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Content

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This issue

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Parbo-kagaj : A Refereed Journal



Editorial

At the beginning of the twenty-first century nothing is certain in terms of media boundaries and specificities. Films are edited on video and the post-production is more and more computer-based. Computer graphics, computer-generated animation, and computer-generated images are today a natural part of movies. The 'technologies of reception and display' have also blended into a multi-medial format. Movies are watched on the Internet, on television or on DVD, or online via streaming, embedded flash video. Video file sharing systems, such as YouTube and others following its trail, transmit home-made videos, music clips, advertisements and even official movie trailers. The online television broadcast enterprises can easily negotiate with hardware vendors about embedding them into set-top boxes and televisions that will change the market as we know it. This way, the cinema is today not an antithesis of television as it was from the late 1950s, but rather a media partner with a good deal of cross-fertilization in terms of personnel, financing, and even aesthetics.

The introduction of the dynamic screen also fashions new ways of seeing and watching. While the classical narrative cinema offered a linear structure of narratives, and a pre-manipulated set of emotions, the new media invites the user to create a more personal temporality and mold a more personal emotion.

One of the most important aspects of the competition between the cinema and television is the issue of screen formats. But there is the counter-movement that runs parallel to the magnification of projection potentials of both the cinematic and the televisual screens. With the appearance of mobile devices there has been growing interest in scaling down images to fit smaller screens. The challenge today is not to produce the biggest screen of all times, but to make visual data rendering possible for all screen sizes in the same quality.

Spectators are no longer passive receptacles of films. They interact with the story in various ways. While the computer user interacts directly with the framed image with the keyboard, mouse, in the case of touch screens, the finger manipulates what is contained within the parameter of the screen. This interactive process redefines the role of the place of interaction. So the screen cannot be theorized as a blank surface on which a flux of images is projected, rather it becomes an interface. Since now we also have to think of what kind of cinema is appropriate for the age of Google and blogging, Lev Manovich along with his fellow contributors to the multimedia project responds to this as a combination of theory and art: 'a media art complex that foregrounds the remastering potentials of the new media'.

The cinematic image and the logic of filmic communication are continuously being redefined

by the new media in their incorporating cinematic modes of representation. In turn, the new media is being fed back into new forms of cinematic expression. Filmmaking or participating in a cinematic culture is no longer the privilege of a chosen few or of an industry. As Manovich says, along with culture and cultural theories, it has become "open source". So Dziga Vertov's, 'The Man with a Movie Camera' needs to be rephrased. A person can do much in the virtual arena of the new media even without a movie camera.

It is not enough to address the issue of the cinematic screen alone. We must add computer screens and digital technologies, television screens and interactive video formats to our conceptualization of the cinema and its screens, both in historical and theoretical perspectives. So SRFTI, along with its film wing, introduced its Electronic and Digital Media wing last year to address the need of the time and the national seminar on 'Cinema in the age of New Media' in association with 'ParboKagaj' has been organized as cinema has become embedded in its several media competitors, such as television, computer and the mobile.

Dr. Debamitra Mitra

Director of SRFTI

Keyword

(Cinema in the age of New Media)

Mr. Dhritiman Chatterjee

Mr. Dhritiman Chatterjee, a Bengali actor who began his acting career in 1970s as the protagonist of Satyajit Ray's 'Pratidwandi'. Most of his acting work has been in India's 'Parallel' or Independent Cinemas with the film makers like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and Aparna Sen among others. He has also worked in English films with well-known film makers such as Deepa Mehta and Jane Campion. The honorable Chief Guest of the SRFTI headed his speech with the sign of gratitude towards all the members present. He being an actor for last five decades, shaped some non-fictions advertising films.

He went ahead in his speech with an introduction of that zone. Probably around 40 years ago that was a part of the wet land. In the generation of his ancestors, people used to go there to hunt birds and once upon a time that was the home of tigers too. The communicator then proceeded with the range of telephones. During his era, there used to be a huge instrument named telephone and when the receiver used to get picked up, a lady on the other end would audit the number and the person on this side had to wait patiently to get connected. Then, that was replaced by the rotary phone. In that the numbers were needed to be dialed patiently and if there was a need to call a person to another city, the span of sitting patiently was half-a-day. Today, the mobile phones are taken for granted. Human instinct is what happening nowadays is that they think the present is the ever present which was there always and that is one thing to be objective.

Another curse be the cinema in the age of new media. A question that frequently comes up, 'Are we thinking of cinema as an integral part of new media or setting it apart?' In other words, it can also be questioned as, 'Are we considering the evolution of cinema from analog to digital?' And what that means technically, financially, aesthetically and in various other ways. New Media, which is generally getting considered as the social media, electronic media and other platforms. It is necessary to get clarity of these things. By 1975, seven Indian cities got television and in the last four decades that ancient version of picture has changed radically. The Economist, Prof. Amartya Sen has a book named 'Argumentative Indian'. Therefore, from that it is very clear that Indians like arguing. During the time of the film festival in Kolkata around the year of 1970s, the hot topic for discussing in cinema were the documentary films. A renowned person from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting told in one of the Cinema that people can shout at the top of their voice but one thing to remember that the Indian Democracy is the largest head unit of the world and that decision remains final for all.

In the past, numerous film makers had dealt with technologies and in various ways. It is famously said, "I don't want to wait on the tool, I want the tool to wait on me." By the line, it is meant that technology should be controlled by men, not men be controlled by technology. In the experiences of Mr. Chatterjee, Satyajit Ray was neutral about the technology. He didn't have the western collections. He wanted to use the technology which he could himself control. As it is known by everyone that Satyajit Ray himself used to do the camera work, the editing

and the sound mixing. Overall, he wanted to be confident over the control of technology that he used. Another enormous personality, Mrinal Sen used to get much excited about the very technology. Mrinal Sen was the one who first adopted the steam work. During those days, he instead of parting ways with his long time editor as that editor was not comfortable with and refused that scene with the new technology. Mrinal Sen, was always eager to views and deal with new technologies. Although, when he made his first and only serial for Doordarshan, Mr. Chatterjee happened to work with him. So, he got a chance to see that how much Mr. Sen was overwhelmed with the beta take rather than the film. The fact today is, technology is not waiting for anyone. As compared to the analog phase, technology has acquired a life of exponent and apparently independent of human agency.

In the year of 1981, "Many v/s Word" got viewed on public television, that was how to ensure that television remained a tool for public good and social good. 1970s was the time of great hope for the young professionals. It was the time of research on how to make television relevant to the needs of people. In case of analog cinema and digital cinema, there is a confusion whether it could reach the core issue. Many are familiar with an independent film maker named S.B.'s 'Sex life and Video tape'. Three-four years ago, S.B. addressed at Sunrises film festival, which was much enlightening and educative. That speech by S.B. was to notify the audience the difference between cinema and movie. The former can be elaborated as a movie is something that audience sees and on the other hand cinema is something made. His point of view was that cinema has nothing to do with the captured medium. It has no connection with the screening, bedroom or iPad and it is of no need to be a movie. It can be a Commercial or a Video on YouTube. Cinema is a specificity of vision which belongs to one person. It is the polar opposite of generic or arbitrary but the result is as unique as signature or a finger print. It is not made by a committee or a company or by the audience.

Cinema as dealing with time brings the essence of cinema. For example, like all the films of terrorism, 'Chauthi Koot' by Gurbinder Singh is a film on the period of terrorism but it has no violence. It's just ordinary people waiting for the terrible to happen and that what grabs the attention. On the other hand, story and narrative is not alike. A narrative is pre-imposed structure on cinema which introduces limitations but just handling the camera on two faces where nothing happens itself tells a story. The transition from silent cinema to sound in the mid 1920s was a great disruption. The cause for which many actors went out of work was due to unacceptable voice.

As far as the topics of creativity and new media are concerned, it brings new horizons in the post modernism scenario of film making and challenges of today's television. According to Mr. Chatterjee, he says that he himself do not understand what the post modernism means. Some intellectuals described it as an anti-buzzard. On the next go, creativity and new media which makes a dramatic change both on the way images are produced and consumed. The image making nowadays becomes a broad based process. As far as the television is concerned, there is a question whether television is going to remain a relevant medium for much longer or not. The television is a content that can be broadcast simultaneously to view everywhere regardless of location. Though all the content that television shows can be viewed on some apps and you tube anytime anywhere. So, to make the television relevant it has to reclaim the place for which it was meant. It has to regain the objective to serve the public. He concluded his speech suggesting the younger generation to have a look whether they can reclaim the television.

Session 1

Challenges for Today's Television

Chair : Sri Abhijit Dasgupta

Mr. Abhijit Dasgupta

Abhijit Dasgupta, is a veteran Journalist and Media Analyst. His subject of oration was "Research on the Effect of Television bringing on Children". He outsets his views as Television is standing at the cross road as according to him television is suffering from dilemma technologically and content wise.

