



UNIVERSITY FILM CLUB

MONTAGE



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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| <i>Songs of His Roads</i> | 4 |
| <i>Short Films- An Eye Opening Experience</i> | 5 |
| <i>Shakti Samanta's Contribu- tion to Indian Cinema</i> | 6 |
| <i>Financing Bollywood</i> | 8 |
| <i>The Concept of Spoofs in Bollywood</i> | 9 |
| <i>Bollywood- An Outsider's Perspective on Indian Cinema</i> | 10 |
| <i>Feminist Movement in India and Women Centric Bollywood</i> | 11 |
| <i>The Reader- The Complexity of Human Morality, Jewish Organisa- tions and The Oscars</i> | 13 |



JUVERIA KHAN
Editor (English)

EDITORIAL NOTE

After the success of Filmsaaz, a national event organized by the University Film Club, the overwhelming response of the audience encouraged us to continue this legacy of the silver screen in the form of this magazine, first ever in the history of University Film Club. Putting news, views, and reviews in a magazine is not an easy task. When the idea of publishing Film Club's own magazine was proposed, there weren't many takers. But we managed to stride across to what you have in hand now.

With a flourishing film industry and the multiplying money in pockets, we need not provide incentives to students to actually view films. At the Film Club, every dedicated member's effort has been to promote an understanding of the aesthetic value of films and that of filmmaking as an art.

Filmsaaz aims at providing a platform to the budding talent in the arena of films all over the country. The response has always been overwhelming and this year too we managed to capture the unveiled talents.

Purity of thought and expression makes a film a timeless masterpiece. For a film to be regarded as great, purity of expression is essential. Films are the true reflection of society and this issue opens up throwing light on various genres and facets of films which makes it really interesting. The articles in this magazine range from the technical aspects of the films to the very aesthetic revolution and these, I am sure are going to take you on a roller coaster ride. According to Frank Capra, Italian born American film maker, "Film is one of the three Universal Languages, the other two: mathematics and music".

We at the Film Club aspire to master the Universal language. In this magazine utmost care has been taken so that each and every article highlights the increase in the creative demeanor of its contributors in films.

As the Editor, I am highly indebted to all the Members of Editorial Board for their precious time and help and would like to extend my gratitude toward each and every member of University Film Club and more so to those who took upon them to initiate this task and see it to the end.

Lastly, I would verily like to appreciate and congratulate all the contributors for their thoughts.

SONGS OF HIS ROADS

Like many of those called adventurers, Satyajit Ray (1921-1992) began his first film with only a fraction of the funds needed to finish it.

And like many, he began without any film production experience. Yet there had been a preparation.

The making of the best ever Indian

Film 'Pather Panchali' was done in unforeseen circumstances by the 'young man with a script' the then film connoisseur Satyajit Ray. When more than thirty distributors said 'No' to him, he approached West Bengal Government which subsequently became the producer of the film.

At Cannes the West Bengal entry, directed by an unknown, was at first not taken seriously by the festival management. At one phase of the program planning it was assigned to a morning showing, which would mean that only a handful of people would see it, while some of the jurors still rested in bed. The "important" films were supposed to come in the late afternoons or evenings. But a handful of people in Cannes- they included Edward Harrison and several others- had seen Pather Panchali and re-

arranged a large party after the Kurosawa film and some of the judges adjourned for this important social occasion.



Next day the French critic Andre Bazin journalistically protested these events as "the scandal" of the festival and his protest led to a re-screening of *Pather*



Panchali.

Finally assembled, the judges were astonished at the Indian Film and voted it the "best human document" of the festival.

Thus began a sequence of awards which was to make Pather Panchali known on

every continent, placing Ray almost at once among the great directors of the world and launching an extraordinary session of Ray films

including *Aparajito* (The Unvanquished), 1957; *Jalsaghar* (The Music Room) 1958; *Parashpathar* (The Touchstone), 1958; *Apur Sansar* (The world of Apu) 1959; *Devi* (Goddess)

1960; *Teen Kanya* (Three daughters) 1961; *Kanchanjanga*, 1962; *Abhijaan*, 1962.

