activists. We could see the true reflection of the Indian society in all his films especially in “Kaaka Muttai”.

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