According to Mr. Abhijit Dasgupta, Television was born in India as an unwanted child and it came as a form of a bribe. In the end of 1958, at the Pragati Maidan in Delhi an exhibition took place and there Philips brought in their television. They brought it as on those days their radio was in great demand. Therefore, instead of taking the television to Holland, the Phillips donated it to the All India Radio. In the year 1959, the All India Radio Research Engineers outset the television which was inaugurated by the first President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad. From then, they used to telecast news, interviews of ministers for one hour a day and two days in a week, but the issue was that there was no audience. Latterly they thought of requesting the Headquarter of Phillips in Holland for some television sets. In return they donated 41 television sets to India. Therefore, Indian television began with the low power transmitter from the fifth floor of Akashvani Bhavan. On the April 1, 1976, Doordarshan came into being as a separate entity. It was followed by a lot of development and from the Government produced program it opened up to serials like Hum log, Buniyad, Malgudi Days, Rajni and many others all went on air.

One fine morning, it came under notice that people were not watching those, so commercial television and zee came in. Thereafter, economic war engender. Each wanted a bigger pie from the same cake. To increase sales, they rely on the 4S-s i.e. sex, scandal, superstitions, sensationalism. In the year 1995, an astonishing event took place. The then, Information and Broadcasting Minister after coming out of a press conference, openly stated that "The future of the television rests on the private sector and we must encourage the private and the commercial sector. There's no future for Doordarshan". It was followed by the resignation of 10% people who worked on Doordarshan all over India and we're absorbed by the commercial and private sectors. The 'M' power, whether it be the money power or the mobile power is the ruling power in today's world. Things which are taking place nowadays doing a lot of hard than of heal. Doordarshan today does not have staff and they didn't recruit a single person in the last 17 years. Therefore, viewership dropped and commercial viewership went up.

Now the question comes, what the commercials show. According to the respected orator, the inferences of what they show includes crime against women, in every house mother-in-law insults the daughter-in-law, every unitary husband has an extra marital affair or an illegitimate son. In serials a 18 year old girl marries a boy of 9 years old. He drew the conclusion mentioning that India has approximately 440 million children, out of which statistically 50% were sexually abused in the last decade. There has been a rise of 143% as rapist in the juvenile court.

WINTER IS HERE FOR THE TRADITIONAL TELEVISION INDUSTRY: TRIALS OF TODAY'S TV

Debapriya Bhattacharya
Nabanita Bhattacharjee

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PREFACE

Right from its early days, television has been playing a pivotal role in our lives. Remember the days when our working routine depended on the TV shows we wanted to see? Mothers would tell children to finish their homework so that they are free in time for their favourite cartoons, dads getting home right when their favourite shows were about to start and everyone vacating their seats only during the commercial break? Well, it seems that those days will soon be fond memories, for today's television industry has been facing challenges on multiple arenas.

With the emergence of alternative streaming services and increased piracy of content all across the globe, it seems as if winter has come for the traditional TV viewing experience and we shall proceed to see from which corners the throne is in peril.

INTRODUCTION

When television was first introduced as a commodity in the late 1930s, it took the world by a storm. It was the dawn of new millennia in the communications and entertainment industry. The two Golden Ages of Cable TV in the 1950s and the 1990s saw the big boom in cable television industry; by the end of the 1980s; almost 98 % of the households of US had at least one television...and the rest of the world followed suit.

But for the last five years cable TV has been slowly losing the market which it had

created, which they have acknowledged only recently. The Leichtman Research Group found out in 2016 that the cable TV lost 100000 subscribers in 2013, and the figures went up to 150000 in 2014 and 385000 in 2015.

With the emergence of alternative video streaming services, the future of cable TV is at a crossroad where it has to either outdo itself as well as the others or undergo the same fate which awaited its predecessor...the radio.

Coming to this point, according to Nielson's "Total Audience Report," traditional TV viewing by 18 to 24 year olds was decreased by 10.9% year over year and at present, has dropped by 41.3% since 2012. In other words, in the last five years, more than 40% of this age group's traditional television viewing time has shifted to other activities or streaming.

Figure 1: Drop in TV viewing among younger generations
Source: Nielson's Total Audience Report.

The data gathered from the latest Total Audience Report (Quarter 1 of 2017) indicates that:

For teens (aged 12-17), the traditional TV viewing suffered a drop of 15.9% year-over-year and a 41.04% contraction in the last five years.

For the older millennial (25 - 34) the year-over-year drop was 11.2% (more than double of the 5.2% drop of Q4 of 2016) along with a 28.7% drop over 5 years.

A 4.8% decline figured among the Gen X (35 - 49), which was three times as large as Q4 of 2016 (1.6%) and representing a contraction of 13% over a five year period.

However, for the age group of 50 to 60, the year over year was down by just 1.4% but relatively flat (+ 0.6%) over 5 years, while for those 56 and older it was up by 0.3% from the previous year and up by 7.7% over five years.

This brings to a very crucial point in this discussion...the fact that the average age of traditional TV viewers has risen to an all time high.

According to The Sun and a report by the BBC Trust, the average age of the BBC viewer has risen to 61. This data has verified the fact that the television is failing to attract the young viewers thereby making the threat even more eminent.

THE PRIMARY THREATS

In order to understand the gravity of the threat, we shall now endeavor to study some of the primary challenges facing today's television industry:

1. EMERGENCE OF ALTERNATIVE MEDIA CHANNELS:

With the Digital Revolution kicking up a storm all across the globe, audiences are no longer satisfied with the pre-bundled channels they used to receive from their cable operators for a fixed price. This has led to a shift in their viewing behavior, emerging as a threat to the age-old model of traditional cable television. People are now turning towards other options like Amazon Prime and Netflix, where they get both the value of money and

the flexibility of time. Also, the free streaming services like YouTube are enjoying the home run, for as they say, there is nothing like free things. According to the Fortune Lords, 6 out of 10 people prefer online video platforms to live TV, and by 2025, half of viewers under 32 will not subscribe to a pay-TV service. We shall discuss Netflix and the likes later on, but now let us look at the momentous rise of YouTube in just twelve years.

Emerging in 2005, YouTube had 15 hours of video being uploaded on it every minute by October, 2008 and the figure has gone up to 300 hours per minute in 2017. The number of videos being watched everyday has gone up to almost 5 billion from just 8 million in 2005, and as a result even advertisers are making a shift from major cable TV networks to the streaming service. Back in 2013, Google allowed advertisers to test Nielsen Measurement Tags (which helps clients understand cross media behavior by their audiences) on YouTube ads, and based on the data, it was published in the October 2013 edition of YouTube Insights that more consumers viewed ads on YouTube than cable TV networks. According to an article in the Financial Times by Hannah Kuchler in 2015, the number of advertisers on YouTube soared more than 40% than the past year, and though the Google owned website did not disclose revenue figures but the data provided an indication of how it is benefitting from an explosion in demand for digital video advertising as millennials spent more time on the site. In 2015, it launched the "digital storefront," where if we like a product, we can buy it then and there. So what is the secret formula for the breathtaking success of this endeavor?

The first point would be that it is free, and let's face it, we all love free stuff. Another factor is that it possible for almost everyone to upload a video on YouTube by themselves without taking the help of many media houses or channels as in the case of television. The uploaded videos can be accessed from Personal computers as well as from Smart TVs and mobile phones as long as it has an internet connection at anytime of the day, all across the world. YouTube has also been acting as a platform for uphold new talents, giving the world stars like Justin Bieber (can also be listed under negative impacts), thus transforming itself from a mere video sharing site to a stage where people can start their career.

What started out as a website with an eighteen second video titled "Me at Zoo" has now become a go to source of entertainment for many people. With almost limitless potential, the future of this multimedia platform would continue to bring greater threats to the cable TV than the latter can afford to admit.

2. VIEWER BEHAVIOUR AND PREFERENCES:

As is known to all, we live in a world where everyone is against a constant race against time. Social media, online shopping...with advancements in technology we are getting so fixed up with getting what we want when we want it, taking every available shortcuts to continue the fast paced life. This being the case, we prefer that our entertainment sources should also be capable of providing the service better suited for our needs. Unlike traditional cable TV, video streaming sites like YouTube and new age TV giants allow us to access our favorite shows without any fixed schedule at any time all across the globe. We no longer have to wait for reruns of previous episodes, we have the option of binge-watching the entire series. Also the fact that the services of these can be availed with

nominal fees has also helped in increasing their popularity, unlike cable TV where for more bucks, we are mostly getting a bundle of channels grouped together by the cable operator. Thus it can be clearly understood why there is a surge in the market for these services.

Subject: Audience Report On How They Planned To Watch The Recent Season Of GoT
Picture courtesy: Finders.com

With the multifarious entertainment content coming under the same banner and making quality content of the global standard being available all across the world with international premieres, the streaming giants such Netflix and Amazon have succeeded in luring away the millennials from the cable TV, who want their free time made worth the while.