But to be honest the real Ray cannot be discovered and understood unless and until we watch his later movies which were not adaptations of any work of fictions. Examples can be given of his *Shakha Prasakha* (The Branches) and *Aguntuk* (The Stranger). *Shakha Prasakha* deals with a man with an upright moral character and his five sons. The youngest of his five sons is mentally retarded, gets no formal education and lives with his father whereas his four elder brothers are educated, successful and live abroad. The film starts when the brothers come home to see the dying father with their respective families. The director shows the moral emptiness of the first four brothers and highlights the

innocence of the heart of the mentally retarded youngest brother. The film is urban and modern both in content and approach. What the first three movies of Ray lacked was the complexity of human mind and emotions, but it was dealt with brilliantly in *Shakha Prasakha*. The Film *Aguntuk* starts when a distant and supposedly dead uncle arrives at the place of his niece to pay her a surprise visit. Initially the lady, her husband

and a closefamily friend considers this uncle a crook and it is only when the uncle goes back leaving all his wealth to his niece that the family realizes the truth. What the first three films of Ray lacked was the pressure of modern day life which is so clearly highlighted in this movie. The challenge of cinema lies in its success of holding out a mirror to the society. In today's world the mirror has to

be as modern and complicated as the society it aims to reform. Going for adaptations depicting rural Indian life fails to achieve that. It is only when directors follow their own imagination and sensibilities that they are able to achieve the task.

*-Md Adil Hossain
Secretary,
University Film Club*



SHORT FILMS- AN EYE OPENING EXPERIENCE

Short films date back to 1910s and until 1930s they enjoyed limited commercial success. However, with the arrival of television and the rise of the big film companies took a backstage. Nonetheless, short films have remained an important genre till this day and I only began to appreciate the depth and relevance of this art recently. I do not have any consequential understanding of cinema. I too shared the common misperception that cinema was only a source of entertainment. Being interested in literature and believing in its "superiority", I never questioned the "Literature is for masses" mindset. However, all this changed when my friend recommended that I should watch *10 Minutes*, a short movie directed by

Ahmad Imamovic. The movie skillfully juxtaposes the story of a Japanese tourist in Rome with that of a boy living in war-torn Bosnia. The Japanese tourist



wants to get his photographs developed and is pleasantly

surprised to learn that thanks to the latest technology it will only take ten minutes. In the next scene, the ramshackle settlements of the Bosnians are shown. The boy's mother asks him to get some water. While he was out fetching water, the Serbs had attacked. When he returns ten minutes later, he finds every single member of his family has been killed. This movie had moved me immensely and had such a

cathartic effect on me which I thought was the sole preserve of poetry. This movie, like any piece of good writing, can be read (or in this case –seen) at many levels. It brilliantly brings forth the futility of war and the degradation of humanity that accompanies it. The movie was able to convey this powerful message without a single world.

After seeing *10 Minutes*, I was captivated by the magical world of short movies. And thanks to YouTube, I was able to explore it to my heart's content. The fundamental difference that I noticed between

short movies and writings was that movies had great deal more of emotional appeal. Their strength lies not in cogent arguments but in highlighting the essence of humanity present in us all. For example, regarding the ban of headscarves in French schools, so much has been written but none of them had the impact which *Hijab*, a short movie of only eight minutes had on me. Produced by a Spanish, Xavi Sala, it deftly tackled the issue of Islamophobia, racism and multiculturalism in a manner which reams and reams of Op

-Eds could not.

This is a very limited and personal account of my journey into the world of short movies. I was amazed by the breadth of issues dealt by short movies and how very well made they were, especially considering the fact that most of them were made by independent filmmakers on tight budgets. I would recommend everyone, especially those who consider cinema to be “low” art, to embark on a similar journey. Besides, it is only a click away.

