City and Indian Cinema

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ABSTRACT

This paper efforts to explore the relation of city and cinema in India, that how filmmakers are trying the best to grasp the essence of city in Indian cinema. From earlier time to the present age there is a change positively; the focus of Indian cinema is now on the true characterization of cities and its nature, culture and customs, which is encashed through the proper revelation of a particular spatial in itself or say as it is, because each city possesses certain qualities and that calibre of city is subjected to explore.

Keywords : City, Cinema, Culture, Customs, Calibre.

I. INTRODUCTION

Cinemaoriginets from the French word 'cinematographe' and it is an abbreviation of the word cinematograph. It can also be defined as 'there are still images which are put together and shown continuously in a visible speed. ' A change was brought by Lumiere brothers in the 19th centuryinthe form of visualised films. 'cinemashowedits first glance in Europe and then spread to the all over countries. 'Earlier cinema was simple with scenes of daily lives; in the first visualization of cinema an arrival of a train at a La Ciutat was shown, in which nothing happens but a train arrives at the station, on this first screening audience were scared to see train coming and they moved away from the theatre. ' There has been an interesting evolution of cinema from Europe to across the world. Films are most pervasive form of communication and a tool of entertainment. Before cinema there were theatres, where people gathered and enjoyed. In theatres the mythical stories were presented based on myths and ancient scriptures. In the Hellenistic period of Greece and Rome, tragedies were performed. Tragedy which imitates the action of human beings.

The word theatre has been derived from the Greek word 'theatron' which means a place for viewing. Theatre, a form of an art presents the real experiences or imagined experiences of lives through performances. These performances were a kind of tools and ways to convey the particular messages to the audiences. In western theatres drama initiated with the characters like Greek gods, heroes, prophets etc. , were highly religious in nature. Drama in Greece began with religious ceremony and the hymns which were used in the praise of god Dionysius by a group of people. Indian drama also developed with Sanskrit theatre, Indian drama like Greek drama was religious in nature. Indian dramas owed to the ancient books of religious texts- the Mahabharat, the Ramayana epics, which came before us in the form of stories acted on stage. There were songs, dances, utilisation of dialogues effectively used in drama. The difference between Greek and Indian dramas was that as proposed by Aristotle that drama is an 'imitation of an action' whereas in Indian context it represented the 'bhava' which is internal. Aristotle talks about six focal points in which spectacle is of lower importance but in Indian context spectacle is as much importance as other

constituents. Now in the modern period cinema is a step forward from drama in matter of sensation, reprise and shattering. In modern time theatres are still in actions but cinema has marked his presence in the age of mass media. Cinema can be considered as an upgraded form of drama and has particular characteristic which sets it apart from the other media. After development of technologies, multimedia, films are available to all. Now a day's films play important role to present dynamic issues of society and ideas to raise the questions and to argumentation, cinema reflects the whole society and it has power that; it can affect society positively. The chapter 'cinema as institution' in the book entitled as "An Introduction to the Film Studies "edited by Jill Nelmsmentionsthat 'filmsdo not exist in a vaccum:they are conceived, produced, distributed and consumed within specific economic and social contexts. ' In India first film was shown by the Lumiere brothers in Bombay (now is Mumbai) in the year of 1896; where Indians were not allowed to watch because India was fettered then by the British. Bombay established as a main centre of trades, import and export. New technologies emerged there. Aashish Nandy in his book 'An Ambiguous Journy' mentions that "the new city usually a presidency town, was the centre of the colonial political economy;it reduced the importance of cities like Varansi or Ajmer which were mainly places of pilgrimage, and of cities like Kochin or Calicut, which were the centre of trade and offered their own versions of cosmopolitanism". In "A2 Film Studies, The Essential Introduction" written collaboratively by Benyaha, Gaffney and White, ensure - "In our readings of films we need to be aware that any film will be offering a very particular view of the world and that as such it may be seen to be potentially influencing the ways in which we, the audience see that world. Its perspective may gel with our own view clash with our outlook, or fall somewhere in between. "The journey of Indian cimema started early 20th century bya person named Harishchandra

Sakharam Bhatavadekar. It was a groundbreaking action in India and for Indians. He was known as Save Dada, he had been influenced by Lumiere brothers and after learning technique of camera;he shot his first film that was 'the Wrestlers'. Earlier Indian cinema was based on the sacred scriptures and epic themes. 'Raja Harishchandra' the earliest cinema of India illustrates the story of a king , the sourse was taken from the Indian ancient scriptures of Hindu Mythology. Later cinema was based on the village and rural lives with the theme of daily lives, struggleforsubstances, miseries, one's state of mind and bleak situation: The Apu Trilogy by Satyajeet Ray, for example, is the best example of it this film was shot with real place with non-real characters.