3. PIRACY AND NETWORK SECURITY:

This year, the world went crazy when Season 7 of Game of Thrones came later on air than it usually does every year. But when it did, it seemed the week long wait for every new episode was too much to handle for most of us...after all winter is here and there is hardly time to wait around, is there? And thus the world saw one of the most renowned leaks of recent times as hackers successfully hacked into the mainframe of HBO and gave the world a preview before the premiere. While we are on the topic, the season premiere of Game Of Thrones Season 7 also happened to be the most pirated show of 2017, and the series itself has taken the glory of being the most pirated TV show for the last 5 years.

This incident brings us to the question of network security which is responsible for taking away the night's sleep of many television entertainment barons. Not only leaked versions of shows are of major concern...but also the pirated version.

This year, IRDETO, a leading company providing digital platform security, carried out the largest global consumer piracy online survey ever with more than 25000 adults participating across 30 countries and found out that 52% of the individuals have admitted to watching pirated video content.

Quoting Doug Lowther, CEO, Irdeto, "A battle is being waged in the media & entertainment industry. Legal content offerings are no longer only competing against each other. Pirates have undoubtedly grown into a formidable foe that should not be ignored. With more than half of consumers openly admitting to watching pirated content, it is crucial that the industry tackle piracy head-on. To do so will require technology and services to protect the legal content as well as a comprehensive education program to help change the behavior of consumers."

The survey found out that though 70% of consumers around the world stated that it is illegal to produce or share pirated content, only 59% stated that it was illegal to stream or download them. The data from the survey showed that the condition was critical, especially in Russia, where 87% of respondents said that it is not illegal to produce or share pirated content, while 66% said that it was not so to stream or download them either. According to the survey the major pirated content across the globe were movies (27%) and TV series (21%). Quite unexpectedly, however, a growing industry problem turned out to be live sports piracy, with Portugal and Egypt being the top two countries where this featured.

Incidentally, it was found that the percentage of adults viewing pirated content was least in USA and the United Kingdom, suggesting that the audiences there have better access to the stuff they want to watch.

Region In general, how often, if at all, do you watch any pirated video content?

Net: All who watch pirated content In general, how often, if at all, do you watch any pirated video content?

Answer: More than once a week In general, how often, if at all, do you watch any pirated video content?

Answer: I have never watched pirated video content

Europe	45%	7%	51%
APAC	61%	11%	33%
Latin America	70%	11%	26%
USA	32%	4%	63%

Source: Irdeto Global Consumer Piracy Survey Report.

The main device used for viewing pirated content is the laptop, though recently the trend is shifting towards mobile phones and tablets with the younger millennials. Being available mostly free of charges and through a great number over the internet, these pirates are quite literally running away with the cream of the TV industry profits, thus making the production houses suffer major loses, and in turn hampering innovation and the future production of better shows. As Rory O'Connor, Vice President of Services, Irdeto said, bringing a change in consumer habits will take "a concerted effort from all the industry players to not only educate consumers about the negative impact of piracy, but also continued innovation to address the three elements of consumer choice - content, value and convenience."

4. DEMANDING QUALITY AND CREATIVITY OF PROGRAMMES:

Ted Sarandos of Netflix has quite aptly described the present condition when he said that the TV producers need to figure out "how to stand out in that cluttered TV universe." As he explained, "everything exists in perpetuity now, so every time we put on a new show, we are competing with everything ever made." With big budget shows being produced by all the major channels bringing on the cast of finest actors and newer ideas, the competitiveness among TV channels have reached an all time high, and not only does a channel has to outdo another channel but also the streaming giants like Netflix, which are not only giving easier access to these shows but are also producing their own exclusives.

But even this is not where it ends. Traditional TV has lost its status as a commodity and has been reduced to simple entertainment avenue, and like all others, it has to now compete with the various sitcoms but also with the types of Pokémon Go and \$200 million blockbuster movies. In simple words, television has been brought down to simply an app.

5. MARKET SHARE OF NEW AGE STREAMING GIANTS:

Finally, we come to the biggest threat facing traditional television. Today, we happen to be in the middle of a TV Renaissance, as traditional TV is gradually making way for streaming giants like Netflix, Amazon and Hulu. The phenomenon, also known as 'cord cutting,' is gaining momentum all around the world, and according to the Leichtman Research Group, first surfaced in 2013, with cable operators losing 100,000 customers.

The principal allure of these services is that it gives the audience a cheaper alternative to cable TV which can be accessed anywhere and at any time of the, according to the preferred schedule of the customer.

The market of these streaming services has boomed recently to the point where Netflix announced that they are spending \$5 billion dollars on content this year. At present, Netflix is currently enjoying the top spot among the streaming services, with over 80 million users in over 200 countries, with a market cap in the \$60 billion dollar range. Amazon Prime is not trailing far behind, and is quickly picking up pace, for it offers a huge array of services under the same banner.

Apart from giving us access to thousands of movies and TV shows, Amazon and Netflix are also coming up with original shows with big budgets and both bigger stars and talented newcomers. The trend of 'binge-watching' of our favourite series which they have inoculated among us is spreading rapidly all across the globe, with more and more of us getting to immerse in our favourite shows as long as we want. With time, more and more players are getting out on the field, like HBO, which has recently launched HBOGo after keeping it under wraps for a long time. Also, Disney has announced launching two streaming services, one for ESPN which is expected to launch in 2018, and another carrying Disney's content in 2019.

The important takeaway from the rise of these streaming platforms is that television will cease to be considered as the primary screen and the phablets and the rest as the secondary screen- all them coming together to give the viewers one seamless experience.

THE INDIAN SCENARIO

With the sun setting over the traditional television industry all across the globe, one might wonder where India stands in the race, being the country which happened to be the third largest TV market in the world according to the 2015 report presented by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

Well, it seems that even though the rich and diverse cultural heritage and the multi lingual population has kept the television industry afloat for so long, the lack of new ideas and big budget productions are taking their toll on the country's TV market. The formulaic and budget production of TV series has resulted in the inability to produce newer original game changers which would go on to become global TRP toppers.

The budget factor plays a vital factor in the country's failure to producing world -class TV shows. At a time when Netflix's annual budget for content is a whopping 6 billion dollar, the annual turnover of the entire Indian television industry sums up to be just one

billion dollar, even when this includes hundreds of shows in scores of languages; incidentally the entire cost of the making and marketing of all the seasons of Game of thrones is also estimated to be the same.

Though indigenous streaming services like Hotstar has come up in our country, it has failed to come up with original content as of yet. With the new age Indians being both tech-savvy and hungry for content, the Indian television industry has limited time to adapt itself to the new playing field, or be sidelined from the game in the near future, if it has not been already so.

CONCLUSION

As can be seen from the paper, at present we are right in the middle of the Television Renaissance.

With the alternative streaming services taking care of both our time and money, it seems that they are here to stay and at the going by the current trend, they are not just here to modify our TV viewing experience, but to replace it completely.

The network security threats as well as those of piracy continue to be a source of worry for the production houses, with pirated contents being available more and more easily across the globe, along with the shift of consumers from television screens to laptops and hand-held devices.

It seems that finally, winter is here, not only on television but also for television, and as the industry fights a hard battle, we got to and see how long before the Wall crumbles.

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The pie-chart under VIEWER BEHAVIOUR AND PREFERENCES was taken from finders.com; the graph under MARKET SHARE OF NEW AGE STREAMING GIANTS courtesy marketrealist.com.

The data for the Paper has been compiled with the help of the following websites:

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Television and Religion: Re-Mapping the Indian Scene

Soumik Chatterjee

Abstract

The paper is an attempt to capture the various strands of scholarly engagements in the field of television and religion that have emerged over the years and to map the scholarship in India. I argue in the paper that even as mainstream televangelism studies are few and far between in India, there is also a wide scope and need for anthropologically looking at television and religion. I illustrate this with my ethnographic case study of Indian Idol, a popular reality music show on Indian television broadcast in 2007. Using an anthropological framework and invoking the anthropological categories of rituals, rites of passage and myths, among others, I employ techniques from reception studies to elicit the presence of religion in both the broadcast of the media spectacle and its readings. I argue that such an anthropological approach brings within its ambit phenomenon that otherwise lie beyond the realm of institutional religion thereby benefiting our understanding of the interface between television and religion in the contemporary post secular Indian society.

Key words: Television, religion, televangelism, anthropology, ritual, myth.

Introduction

Scholarly discourses and works on media and religion is a recent emergence with a history of even less than three decades. Despite both the fields having attained the institutional recognition and identity long back, little attention has been drawn towards inter-disciplinary works. As a result, they have historically remained disconnected from each other as neither saw profit in mutual engagements and also a 'risk' associated with such an exercise was perceived, provoking scholars to argue that the study of media and religion has remained an 'understudied area' (Stout, 2012; Winston, 2009; Morgan, 2008; Hoover & Lundby, 1997). Consequently, as Hoover and Lundby (1997) argued, there has always been a 'missing link' between media, religion and culture. In recent times, the shift in the thinking of the conceptual categories of both 'religion' and 'media' has paved way for serious engagements in the interface between the two.