*-Abdul Haleem Kidwai
BA Economics (Final year)*

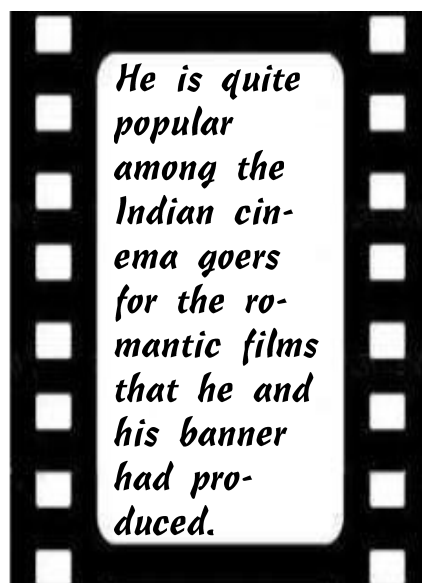


SHAKTI SAMANTA'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN CINEMA

The glittering and fascinating world of cinema especially ‘Bollywood’ has produced innumerable film directors. Legendary among them are directors like Raj Kapoor, Guru Dutt, B.R. Chopra, K.. Asif, Bimol Roy, Yash Chopra, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Muzaffar Ali, Kamal Amrohi, Shakti Samanta and the list continues. Each one of the above mentioned directors are connoisseur of their own kind of cinema. Shakti Samanta, creator of the Shakti Films is a legendary director. He is quite popular among the Indian cinema goers for the romantic films that he and his banner had produced. Everyone appreciates his prowess of mak-

ing romantic films.

Shakti Samanta (also popu-



larly known as Shaktida) of the erstwhile Bombay Talkies,

started his directing career in 1954, when he directed *Inspector*, which was produced by A.A.Nadiadwala and starred Ashok Kumar, Nalini Jaywant, Pran and K.N.Singh among others. The film was an instant hit and led Shaktida to fame after which he did films like *Hill Station*, *Sheroo* (1956) and *Detective* (1957) which also did good business. This boosted the morale of Shaktida and he launched Shakti Films in 1957 and the first film that came out of this stable was *Howrah Bridge* (1957) starring Ashok Kumar and Madhubala as the lead pair. *Howrah Bridge* did excellent business and established Shaktida as a filmmaker. The

impact was so much that investors queued up asking him to make more and more films. Then there was no looking back and Shakti Films delivered hit after hit. Films from the banner that did well at the box-office were China Town (1960), Naughty Boy (1962), Kashmir Ki Kali (1964), Sawan Ki Ghata (1965), An Evening in Paris (1968), Aradhana (1969), Kati Patang (1971), Jaane Anjane (1972), Amar Prem (1972), Anuraag (1972), Ajnabee (1974), Amanush (1975), Balika Badhu (1976), Anand Ashram (1977), Anurodh (1977), Khwab (1980), Barsaat Ki Ek Raat (1981), Aiyash (1982), Awaaz (1984), Aar Paar (1985), Dushman (1990) and Geetjali (1993). Shaktida was very popular among the artistes he worked with and vice-versa. Most popular among the lot was Ashok Kumar, with whom he did as many as nine films namely Inspector, Sheroo, Isi ka Naam Duniya Hai, Howrah Bridge, Aradhana, Amar Prem, Anuraag, Anurodh and Anand Ashram. Shammi Kapoor and Rajesh Khanna followed with whom Shaktida

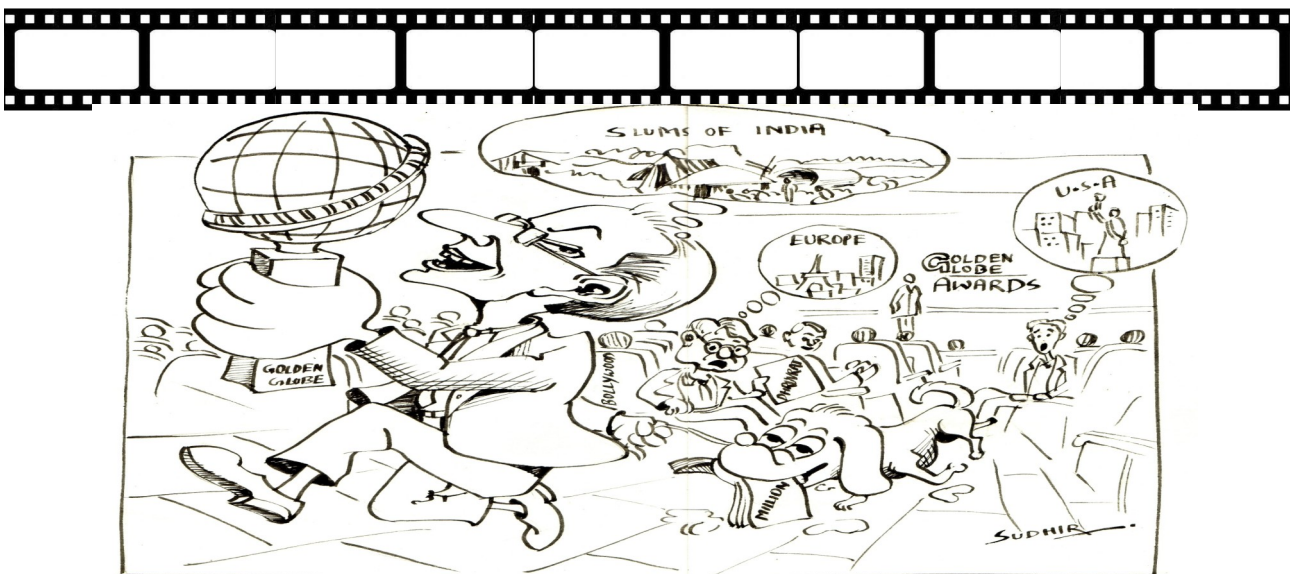
did six films each. He did Singapore, Pagla Kahin Ka, China Town, Kashmir ki Kali,