CITYSCAPE and CINEMA

Cities have been an important concern for today's filmaking. To make a story or film one needs a location and a particular setting. In film any particular spatial reflects the cultural-social milieu of that peculiar place. We come across the very place through cinema which we are not familiar with or that is unknown to us. Now in the age of rapid advancement in technologies, librelism and globalisation landscapes are changing drastically. Through the cinema, there may be gesticulation of any particular space or place. To corroborate this I would like to put some lines from the book 'Documenting Cityscapes'-"Places of memory are thereby our anchors in time and space. . . they are real as imaginary, because they are located in both landscape and mindscape…Their volatile nature prevents our eternal return to these places but there are a few tools that make our way back easier;a picture, a postcard, a film, a gift, a souvenir, a melody, a smell, a flavour…Since moving images occupy a prominent place on this list. We must wonder how they manage to shape, document, recreate and even reinterpret our places of memory, where even they are. " Now city has been used for a source of

inspiration for the movies in Indian cinema, although in the earlier cinema; the journey from village to the city was showed. Mrinal Sen one of the best known director in Indian cinema picturised the urban anguish self-expression in doomed violence as Aashish Nandy mentions in his book 'Ambiguous Journey'. Hisfilm Bhuvan Shome;a story of a modern, urban bureaucrat in rural India that how he comes face to face with his task to be in rural Indian village. Ithas been an important job for filmmakersto choose spatials from villages and citiesin earlier times for cinema, but in present context, the focus has been developed more on city and cityis now treated as a main protagonist. Cinema like Mother India where the village is in the background and cinema like Deewar;in which there is a story of a young man of urban areas. If we look at the contemporary film like 'Slumdog Millionare' which shows the slum areas of Mumbai city and depicts the story of some boys breathing in slums. There is one bad crook of mumbai city, in one side Mumbai shows its glamourous charm, high profile societies, buildings, trades and on other side the bizarre, bleak and miserable people who live in slums where the proper arrengment of sanitation and cleaning is required. In cinema each city; which is shown, has its own characterstics, each and everyplace has its own existence and this very existence is tried to catch and grasp in a particular cinema if it is based on the particular place. Apart from the Indian cinema there is a movie 'Berlin Alexanderplatz' directed by Piel Jatzi, whose premiere was on october 8, 1931, which was based on Alfred Doblin's novel of the same name. In a chapter THE CITY VANISHES:PIEL JUTZI'S BERLIN ALEXANDERPLATZ of the book 'Screening the city' Peter Jolawich mentions that movie was scrutinised by many for its cinematic qualities that, city of Barlin; which dominates in Doblin's book is, in movie adaptation;has been marginalised . Further he talks about another film of Walter Rutmann's Barlin, The Symphony of a Great City that 'A landmark in the history of avant garde cinema,

Walter Rutmann's Barlin, The Symphony of a Great City(1927) is a non-narrative film depicting a day in the life Barlin, where scenes of industry, commerce, traffic and entertainment represent the activities of various social classes at work and at play. "This movie was praised and scrutinized for the real presentation of Barlin and articulation of real. So imagining of the city in a cinema is meant to the true representation of the intrinsic nature or indispensable quality, quintessence or soul of the city.

BANARAS CITY and CINEMA

Some movies beautifully and gloriously grasped the soul and spirit of Banaras, onone side Banaras city is very beautiful and also sacred destination. Since ancienttimesit is considered as a safeheaven of lord Shivaand people visit this placeseekinghisblessings. The holy city of Banaras has special charm because of its ghats, saints and the holy river Ganges that attracts the people throughout the world. Not only Indians but many foreigners come here everyyear. Even the bollywood celebrates the ancient city of Varansi and numerous films have been picturised against the backdrop of this ancient city. The charm, historicity of places, spiritual occulticism drew the attention of many filmmakers and directors. But I intend to talk about film based on specifically on the city of Varansi. If a filmmaker makesa film, there is always a particular place he chooses for his filmor any place always exists in background of his film, but the matter is that , now the role of city is not to give only superficial base for cinema but city is used as a main protagonist or as a charecter in the cinema. In present time Scenerio has been changed for filmmaking, cinema has assimilated kind of realistic touch for that place which is used against the backdrop for the story of cinema . It is showing the true essence and culture of any particular place and space. I would like to draw attention in this case and illustrate those movies which has canc vased the holy city of Banaras on screen, grasping the real

issues and show the true picture of Banaras. we are living in eternal presence thought is changing, the advancement of science has acceded us to exceed and aversed the clout of absolute truth and knowledge in the age of Postmodernism, deconstructiveness in which knowledge, truth are treated as sceptic way. The voice of equality between man and woman , demolishness of caste hierarchy, influence of mass media, telivisions and many others have changed the dimension to look at the world. And Indian cinema is also playing important role to reveal the all goings. The Banaras and movies based on this city , bring forth a tremendous influence on audience. Movie Raja Harishchandra directed by Dada Sahab Phalke is a 1913 silent film. The Indian government recognises that 'Raja Harishchandra' is the first Indian feature film. The most important thing is that it was based on Kashi in this picture mentioned below is a scence from that mo1vie , in this movie the king

Harishchandra comes Kashi to meet Sage Vishwamitra.