The present paper attempts to capture the various strands of scholarly engagements and contributions in the field of television and religion that have emerged over the years and seeks to situate the scholarship in India. In particular, highlighting the anthropological turn in the study of television and religion, the paper highlights the scope of anthropological reading of television broadcasts in India by illustrating it through the case study of the broadcast and reception of Indian Idol, a popular reality show on television in India in 2007. The paper is divided into three sections. Section one discusses the major strands of inquiries in the field of television and religion studies and focuses on what is termed

here as the 'mainstream' approach. It also highlights the state of scholarly contributions in India within each strand. Section two examines the anthropological approach and includes the study of the reality show Indian Idol. Section three provides the concluding remarks.

1. Major strands in television and religion studies

A bibliographical review of literature in the field shows that scholarly studies around television and religion can be tentatively classified into two broad categories: the mainstream approach and the anthropological approach. Within the mainstream approach, at least three major strands can be identified as shown in Fig. 1. The anthropological approach, on the other hand, is a result of the growing realization that far from the withering of religion in contemporary 'post secular' society (Woodhead, 2009), there is a rather forceful re-emergence of religion in everyday life of individuals, and that this is facilitated by the increasing 'mediatization' of religion (ibid; Hjavard, 2009) brought about by media technologies.

Figure 1: Showing different strands in television and religion studies

Earliest studies in the field can be traced to what began to be popularly called 'televangelism' in North America since the early 1950s. The growth of televangelism in the United States, particularly after the withdrawal of networks giving free time to mainstream religious denominations resulted in radical changes in religious broadcasting in the United States (Biernatzki, 1995). This led to increasing interest among scholars who began to reflect primarily on the demography and size of audience of religious programmes and attributes of successful televangelists. Various empirical studies indicated that the audiences for such broadcasts represent only a 'rather small subculture', even within evangelicalism (Horsfield, 1984). Data generated in such studies were useful for policy making by the funding agencies of the study, which was mostly the religious organizations, even as they generated more confusions than clarity as in the case of nationwide surveys in the 1980s such as Annenberg - Gallup study. Stuart Hoover (1987) joined the debate by highlighting the contested meaning of 'significant' viewing and 'religious' programme. Reiterating Horsfield's (1984) conclusion that there is not much co-relation between religious television and non-attendance in church, Hoover argued that audience size of televangelism is quite small and it does not increase with accessibility to cable.

Technological strides in the field of satellite and cable television across the world over has enabled a typical American phenomenon as televangelism to spread to and consolidated its position in Europe, Africa, Australia, Latin America and Asia (Biernatzki, 1991). Concomitantly, the meaning of televangelism that was initially restricted to television's use in preaching Christianity had undergone change, and today, according to Armstrong (2010), it broadly includes "virtually any religionist with a message for a television viewer, no matter his or her religious background or the format of the programme" (p.424). In this sense, one cannot but agree with Stout (2012) that almost every religion has seen the growth of televangelism. In India, for example, there has been a considerable growth of religious programming on television in recent times and various avenues for such broad-

casting exists. These include Doordarshan - the state broadcaster, transnational religious channels, stand alone indigenous religious channels, and various religious programming on secular cable and satellite television channels (Thomas, 2008). However, with exceptions, they have hardly attracted scholarly reflection.

The growth of Christian fundamentalism on the media, particularly television has been an issue of interest among few scholars in recent times in India. Attending to the case of Christian fundamentalism in South India, a hitherto understudied area, Thomas (2015, 2010, 2008) discusses the role played by the rather large number of transnational and national Christian television channels in the expansion of narrow forms of Christian mission in India and illustrates the deeply textured relationship between Christian television channels, religious leaders, politicians and market. Highlighting the huge investment by global Christian Broadcasters in India and global export of Christian fundamentalism, Thomas argues that such trends that contribute to the rise in interfaith tension needs to be seen in the context of revival of Hindu nationalism in India, an argument earlier articulated by Almond et.al (2003). However, Thomas' approach essentially remains an instrumentalist study on the political economy of Christian fundamentalism and broadcasting in Chennai and it does not address the more central questions of negotiation over meaning or complexities of mediations or analysis of contents.

There are other studies on televangelism in India that focus on the changing religious environment in the country due to globalization. Examining the growth of both the Christian and the Hindu televangelism in India in an era of both globalization and 'glocalization', James (2010), in his work, argues that religious television programming in India has been a reactionary response to each other. Contrasting the global and indigenous Christian broadcasters in the country, he also posits that the former often preach anti Hindu sentiments while the latter cautiously refrains from this.

The ability of televangelism as an effective means of preaching has been a bone of contention particularly among scholars. This has led to a related but different strand of research in televangelism that Clark and Hoover (1997) termed as 'religious media criticism' or the 'critical approach'. Drawing from various sources, Stout (2012) and Clark and Hoover (1997) highlight the two opposing views on this: one that appreciates television's ability to bring religious experience and instruction in the home and sees it as a great opportunity to evangelize; and the other that see the medium as being too passive for viewers to engage in substantive religious experience. Ben Armstrong (1979), who saw the 'electric church' as a 'dramatic revolution' and a link between the twentieth century technology and Christ's commandments, for example, echoes the perspective of first school of thought.

Other scholars hold contrast opinions. They argue that the Gospel is devalued or at least cannot be communicated authentically through the television. Quentin J. Schultze (1989) sees non-denominational televangelists as promoting a negative kind of 'protestantization', an anti denominationalism which spreads an attitude of disrespect for all religious institutions. He levels charges against electronic church by saying that it encourages faith in technology rather than faith in God, devalues the 'authenticity of the message' and politicizes religion. Works in this particular tradition needs to be seen in the light of broader

mass media criticism reflected in the writings of many scholars (Boorstin, 1972; Ewen, 1976; MacDonald, 1962; Postman, 1985, among others; as cited in Clark and Hoover, 1997) and the discourses on use of images that 'lie', 'cheat', 'steal' and distort the truth (Morgan, 2008, p.96) For religions wherein images - both consecrated as well as not consecrated - command great reverence as in large part of Indian society, this opens up a vibrant field for inquiry. In this context, Heinz Scheifinger's (2008) argument that because darshan of the divine is implicit in Hinduism, there is a natural fit between the religion and cyberspace better suits the audio visual medium as television.

While scholars have credited mythological films for transforming little known Hindu deities to pan Indian ones (Das, 1981), and acknowledged print technology for making cheap gods posters easily available thereby democratizing not only religion but also conventional religious practices in India (Smith, 1997), critiques on television as a medium for religious 'protestantisation' has remained largely unexplored. A rare study that fits in the context is by Thomas and Mitchell (2005) who argue in their study among conservative Marthoma Christian families in Kerala that television and religion are almost mutually exclusive categories with none influencing the other much, though there were evidences of daily schedule in the family including the prayer timing being heavily influenced by television.

The third significant trend in television and religion within the mainstream approach has been in the examination of the presence of religion in the news. Early 1990s proved to be a turning point in this area in the United States. Citing the major works in the area (Dart & Allen, 1993; Hoover, et.al., 1995), Clark & Hoover (1997) point out that scholars have attended to the contents of the coverage, the audiences and the institutions that produce the content. An important finding has been that the non coverage of religious stories by the media was due to the ignorance of journalists rather than media elites being less religious and did not engage in controversies (Dart & Allen, 1993, as cited in Clark & Hoover, 1997). Despite the strand of research being very instructive in that it poses interesting questions, it is restricted in its scope as it looks at religion as another type of news that competes with other categories like sports, politics, economics, business, etc. (ibid), even as it turns into a marginalized field of interest. It is significant to note that despite coverage of stories on and around religion and religious controversies in everyday news and news channels on Indian television, there are hardly any scholarly inquiries in this sub-field.

2. Anthropological reading of television

The anthropological turn in television and religion studies is a result of creative application of the idea of ritual and myths in media studies. The forceful resurgence of religion and consequent renewed understanding of the term in contemporary 'postsecular' society emphasizing its function (i.e., what it does) rather than its substance (i.e., what it is) further contributed to this. Scholars attribute much of this to technological strides in the field of communication (Woodhead, 2009; Winston, 2009; Posami, 2005; Warner, 1992, as cited in Hoover and Park, 2005, among others) and stress the centrality of 'meaning making' in this. Such an approach forges the blurring of the sacred and the profane and looks for 'religious' even in popular culture. As Christopher Partridge (2009) observes:

... a social or cultural phenomenon can be identified as 'religious' if it fulfils certain functions normally ascribed to religion, such as the provision of purpose in life, hope in the shadow of death, and meaning in the face of suffering and injustice. Religion then is not unique in providing strategies to overcome fear, despair and hopelessness. (My emphasis) (pp. 500-01)

Drawing from anthropology, Daniel Stout (2012), characterizes 'cultural religion' as one that exhibits the numinous that captures a full experience both inside and outside denominations. Stout cites varied experiences like Elvis Fandom, Oprah Winfrey phenomenon, Deadheads and Parrotheads, Star Trek fans, sports fans, the Rothko Chapel Community to demonstrate his argument. These phenomenon, argues Stout (ibid), exhibit all the four essential elements of religiosity: community, belief, deep feeling and ritual and thus they cannot be considered anything less than what we otherwise normally understand by religion though they need not necessarily involve the supernatural. Modern day electronic media play a critical role in such numinous experience. I now illustrate this from my study of the broadcast and the reception of Indian Idol in 2007 in Gangtok, capital town of Sikkim state in India.