An Evening In Paris and Jaane Anjaane with Shammi Kapoor and gave super-hit films like Aradhana, Kati Patang, Amar Prem, Anuraag, Mehbooba and Ajnabee with Rajesh Khanna. He also worked with Amitabh Bachchan and Sanjeev Kumar. Among the actresses Shaktida worked with Nalini Jaywant, Madhubala, Mala Sinha, Nutan, Sharmila Tagore, Hema Malini and Asha Pareekh. He considers Sharmila Tagore as his favourite actress with

whom he has made super-hit films like Amanush, Aradhana, Sawan Ki Ghata, An Evening in Paris etc. Shakti Samanta won awards for his films Aradhana, Anurag and Amanush. He has also received several Lifetime Achievement trophies and several other honours from different organizations. Several prestigious films of the banner have been shown at international festivals in Berlin, Tashkent, Moscow, Cairo and Beirut. Shaktida under the aegis of Shakti Films has given some evergreen romantic films to Indian cinema buffs. Albeit, in the recent few years Shakti Films has not produced quality films but Ashim Samanta the son of Shakti Samanta and present mentor of the banner promises to produce some good romantic films, one titled 'Na Na Karte Pyaar Tumhi se Kar Baithe' being in the pipeline.

*-Safdar Imam Umerani
BA Communicative English
(Final year)*



FINANCING BOLLYWOOD

Mumbai, the financial capital of India, is a city of dreams. The city boasts of Bollywood, the Hindi Film Industry. Bollywood produces approximately



800 films a year. Nearly, 15 million people parade into 12,500 theatres to watch movies.

The audience expects all round entertainment in return for their money, with a good entertainer generally referred to as “paisa wasool”. Usually, the audience decides the fate of movie and sometimes fate of actors as well. Bollywood has produced blockbusters that have run to packed houses for years, yet many have disappeared from theatres within a few days or weeks of their release.

Bollywood is said to be an industry in itself as it provides or generates employment and resources. According to PWC and FICCI reports, the entertainment and media industries in India will touch the Rs. 1,15,700 crore mark by 2012. The Report further states “The

performance of the Indian Entertainment and Media industry has surpassed the performance of Indian economy and most other industries in 2007.”

Following the economic reforms initiated in 1990’s, India has become the world’s second fastest growing economy next to China.

Financial transparency, Commercialization and Corporatization of Bollywood are increasing. Producers are now

keen to learn financial management for their survival in industry. They are moving towards bank financing. IDBI and Exim bank

have initiated film financing along with others

like SBI, Bank of Baroda. RBI’s decision to allow banks to finance movies has given a boost to film financing. Exim bank funded the industry to the tune of Rs 100 crores in FY 05 and Rs.300 crore in FY 2006.

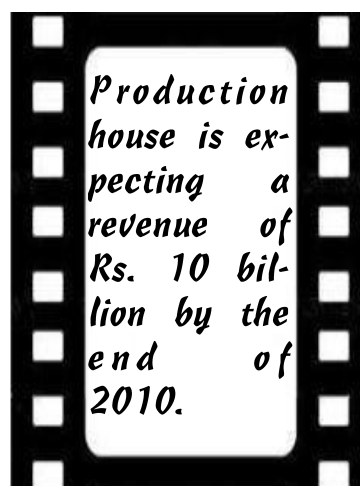
Banks financed films like ‘Cheeni Kum’, ‘Mangal Pandey’ etc and charge an enormous rate of 16-17% for film funding. But banks are not the only source of Finance for the Industry. Media and

entertainment raised money through IPO’s, Balaji, NDTV, UTV, etc. Production house is expecting a revenue of Rs. 10 billion by the end of 2010. The remarkable entry of multiplexes with growing mall culture have changed the equations. According to PWC report, in India, approximately 700 multiplex screens, out of total 12900 screens and these generate 60% of the box office collections.