In this movie saints, ghats, streets of Varanasi city provide a special charm . There is a place in Varanasi, located at Gowdoulia named Mukti Bhavan- the place of salvation. Aged people who are about to die; come in Mukti Bhavan. In Indian tradition there is belief of moksha after death. India, a country of 'unity in diversity', where people from different religions and cultures dwell in such as Hindu, Muslim, Jain, Sikh, Christian, Parsian etc. They have their own beliefs, traditions rituals and rites and customs, in Hindu tradition the concept of soul and rebirth exists. One would get rebirth on account of

his or her 'Karma'. But to escape from the cycle of life , death and troublesome of life, Hindus want salvation, so the city of Banaras is right place to attain 'moksha'that one who dies here would defenitly get salvation (Moksha). There is a movie based on this notion titled as same 'Mukti Bhavan' which tells about the story about the life of an old man who comes with his son in Mukti Bhavan for salvation, the old man believes that if he dies here, he will attain 'moksha'.
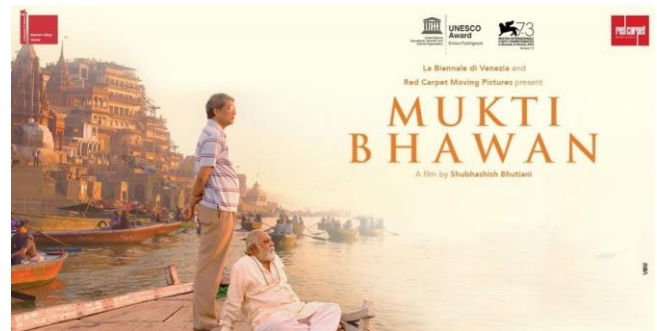
In this movie we see that the son to fulfill his father's desire comes to the Banaras cityleaving his business and works and his outlook of looking towards the world changes in this spiritual city. So this can be bizzare to hear about the home only for the one who is about to die, but it is true. And this theme has been beautifully created through this movie. Apart from the religious and spiritual notion i would like to move towards movies based on high-coloured issues, there are series of movies like 'Water'which came in 2005 directed by Deepa Mehta. This movie is about the lives of widows at a ashram in Varansi. A novel has been written on this movie by Bapsi Sidhwa entitled as 'Water:A Novel'. This film is set when India was not unfettred by the British. The movie water describes about the lives of widows and the way they live in. In starting of this movie there is an girl of 9 years old named Chuhiya, whose hair is being cut because she has beed widowed of an elderly man.

There is an irony here that even she doesn't know

about marrige or widowhood. Her parents hands her in that ashram; where widow live, for whole life. With Chuhiya, there are many widowed women who live in the ashram. Many of them spend his whole life in the ashram because they would have been widowed in their childhood. They are not allowed to wear colourful attires, eating sweetmeats, to love or to remarry;the only work assigned to them is worshipping of God, spend life in seclusion and imprecate their own lives. In starting of this movie there is a nine years old girl named 'Chuhiya' whose heir is being cut because she has been widowed and in the ashram she is restricted by performing any job which she likes. What is it, these are the false representation of religion for women. If a woman who has been a widow she is an omenious creature, she would not be allowed in any festivities or auspicious occasions. So this movie is an attempt to make one known to the miserable conditions of womenin Banaras city. The Manusmriti which is also called Manav Dharma Shastra, is a Hindu Mythology whether it has been manipulated or not that is the other question but there are numerous derogatory statements have contained like woman is supposed to be in the custody of father, husband and son. Why is woman considered progenitor of woes, trated like slave, degraded persona. These movies have treid torevealed these. Along with these issues these cinema have beautifully portrayed the true picture of city.

II. CONCLUSION

Cinema is a better tool to communicate with huge mass of people. The developed technologies and mass media aid to pervade the message to people along with providing tools of entertainment, fun,knowledge. Cinemas presents the realistic images, atmosphere as a whole. We know that movies are not real ,their characters are not real, only they try to present reality in abstract way that is the way to present something before people because to show or describe something one needs a tool. The journey of cinema started with mythical stories then villages now rests on the cities .It evokes the sensitivity and emotions of people. And to specify a particular city as a protagonist is main concern of today.

III. REFERENCES

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