Idolising the Indian Idol

The third season of Indian Idol in 2007 witnessed two finalists from two peripheral regions of India competing against each other: Prashant Tamang, an Indian Nepali from Darjeeling in West Bengal defeated Amit Paul, a Bengali from Shillong, Meghalaya. The broadcast of the reality music contest on Sony Entertainment Television in 2007 was not only viewed widely by audiences in Sikkim state in India but they also actively rallied around Tamang, contributing immensely to the transformation of an 'unknown' man from the region to the Indian Idol. A comparison of figures 2, 3, and 4 reflects this.

Fig2: An early news story on June 1 reporting of an unknown contestant in Indian Idol and of appeals in Sikkim to support him (Courtesy: Himalayan Mirror)

Fig 3: Story on June 18 calling Tamang as 'Pride of Hills'

Fig 4: A Sep. 27 story calling Tamang the
(Courtesy: Himalayan Mirror)

'People's Idol' (Courtesy: Himalayan Mirror)

In his anthropological analysis of different forms of religious broadcast, Gunter Thomas (2005) offers a broad framework categorizing different religious forms into four levels, but focusing largely on the television contents. Highlighting specific examples from the Idol, Table 1 shows a modified version of the framework by also including what La Pastina (2005), in his media engagement approach, calls 'interpretations' and 'appropriations' of the televisual text by the audiences; relevant contents of the local media as well as audience responses provide a vital clue to this.

Table 1: Religious Forms in Television Broadcast of Indian Idol-3

Focus of Analysis	Examples from the Idol broadcast/s
Level 1 Explicit recognized religions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location shot of the anchor with religious sites in the background and relevant narration by her • The camera following a contestant visiting a temple and offering prayers in her home town, with accompanying voiceover highlighting it. • Public and private prayers for Tamang
Level 2 Religious motifs, symbols, roles, stories and themes in non-fictional broadcast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dream of becoming the Idol • Myth of 'Mumbai', rural innocence, good mother, • Values and moral dilemmas: Conflict between justice and injustice to Prashant Tamang • Humbleness and camaraderie of the contestants in the face of competition
Level 3 Adaptations and transformation of religious rituals in TV broadcasts beyond the reception of motifs, symbols, and themes and that celebrate events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A media event enthralling large audiences • Archetypes of Tamang as savior figure/hero and community as victim • A must-see broadcast • Priestly role of hosts and judges • Partisan role of local journalists • Public celebration/observation of shared values • Rites of passage: condensed performance of life
Level 4 Religious cultural forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of 'transcendence', beyond the everyday experience • Providing ontological security

While detailed analysis of each example at various levels stated in the table is possible, for want of space in this paper, I will attempt to provide a general summary. An anthropological reading of the Idol showed how a reality music contest could be considered a

religion in that it displayed the presence of community, deep feeling, belief and ritual, implicit in Stout's (2011) idea of 'numinous'. Intense emotion constructed around the issue of identity and belonging ignited by the Idol was associated with the dream of seeing a fellow Nepali become the Idol of India and this, it was believed, would be an apt response to what Middleton (2013) called 'concerned anxiety' of the community and the their alleged stereotyping by the nation that hitherto did not acknowledge its identity and often ridiculed it. Such televised events thus draw our attention to what Shills (1975) calls 'sacred centres' of the society, that deals with fundamental values, beliefs and meanings of life that bind individuals together. These centres are often articulated and magnified by the media as was demonstrated by SET's in its (in)famous July 19 episode and the corresponding reaction generated among the audiences in Sikkim reflected strongly in local media (see Fig.5)

Figure 5: Tamang made to enacting Pran's role of bahadur in the 1974 Hindi film *Kasauti* occupying prominent space in local media in the region (Courtesy: Himalayan Mirror)

It is interesting to note that the mythic archetypes of both 'victim' and 'hero' (Lule, 2005) were invoked as the Idol contestant was imagined to rescue the community from the 'historical injustice' it was subjected to. So was the myth of 'good mother' (ibid) and 'mother goddess' employed as individuals and collectives composed video music in praise of Tamang's mother for having given birth to a charismatic son as a part of campaign to garner wider support for the contestant. The role of the local media and journalists need special mention: shedding their professional objectivity and turning into 'fans' of Tamang, at least for the timing, they in fact prime moved the campaign, and this came out forcefully during my in-depth interviews with them (also see Figure 6)

Figure 6: Enthralled fans at Titanic Park (M.G.Marg) getting ready to watch Tamang on the giant television screen performing in one of the semi-final shows on 15.9.2007. Note the last line of the original caption by the newspaper that states that the journalist "refused to run between the venue and the office and miss the show." (Courtesy: Now)

Such surrendering of the journalists to ceremonial occasions has been examined by Dayan and Katz (1992), in their pioneering work on media events and this reflects on the 'sacred' aspect of the Idol show. The collective responsibility the local journalist played to unite the community during the occasion can be compared to the role priests play in traditional religion.

The televised event of the reality show in Gangtok had accomplished in bringing individuals into a 'community' in the same way sporting events like the Olympics achieve (Rothenbuhler, 1989). Just as Olympics promoted pride in one's country through the enactment of mass rituals, in the Idol too, rituals in the televised event promoted core values: victory of simplicity, humbleness and rural innocence, harmony in competitions.

And in all these, attention was drawn towards the 'sacred centre', the faith in one's own community leading to a feeling of ontological security. The integrative function of rituals was emphasized again and again.

The ritual structure of the idol broadcast can also be brought to the fore when examined in the light of what anthropologists Arnond van Gennep (1960/1909) calls the rites de passage. Such an analysis is apt as Tamang finally took 'birth' as the Indian Idol as a result of transition from pre-liminal through liminal phases and finally was integrated back into the society in the post luminal phase. Further, the entire Idol format revolved around the elements of community spirit and integration. These ideals, otherwise are often at risk in contemporary everyday life, but were preserved well by the religious logic at work in and during the televised event of the reality show.

The rupturing of Durkheimian argument of strict separation of the sacred and the profane in the contemporary era can also be brought to the fore. Music icons often command great reverence from fans and DiBernardo (2008) qualifies these as music-religious movement. Thus, like the fan following of the Deadheads and its sects (ibid), or that of Michel Jackson (Stout, 2012) or of the Beatles in the 1960s (Cleave, 1966), fans of Prashant Tamang in the Idol demonstrated their adoration for him as they actively participated in the making of the Idol. It must be noted further that the idolised status that Tamang enjoyed was short lived drawing us to the key question of whether he could be considered as a hero or simply celebrity. Billings, et.al. (2012) refer to a distinction between the two: while heroes transcend the ordinary human qualities embodying the divine and face the tests and trials of strength and character commanding public admiration by being authentic, celebrities are manufactured by the media for the purpose of spectacle. Reflecting on the period after the Idol was over till date, during which Tamang had transposed himself to the oblivion, it is not difficult to qualify Tamang as a celebrity rather than a hero.

3. Conclusion

Even as the study of television and religion is evolving, the review of literature indicates that a considerable amount of theorization and studies are today available that merit attention. However, as the paper shows, theoretical exposition far exceeds empirical works. It is apparent from the review that within the three strands of traditional research in television and religion, televangelism dominated the interest of both the academic and evangelical scholars for most of the time. Media scholars have also contributed to our understanding of television news and religion. Critiques around televangelism have found reasonable space in scholarly literature. In all these, literature from India is beginning to emerge, even as it is still within the domain of televangelism, though works in this sub field are also few and far between. Given that the overall field of television and religion in India is yet a largely unexplored area, there is a tremendous scope for scholarly attention in the field.

The steady growth of and access to religious channels across all religions, coverage of religion in news and other programmes by news channels in India, mythological serials, infusion of religious themes in shows in GECs cutting across regions/language provide an

ample scope for scholars to inquire into the interface of religion and television in India within what this paper terms as 'mainstream' research strand in the area. The emerging field of media anthropology has offered a further profitable site for inquiry in the field of television and religion by bringing within its ambit phenomenon that otherwise lie beyond the realm of institutional religion. Engagement with such an approach, as illustrated through the case of Idol in the paper, requires that our understanding of both television and religion in the processes move beyond commonsense knowledge, as well as beyond the accepted common sense within their respective fields. This will only further our in-depth understanding of the relationship between television and religion in India.