Problem faced by Bollywood is widespread Copyright Infringement of its films. Often, bootlegs of DVD copies of movies are available before the prints are officially released in Theatres. There are also increasing returns from theatres in western world where Bollywood is slowly getting noticed.

As more Indians migrate to these countries, they form a growing market for up-scale Indian films. Bollywood has many things on its plate, at the same time, it still has a long way to go to become an organ-

ized sectors and a business industry.



-Sharjeel Chowdhry
BA Communicative English
(II year)

THE CONCEPT OF SPOOFS IN BOLLYWOOD

As I sit to incorporate rather rejuvenate my thoughts on this subject, I am reminded of numerous phrases used in the countless movies which tickled not only my funny bone but of the masses on the whole. Any humorous discourse which is intended to amuse is referred as Comedy in the Celluloid World. A mixture of elements of surprise, conflict, repetitiveness with satirical statements is the core of Comedy.



of Art being balanced by Spoofs and Original master-

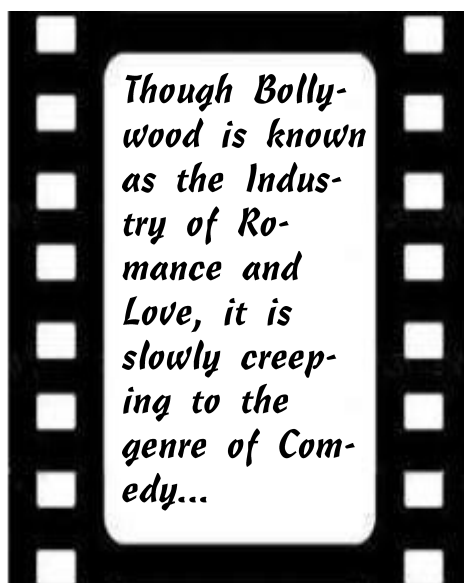
artists like Mahmood, Jagdeep, Asrani but the concept of Parody has never been accounted for. We may never have the audacity to go into this genre as masses may not like the idea. Idolising the Western Cinema in this genre may be something of a “Qui trop embrasse, mal étreint” as an attempt to explain the virtues of humor infuriates people. Along the way, it makes highhanded statements about comedy’s power to pierce pretense and lies; to challenge orthodoxy; to purge the world of toxins; and to—no joke—cure the sick. According to

Comedy plays an important role in helping us laugh and relieving the stress in our lives while an opportunity to look at humour in soothing way. Many scenes have an outburst of crazy and ridiculous moments which never happen in daily lives are fun to enjoy. All comedy movies make us laugh and feel better about ourselves, but some comedies throw in a pointless useless moral usually in the end of the movie.

pieces. Though we have remakes of Golden Oldies and Timeless Masterpieces like Umrao Jaan yet the concept of “Spoofs” is naïve rather

the Pundits of Comedy “It’s hard to laugh when the whole nation is depressed. But when we laugh, we feel better, and healing can begin. And that’s what comedy does.”

In the world of Comedy, the killer touches which turn the theater in the laughing gallery are depicted by any actor who with his/her sophomoric punchlines and deadpan expressions mesmerizes the audience. In Hollywood, we see that humorous work



Though Bollywood is known as the Industry of Romance and Love, it is slowly creeping to the genre of Comedy with Blockbusters like Golmaal, Bhaagam Bhaag and others showing that Indian audiences approving and whole heartedly accepting it. In the long run, the concept of SPOOF shall flourish and attain maturity.

**-Momin Saeed
B Tech Chemical
(III year)**

not visible at all.
We have witnessed great

BOLLYWOOD- AN OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE ON INDIAN CINEMA

I'm often asked by my friends here, "Why do your Bollywood actors break into a dance sequence in the middle of a totally serious scene?". I don't know what to answer first. The fact is that I hate it when people refer to it as "Bollywood" or that not every movie follows the same pattern. I have tried to hold myself back, which, trust me when I say this, is the hardest thing to do as an Indian answering to people who still carry an oversimplified image of their "bollywood". Living outside India has taught me a lot of things, one of them being to overlook such ignorant remarks. Could they be right though? Perhaps it is my own ignorance that shields my opinion on an outsider's perspective on Indian cinema.