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An Analysis Of Current Trends In Research On Effects of Television Viewing on Children

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John Seymour, the leader of the anti-consumersist movement once proudly declared "We don't have television. It stops you from doing anything useful - you watch other people live instead of living yourself." Similarly critical was Nicholas Johnson when he sarcastically remarked "Everything in television is educative. The question here is what is being taught?"

These comments assumes signifance when we focus on the issue of what impact television viewing has on various aspects of a child's life. In today's mediated world, television is all pervasive and the younger generation spends a lot of time with this media. In India, children between the age of 3-10 years spent an average of 8.5 hours per week viewing television. Thus, learning and understanding how television affects our children's lives can be empowering.

Sudies Galore- Different Conclusions

Deep Fissures and ongoing debate characterise the discourse regarding the relationship between children and television. Much of the research in this genre however is conducted outside the realm of television and communication studies. Social scientists, politicians, teachers, pshychologist, parents and media houses all have some opinion on the issue. In recent times, with the evolution of new technology newer applications have reached the children. Satellite, cable, and digital channels, computer games, internet and video. This has further aggravated the concern resulting in renewed focus on the issue.

Theoretical Perspectives

To understand the impact and influence of mass media on the audience three relevant theoretical perspectives have been considered by researchers to build the assumptions George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory suggests that repeated exposure of the audience in mass media to situations which are different from 'reality' leads to perceptions among the viewers that the mediated reality is normal. Thus, Gerbner (1970, 1977) and Gerbner et al (1980) theorised that such exposure for a considerable period grants legitimacy to the mediated reality which influences audience behaviour to a considerable extent. Gerbner's work presents a social psychology theory of communication effect and consequently on persuasion as related to mass media. Gerbner consciously selects the term 'cultivation'

instead of 'long term effects' while propounding his theory to emphasise on the constant nurturing, exposure and consistent incorporation the viewer experiences through mass media channels. Thus, this theory is often used by researchers to study the effects long hours of television viewing has on children.

Everett M. Rogers's (1995) Diffusions of Innovation Theory emphasised on the role social factors play in making mass media effective for the audience. Rogers identified four steps in the process - Invention, Diffusion (or Communication) via the social system, time and consequences. An innovation which is "an idea, practice or object perceived to be new for adoption" is "communicated through channels over a period of time." Opinion leaders influence the target audience with the help of additional intermediaries called 'change agents' and 'gatekeepers' for the adoption of the innovation. This theory assumes significance specially for children as parents and teachers play a significant role in explaining messages percolated via television on numerous ongoing innovations presented through programming and advertisements to which children are exposed.

A subtle change in emphasis is noticed in between two theories as we see the march of the powerful media which directly effects the audience and shapes and alters perceptions as theorised by Gerbner is jolted by interlocutors in the form of opinion leaders, change agents and gatekeepers to gain importance in the system by providing meaning and interpreting to the audience, the messages being directed through the mass media.

In stark contrast, Elihu Katz (1959) put forth the Uses and Gratifications Theory where the focus shifted to "What people do with the media" from "What media do to people". Instead of assuming the audience to be naïve and gullible and a homogenous lot Katz portrayed them as intelligent individuals who use the media and responds to the media messages in order to satisfy personal needs and priorities. The choice and preference for mass media content being made here is largely determined by their social and psychological make up (Katz et al 1974 a). With the wide variety of choice now available to the audience this premise as presented by Katz is considered to be relevant while investigating the relationship between the audience specially children and the different channels of mass media (LaRose et al 2001).

Children and Television: Areas of Concern

Much of this debate is centered around how 'children' have been defined in western societies. Here a child is an individual who is in that stage of life where he is physically and emotionally dependent and immature. It is presumed that a child is unable to take logical and reasonable decisions without adult assistance on social, political, economic, intellectual and sexual issues. Childhood is considered to be an important phase of life where the socialization process continues. Proper education, sports and other physical outdoor activities are considered essential for the child to grow and become an healthy, mature citizen. Therefore, it is considered essential to segregate a child from the social life of an adult and keep him within a protective environment. Many critics consider the television medium to be an arm, some sort of an extension of the adult environment making an untimely intrusion in a child's social life. And herein the debate starts.

Much of the research conducted in this genre have thus been based on this premise and outlook. A brief summary of the research agenda on 'Children and Television' may be stated as follows:

Attitude of children towards improper subjects including violence, explicit sexual content and abusive language

Responsibility (parents towards children and television administration towards children)

Ethics and Morality (judging content of television programme)

Education (what children learn from television)

Commercialisation (whether children becoming prey to market forces via television content and advertisement) and finally

Health (how television viewing affects a child's mental and physical health)

Two research projects are being presented in this paper today to highlight the views that are emerging from the wide array of conclusions derived from introspection.

The first study was conducted in the Journalism and Mass Communication department of Rabindra Bharati University entitled 'An Analysis of Changing Trends of Cartoon Shows Telecast in Cartoon Network Channel from late 1990s to the present day' (Chanda & Mukherjee, 2017). Cartoon Network is one of the major cartoon channels which began airing from 1st May 1995. To understand whether there is any change in the content, treatment and presentation of programmes telecast in the channel, a comparative analysis was made between shows telecast since 1990s and those introduced post 2000. Tom and Jerry Kids and Popeye the Sailor Man was contrasted with Pokemon and Beyblade.

The research methodology included the following:

1. The sampled children were stratified into two age groups who were told to watch certain Cartoon Network programmes. Responses were gathered from the sample via a questionnaire and the data analysed.
2. Different genre of cartoon shows were selected such as 'violent, cheerful, soft core etc' and mothers were asked to show the selected programmes to the children aged between 3-6 years. Then the mothers were asked about the kind of tastes, preferences and behaviour pattern they observe in their children.
3. The research team closely watched the sampled cartoon shows to analyse the storyline, dialogue and postures.
4. Expert interviews were taken from two psychologists on the responses generated to understand the effects of such programmes on child psychology.
5. Group discussions were also conducted with the elder children who were part of the study.

The result of the research showed that with time the content of Cartoon Network shows have evolved from having a simple story line with a moral and a message meant for healthy entertainment of the child to a complex web where the characters display violence and aggression with overt sexualities and relationship issues. Watching such programmes is a two-edged sword for children. Cartoons often positively instruct a youngster to remain calm, comply with his peers, talk in an obliging way and develop aptitudes. A cartoon character such as a saint can be a role model for growing kids. Unadulterated substance of good deeds and messages can effectively mould a child's mind.

On the other hand, cartoon shows have many undesirable effects specially on children of pre-teenage group. An overdose of sexuality, both subtle and prominent is part of the content. Being witness to violence and savagery scenes on television can make a child respond viciously in his everyday life to his immediate surroundings including family and peer group.

In this connection, it will be worthwhile to mention the study conducted by Sir Padampat Mother and Child Health Institute (Jaipur, Rajasthan). The aim of this research was to understand the effects of television viewing on child's eating habits, general physical health, physical activity, interest in study and school performance and general cognitive ability. 250 children of 3-10 years of age group were studied for a period of nine months. In this study, average duration of television exposure was 8.5 hours per week. The research demonstrated that television viewing had a significant impact on childhood obesity, eating habits, physical activity and sleep pattern. Methodological limitations often make it difficult to draw firm conclusions about a casual relationship between television viewing and children's behaviour but the implications of the data generated was significant opined pediatricians and other health professionals who were part of the project.

Potential of Educational Television for Children: A Missed Opportunity

Television, specially educational television have been found to be extremely useful in performing a motivational function besides providing discovery learning and cognitive developments of its viewers, thus having immense pedagogic implications. Television, film and computer games are playing a major role in educating young children and there is significant potential to capitalise on their ability to enhance development and learning. Research by the Australian Institute of Family Studies show that media literacy functional skills are acquired early by most children and without much formal instruction. Children under the age of six have demonstrated good media skills:

74% can turn on TV

57% can use the remote

46% can put on video

Such a resource can be capitalised where TV can be used as a useful teaching aid for school going kids. Although in India, there has been extensive use of television for education purpose under the Open Distance Learning (ODL) system, such as, Gyan Vani and UGC Country Wide Classroom, its potential has not been used in the school curricula development. Television has the potential to build on "content of what children view to enhance child development and learning in the areas of physical growth and health, language and communicative competence, self understanding and interpersonal skills, cognitive skills and general knowledge (Don and Patricia Edger, 2008).

Conclusion

About the time a child comes of age to go to school, parents start getting concerned about their child's television viewing. In most families, watching television is an important daily activity for the children. A television set is easy to turn on, it serves as a relief from boredom and most importantly it is watched by the entire family. Although television may be educational and informative it is entirely a passive experience. It provides no opportunity for a child to interact with others. The portrayal of super heroes also tends to confuse a child as to distinguishing fact from fantasy. Presentation of riots and other war activities convey the message that violence is, indeed, a common way of life across the globe. The constant portrayal of violence may affect the child in many other ways: it can be a very frightening experience for him and make it difficult for him to control his own aggressive impulses.

However in the ideal circumstances, children's television programmes may contribute significantly towards helping children to acquire an appropriate set of values and standards of behaviour. Upto the age of 13 or 14, the child's personality, his code of ethics and values - all these are still relatively unformed, and are open to various of influences of his environment. Television - having the unique advantage of being able to reach a vast number of people at one time - can help tremendously in fostering the development of desirable values and habits among our children. Research has shown that television programmes also contribute significantly to the child's physical and mental health, intellectual growth, social and emotional development.

What steps then should be taken by parents to protect their children from unwanted influences of television? Parents should watch television with the child. Presence of parents inhibits the watching of certain programmes. Besides, parents can switch channels if the programme gets unsuitable for children. The contents of the programme may be discussed with the children afterwards which help them to draw right conclusions. Parents should restrict television viewing of children to an hour or two each day. Children should be encouraged to select informational and educative programmes.

To be forewarned is forearmed. Parents should be knowledgeable about the effects of television and children, including violent/aggressive behaviour, poor body concepts and self image, early sexual activity and abuse of substances (alcohol and drugs). Children

must be encouraged to read, actively participate in sports, hobbies, volunteer activities and other pastimes. Parents may serve as good role models for their children by not watching too much television themselves.

Parents should write to television channels, producers and directors about unsuitable content in shows or in specific episodes. And also to administrators to prohibit unsuitable programmes and advertisements.

Laying down laws about television viewing may lead to confrontation in the family. A calm explanation about why certain programmes are off limits will have better results, and children will in a while get used to family values.

But the best solution is to give our children so many other alternatives that television automatically gets neglected. We can take them to library, museums, parks, zoos, social activities where much can be learned. This requires a massive outlay of time and effort from the parents, of course, but aren't our children worth it.

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Television and women - Problem faced by today`s Indian Television.

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Introduction

Television being audio visual medium, is one of the most powerful and popular medium of mass communication and an inseparable part of every household. Television came to India as a medium of mass communication to mainly spread information and education among common mass. Though it still is one of the main provider of information and knowledge still its boom lies in the fact that it became a successful entertainment industry in itself. With time television industry has flourished and became a stiff competitor to film industry. Unlike film industry, television industry is dominated by female leads, and their most loyal audiences are female .But the irony lies in the fact that though the audiences and target audiences of Indian television are largely the female section of the society, still the female characters are always shown in poor stereotyped manner, though the story line are women centric still they are portrayed in regressive manner.

Commercial daily soaps telecasting started in India as early as 80`s, with "Humlog" and "Buniyaad", and since then Indian television industry has come a long way. With time our society changed - so changed our lifestyle, culture, but television industry became regressive in presenting its female characters than being progressive. Not only in daily soaps but also in television commercials, music channels women are always projected as an object of lust or mere demure figure.. Beauty without brains. She is always supposed to sacrifice and compromise to become an ideal daughter and wife and daughter in law and a good woman. Building a career is never an option for her. She is always supposed to depend upon her husband and family for each and every some big thing in her life.

Aim and objective and Method to be followed:

This research paper will focus on growth of television as an entertainment industry in itself and constant changing face of its contents. Television being an audio visual medium of communication is one of the most popular and best reached medium among common mass. The main point of this research paper is finding out the rise and growth of Indian television industry as a female dominated one- the role played by women in this industry - the fact that the main audience and Target of this industry being female, why they are shown in poor light and taste. This research paper will disseminate the psychology of the audiences and the reason behind popularity of regressive television shows and also the producers of such shows. And finally this paper will analysis and try to conclude on how a better and healthy environment can be created and a right dimension be given to the contents of these shows for a better and dignified entertainment package and better communication process. This paper is an attempt to study the nature and effect of these shows, the Nature of viewership and future of these shows.

Problems faced by today's Television industry:

One of the main problem faced by television today is lack of creativity and freshness in the serials and shows that are telecasted. Another challenge faced by Indian Television industry today is that even if new serials with news ideas are launched, they are not popularly accepted by the mass audience. The TRP rates of these serials are much lesser comparing to the TRPs of the common popular serials. It is true that we are provided what we want to see in the world of entertainment industries. Here comes the question of taste and preference of common viewers, which mostly comprises of the female session. Irony is that the serials with regressive attitude are liked and popularly demanded by women themselves. Rarely in popular serials with high TRPs have their leading lady as a working woman. Very few such serials shows the leading ladies walking out of an abusive marriage. Society has changed, nowadays nearly each and every family consist of working women, still in the serials of national level television channels have few leading female characters aspiring to build and have a successful career. Such serials have a tremendous bad effects on the young minds and society as a whole, where continuously women are projected as an object to be dominated. Being an audio visual media, which is very easily available to all, television is very influential in nature. In this scenario instead of using the television serials power for overall social development, television serials are just doing the revise, glorifying abuse on women, propaganda superstition, objectifying women and many other such negative things. Television is miserably failing as an infotainment media, its purpose being information, education and entertainment, and not solely cheap entertainment.

The issue that arises here is: What kind of images do these serials portray to the next generation? Are women the only ones who have the strength to keep a family together? Do men have no role to play at home? Is the docile nature of a woman her only acceptable trait? What about the larger reality that we face today, a world in which a woman is given an equal status in society? Are working women "bad"?

Despite several debates and discussions taking place, nearly every month new serials are cropping up, generally based on the same topic, as it seems like the viewers enjoy the juicy family drama based on betrayal, deceit and an ultimate reconciliation.

The target audience of Indian serials are basically housewives and elderly women who spend their afternoons in front of the television, thus most of these melodramatic serials focus on the lives and personalities of these stereotypical women. Marriage, being an issue of utmost importance and seen as a necessity in the traditional Indian household, is usually the focal point of most of these shows. The marriage usually focuses on the family, instead of the two individuals involved.

Study of contents of Indian television decade wise:

The changing phase of television can be best dissected if studied decade wise:-

80's - It show the advent of 1st ever Indian tele soap "Humlog". Serials in this decade reflected the working class society of the time and were very close to reality like "Buniyaad". No extravagant in content and projection was there. Television was totally under the control of Indian Government at that time. Sports like Asian games, news and rural based information programs were given more priority. Regional Television started in the same decade.

90's- It show the growth of Indian Television. Serials like "Tara", "Udaan", showed women empowerment. Since this time onwards television industry became female dominated one- te lead characters all being women and the contents of the serials being women centric and progressive in nature. Lead women characters were interested in building their character and were not depended on any male figure. The producers of such shows became conscious of the

fact that the audience and target audience of these shows were mainly female. Television no longer remained a luxury good rather became a middle class household necessity. Competitors of DD came into the market in form of private satellite channels. Besides daily soaps, weekend film shows, music videos and other non-fiction programmes were gaining popularity. Government tried to control these growing private channels through the Cable TV Act.

2000- 2010-In the new millennium Television successfully established itself as a full time entertainment industry in itself giving stiff competition to film industry, television industry flourished like never before. But it also very fast moved away from being an informative media towards an entertainment media. Today it is often known as an infotainment media. Satellite channels flooded the industry with new shows and new concepts. Separate channels were introduced for separate programs like music channels, film channels, daily soap channels, news channels, sports channels, fashion and lifestyle channels etc. The contents of the soaps also changed drastically. More lavish sets, costumes, larger than life characters, superstition were introduced. Cross cultured presentation started. One of the vital aspects of these soaps were that unlike film industry here the protagonist are always female though they were often projected in a negative and regressive manner are were type casted and humiliating in nature. Indian families and customs were also often shown in poor light. Steady degradation started in the contents of the daily soaps. The female characters started getting portrayed in serotyped manner - either they are always ever scarifying "ideal" and "good" "bahu" or daughter , never raising their voice against anything, becoming demure housewife being their only goal in life or the ever plotting ad evil minded anti lead. The lead female character is ever forgiving ,superstitious, sacrificing everything for family , obedient and is always found inside the kitchen or cleaning the house or praying , sari clad like "Tulsi" of "Kyukisaasbhikaabhibahuthi" , "Parvati" of "Kahaanighargharki", etc. A girl was never shown interested in building career and becoming self-sufficient or going against the wish of the family even if they were wrong. They are always soft spoken, even never raising their voice against domestic violence. Most of the male characters always had more than one wife that too was justified most of the time. The popularity of such shows showed the hypocrisy of our society. It is interesting to observe how these 'values' are steeped in patriarchal settings. The female leads religiously adorn the symbols of marriage- bindi, sari, chudi, mangal-sootra and sindoor. A good woman, according to Indian serials, is an ideal homemaker. Her world revolves around her family and her home. Her family's/husband's opinion becomes her opinion. A perfect example of this stereotypical bahu is 'Gopi' from "Saath Nibhaana Saathiya". She is a devoted wife and bahu because she is shy, pious, illiterate, sweet and only wear saris. Her 'saasumaa', Kokila, finds in her a perfect match for her son Ahem, another mumma's boy from our daily soaps. However, if a woman is ambitious and stands equal to a man, she is portrayed in a bad light. In contrast to the introverted, conservative and sari/suit wearing bahu, this woman is portrayed wearing western dresses, is outspoken and confident. She is the so called 'vamp' of the serial. Again, according to our daily soaps, a good docile woman is the one who always love and respect her husband, no matter what he does to her or how he treats her.