Stereotype of Indian films have taken a while to form. Be it the dancing around trees, the famous chase scenes in narrow 'gullies', candy-coated college platonian love stories, or the everlasting fetish with romancing on exotic locales, Indian films have shown all that it takes to transport the audience to a different zone. Where sometimes I take extreme pride in being associated with a film industry that has the potential of taking a hard day's tension off a person's head with the mindless comical sequences and stunning yet fictitious sets, cos-

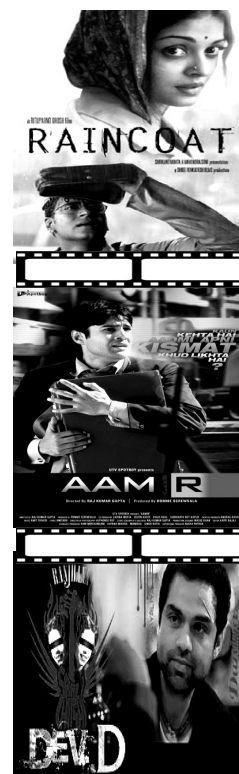
tumes and characters, it is hard to ignore the oversimplification that get linked with our films even strongly by the day.

Enter the big corporate houses that have brought a new breeze of freshness to the spirit of Indian films. No longer can the audience "predict" the story of a film, so to say. There is a distinctive quality that has been attached to films being made today. Filmmakers are no longer burdened by their faithful audience that is promised the same story again and again over the years. They tend to shock themselves more than the audiences. A few not so old examples



fresh depiction of India in all its despair are films like *The Raincoat*, *Aamir*, *Rang De Basanti* and more recent ones like *Mumbai Meri Jaan*, *A Wednesday*, *Dev D*, *Luck By Chance* and many more. These movies might have not done exceptionally well at the box office but show a gradual changing trend in the kind of films being made.

"Bollywood" is no longer synonymous with the routine song-and-dance sequences. A fresh breed of filmmakers that are rising up against all odds are being supported by these corporate houses in a quest for meaningful cinema that entertains while presenting a strong point of view.



The audiences' acceptance of innovative concept and storyline for films has a huge part to play in the success of such films that were once tagged as "parallel cinema". Producers are banking on such multiplex films that are doing exceptionally well. Indian cinema is finally pushing its boundaries to reach what was almost unimaginable for Indian films a decade back. I, for a change, can tell my friends here that "bollywood" has finally got more flesh than it is given credit for. After all who can hold their feet from tapping to a 'Dance pe chance maar le'?

*-Tarab Kureishy
Student, York University
Toronto*

FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN INDIA AND WOMEN CENTRIC BOLLYWOOD

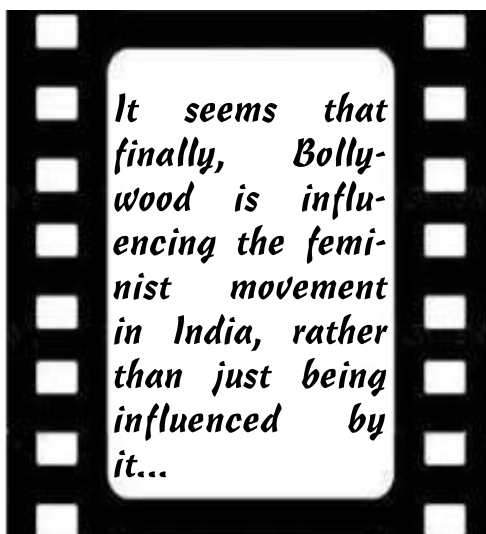
The Indian National Movement involved women equally in the struggle. The 19th century ideals of equality, emancipation and empowerment of women seemed to be materializing when after in-

dependence, women took up positions of power. However, the masses of women still remained in the dark of discrimination. It was fortunate that the active citizens of the country had by now, been sensitized to these issues. With the evolving of the cinema in India, social issues started carving a niche in Bollywood through intelligent and socially conscious directors. Though offbeat movies have since the very beginning been focusing on social issues, it is the popular cinema that needs to be studied as it reflects the views and choices of common Indians.

It was the fervor of the Indian National Movement that fuelled the first wave of women centric films in Bollywood, which appears in the late 1950s. *Mother India* (1957) is the epitome of this first wave, *Bandini* (1963) followed in the same footsteps. Both



films have the assertion of the emancipation and independence of women in common.



Late 1950s and early 1960s constitute that phase in the Indian women's movement where women were emerging out of the shackles of being mere role players. Yet the Indian woman is sacrificing, suffering, someone who is apparently weak but emerges strong at the end of it all. Nargis in '*Mother India*' kills

centric films. Important films like *Arth* (1982), *Mirch Masala* (1985) and *Khooon Bhari Maang* (1988) can be categorized here. These films somehow, seem to be commenting

upon the infidel and lecherous nature of men. Pooja (*Arth*), Sonbai (*Mirch Masala*) and Aarti (*Khooon Bhari Maang*) - all lead a crusade against, instead of surrendering to, men. However, positively strong male characters like the gatekeeper (Om Puri) and the school master in *Mirch Masala* and Raj (Raj Kiran) in *Arth* are also portrayed as 'champions' of women's rights. The films of this period coincide with the promising women's movement that was integrating men and women alike.

The trend continued to the 1990s with the likes of *Damini* (1993) and *Mrityudand* (1997). This decade is especially marked for the recognition of and formulation (and reformulation) of law for crime against women. The concept of 'power', which became the basis for understanding of the term 'gender' at this time also finds a place in the cinema of

the time. Both Damini and Mrityudand give a picture of crimes like rape, domestic violence etc interwoven with power or class politics. However, the typical images of a 'sacrificing Indian wife' who always tries to keep peace at home, saves it from breaking apart and always returns to her 'parmeshwar' husband have trickled down to these films.

The commencement of the 21st century saw diverse women centric films like Astitva (2000), Fiza (2000), Lajja (2001). By now the women's movement had become multi pronged bringing into focus a range of issues like individual identity of women, their place in the society, double standards regarding morality etc. Astitva stands out among all the films of this phase for its powerful

and realistic portrayal of a



woman caught in the complexities of role-playing, the expected chastity and

faithfulness and the consequent punishment. Chameli (2004) highlighted the issue of prostitution, considered an evil by the society, very sensitively. Laaga Chunari Me Daag was also not a bad effort. In recent times, films like brought up issues yet unseen and unspoken about like the sidelining of women in sports, women in the world of fashion, women suffering from domestic abuse in non-native countries etc. It seems that finally, Bollywood is influencing the feminist movement in India, rather than just being influenced by it. Hopefully, it will live upto the axiom 'Films are the reflection as well as the mentor of the society.'

-Asiya Islam
BA Communicative
English (Final year)



THE READER- THE COMPLEXITY OF HUMAN MORALITY, JEWISH ORGANISATIONS AND THE OSCARS

If I could choose a movie to win the Oscars, I would have chosen "The Reader", starring Kate Winslet in a

very skillfully played role of a woman with an air of enigmatic sadness and pain, and David Kross in an impressive performance of a vulnerable teenage boy with raging hormones.

It's a brilliant movie... visually appealing like a beautiful painting with the perfect combinations of lights and shades.. its cinematography is literally stunning, giving a good story, great direction and extraordinary performances new dimensions. The movie is truly a delight for all the senses.

It is strange that this film, which was nominated for five major awards for best picture, direction, screenplay (Based on Material Previously Produced or Published), cinematography, and best female actress, got only one award, despite it being much superior in many aspects, to "Slumdog Millionaire," which

won eight awards. Guess it was scheduled to win in advance every major award as it

meaning of death.

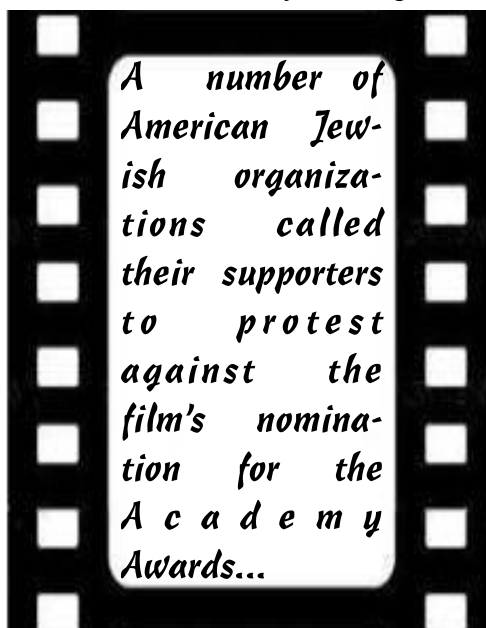
"The Reader" is one of the most daring films emerging

from Hollywood about the Holocaust, and it goes beyond all the familiar patterns and stereotypes commonly portrayed in films about the



is the hip type to be marketed this season.. away from phi-

German, especially those associated with Nazism.



Here is a beautiful woman, sad, weak, though she pretends to uphold by leading in a passionate relationship she establishes with a boy less than half her age, controlling and managing it.

She also differs from other German women who collaborated with the Nazi regime for she is simple, was looking for a job for living, and her relation with the Auschwitz mass detention camp, in which she had worked, didn't exceed performing a duty, and was not the result of any ideological motive. She is, also, noble enough to deny the claim of

losophy, history and the significance of life and the

not knowing the fate of the ten prisoners she had to choose every month in order to be sent for execution.

This human picture is completed with the another, which may be more important here, the Man .. Michael, with whom she had a relationship and whose life changes forever because of her and who feels a sense of responsibility towards her, even after she is sentenced to life imprisonment. This relationship affects him badly, and may be the reason for the failure of his marriage, and his permanent agony, especially after failing to provide the testimony that could save the woman from her tragic end. Her end comes after she acknowledges her crime in the Court, of writing the order of locking 300 Jewish women in a burning church to die, while she was illiterate. She did not want to expose her ignorance before the Court out of a sense of shame, and thus, is condemned. Perhaps this is the first time it is shown in a mainstream western movie- a German man in love with a woman linked to Nazi Germany. Not only that but she seems not to regret what had happened because “the dead will stay wherever they are” and it is “no longer useful to think about what happened”. When Michael asks while visiting her in prison before her release, what she learned in prison, she replies she learned to read!

So here is a human prototype of a woman, attractive, who keeps a boy in her home and establishes a physical and emotional relationship with

him, and then decides to disappear from his life when she realizes that it could destroy his future, she continues her life after the war, without any sense of remorse because her



work for the Nazi was for a living, not devotion or loyalty. She was like millions of Germans at that

time. The concept of duty and loyalty to work to her is simple and consistent with the personality of a simple illiterate woman; so when the judge asks her whether she knew that the prisoners she chose were going to death, she replies: “What would *you* do!” She commits suicide before her release, after more than 20 years in prison, when she realizes that she no longer has anything to do outside, and there is a wide gap between her and her lover, for whom she became a “memory”, not a truth that he could deal with. It was natural for the film treating a sensitive topic, liberated from the “structure” of the usual stereotyped Nazi personality or guard in a detention camp with the horrible reputation of “Auschwitz”, that the Jewish organizations would criticize it strongly. Ron Rosenbaum, author of “Explaining Hitler,” which analyzes how Hitler was able to win the support of the German people, said that the film “is inaccurate and is “ “The Worst Holocaust Film Ever

Made.” and called the members Academy Foundation not to “compound the error by giving the Oscar to *The Reader*.” He added that the film demands us to have sympathy with “an unrepentant mass murderer of Jews”. He accused the film of promoting the idea that ordinary Germans were ignorant of Hitler’s policy and of the extermination of the Jews until after the war. Mark Weitzman head of the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s New York office supported his views saying that *The Reader* was one of the movies of a kind of “Holocaust revisionism” – an euphemistic term for Holocaust denial- that were produced in Hollywood in recent times.

A number of American Jewish organizations called their supporters to protest against the film’s nomination for the Academy Awards, while the supporter of other competent movies took advantage of that and sent thousands of e-mails to the “Academy” for the two weeks preceding the awards, demanding its elimination. Thus, *The Reader* emerged from the Academy Awards without a prize but for a best performance by Kate Winslet. Kate Winslet had stated earlier that she had been nominated several times in the past without receiving the award, therefore, this time, she had chosen a film about the Holocaust in order to increase her chances of winning (which means that movies about Holocaust win). However, it seems that was not the case this time!

- *Asiya Usmani*
MA Arabic (Final year)



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