The irony was that one of the most leading producer of these shows was a lady - Ekta Kapoor. This decade show the rise of Ekta Kapoor and her "k" serials. In the non-fiction sector also a huge change occurred in respect of presentation and formation of such shows like crime based or youth oriented shows. Foreign channels like HBO, Star World, etc also started broadcast-

ing and attracted the youth. A huge change occurred in the news channels also. To attract more viewers and survive in the competitive markets certain things like- panel discussion, on the spot reporting -and such other things were introduced to give all an all-new look and dimension and colour to the information and education programs also. Fictionalised nonfiction programs like CID, Crime Petrol, etc also started in this decade for the purpose of spreading of awareness among common mass. Today, satellite channels are part and parcel of every house hold.

2011-till date- In the last few years some rapid changing are occurring in the shows and daily soaps to keep up with the time and young generation. HD TV channels and smart TVs have invaded the household of even the middle class. More channels and more option to choose one's favourite channel have given a new dimension to the whole viewership. But nothing much changed in the contents of the serial as such. Even if few serials show the female leads to be ambitious still she has to prove herself to be a good daughter, wife, efficient daughter in law, mother first, keeping her career aside, like "Sandhyay" in "Diya aur bati hum". Another new trend came of turning the serial's track into supernatural mood to gain cheap popularity like "Sasural SimarKa", "Qubool hai". One of the serious issues is that people gets very easily influenced by these contents of the shows and adversely effected by them specially the young minds.

But recently few youth oriented shows try to maintain a balance in its contents and projects female and male leads in equal and proper lights, where even the girls are ambitious, not saree clad and demure and can raise their voice against social evils and domestic violence like "Sadda Haq". Serials with new concepts and different tracks are also coming like "Ladies Special", "Dil mil Gaya", "Dildosti dance", "Kaisiyeh Yaariya", few shows like "Mann ki Awaz Pratigya", "Girl in the city", among others. But popularity and TRPs of these serials are much less. Often some serials starts on good note to protest against some social evils but then gradually lose their Moto like "Balika Badhu", "Na anaissdesh mere ladoo", and few others. Channels like Zee Zindagi - where Pakistani and serials of some other countries are shown have more mature and relevant contents than their Indian counterpart like - "Dhoop Chaon", "Kankar", "Zindagi Gulsar Hai", "Humsafar", "Fatmagul", etc, where characters are made of "flesh and blood", and seem real in nature.

Another recent development is serials on internet digital streaming platform and the increase in popularity of Net viewership like for shows in "Netflix", "Amazon prime", among others, which are gaining rapid popularity.

After conducting a random sample survey among 100 women consisting of House wives, working women and teenager girls, it is found that 75% of the viewership of these popular serials consist of housewives followed by 15% of working women and 5% of teenager viewership. When asked why they prefer these serials? The answer was for entertainment purpose only. They relate the on screen characters with their off screen daily life. They are least interested about the negative effectives of these serials on the young generation and the society.

In contrast to this, majority of the teenager girls and working women prefer serials with new concepts and net series on Net channels like Netflix, Amazon prime and others.

Dr.Niti Chopra, Dean - Faculty of Journalism and Communication, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat says, "Most of the commercial serials and soaps on television in India today portray women in unrealistic, garish, and unworthy roles, with majority of them characterised within unimaginative storylines projecting stereotypical, Indian family settings. In contrast, even though the women shown in similar kinds of shows on television in the late eighties and nineties, (on Doordarshan, and a few years later on other channels), did have their share of suffering and pain owing to cultural subservience and gender discrimination, there was definitely an intrinsic dignity and naturalness in that struggle."

Conclusion

Television is a powerful audio visual medium having huge impact on mass, so the contents of the television serials should be done with care, so that they can have a positive effect on society. It is no exaggeration to say television is the most women-oriented medium in India today. But these daily serials are so regressive in nature and are having so much negative effect on society. Says Prof. Shagufa Kapadia, Director - Women's Studies Research Centre, M.S. University of Baroda, "The portrayals are an insult to women who are homemakers as their significant contribution to the household is completely disregarded or rather, regarded only with reference to their inclination to gain the favour of their in-laws. I strongly wish there would be more television shows that depict normal contemporary Indian women who are foregoing ahead to meet the challenges involved in breaking traditional cultural barriers and asserting their independent identity." "It's time to stop judging female characters and their nature based on their clothes and behaviour and face the real world outside. When female characters are consistently stereotyped as 'timid, obedient = good' and questioning = bad', it does add to the innate sexism and patriarchal notions already embedded in the mindset of the masses. KananDhru - Founder and Managing Director at Research Foundation for Governance in India, Ahmedabad opines that, "It is shocking how in a majority of these soaps working women are portrayed in negative light - how they are ambitious and independent, which is a curse for the family and for the society. There is hardly any popular daily soap where one can find characters that one can relate to - women who share the ambition, drive, strength or vulnerabilities but still preserving the spark of womanhood. As a working woman, I feel irritated and offended by these portrayals. It is surprising how there is a large audience for such programmes." "The producers of these shows should be aware of the fact that they have some responsibilities towards the society. Joint efforts from the producers as well as from the viewers and their progressive thinking can only change the trends of these serials for overall betterment. Why the woman is always expected to surrender and forget her self-esteem in order to win her man's love? There is a lot more to 'women's issues' than petty family squabbles, conspiring against other women, fighting with mother-in-laws and competing for love. There are many serious issues faced by women today, like molestation, domestic violence, power struggle, inequality and discrimination in work place and family. The real life of a woman is no less than an adventure where she juggles between her family and work, while also looking after herself. These are the important issues our serials need to focus on, rather than the saas-bahu relationship and undermining the real time problems faced by Indian women.

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WTT

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Session 2

New Horizon in the Post Modern Scenario
of Film Making

Chair : Sri Ashoke Viswanathan

Sri Ashok Viswanathan

Prof. Ashok Viswanathan, is a Bengali film maker and theatre personality. He is the Professor and Head of the Department of Producing For Film and TV at Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute. Prof. Viswanathan actualized with what the post modern era meant to him.

Post modernism is a phenomenon which is regarded as the cultural logic of late capitalism as Fredric Jameson, the Marxist Philosopher of America could see it after the cold war between the two polar powers- the Soviet Union and the United States. Since, the Soviet Union disintegrated, a new cultural logic emerged in the areas of economics, politics, architecture and art. The word post modernism first came into being in the field of architecture in the 1920s but the word today is not used in the same sense. Today the word is used to underline social phenomena, propensities, the esteems of people, trends in economics, politics and art. The first phenomenon of post modernism is that the world is simultaneously expanding and shrinking. It may sound paradoxical, oxymoronic but that's the fact. It is shrinking because of the internet, mobiles, social media. It is at the click of the button, anyone be in contact with the antibodies. By the word antibodies, it is meant to the people living on the other edge of the world. Therefore, the world is shrinking because of the facilities of modern technology. It is also expanding at the same time because of the absurd of different identity.

The three co-ordinates of the post modernism- the trajectory of capital has changed, earlier on Marxist Theory would have applied because during those time industry had raw material which was purchased by the investors, the workers employed would work on that and create a product. The wages of the laborers would have been paid off taking into account the cost of the raw material, their labour, making charges and the profit after sales but today the earning became simpler i.e. without any investment. Like in the stock exchange income can increase without any product being produced. Earlier there had been a blue collar job which was under paid but now the salary has increased. The education centre and teachers were the worst paid. The last one was the dismantling of Marxism or Communism. This was the universal phenomenon. Set back of the communists gave rise to late capitalism, which may not be a pleasing thing. Capitalism is not the answer but the question.

Lastly, the post modernism conveys that now people are deceived by a niagra of visual gabble on the internet, social media, cinema, television and advertising. Everywhere there is knowledge and visuals. The positive points for post modernism is that all are aware of the dialects, languages, much aware of the genders. Living in a patriarchal society, men are no more dominant, women are the ones ruling the society. Although in cinema, it is not expressed. Despite of all these changes that post modernism bought, the absurdity of capitalism is not a good thing after all as along with that fascism, fundamentalism, people being deceived by spirituality. Indian Cinema is still not able to reflect the changes of the society. Most of the Bengali cinema are subject to neo-realistic thought. On the whole today's cinema in India, in Bengal with the makers like Srijit Mukhopadhyaya, Kaushik Ganguly who contently being awarded at the national level or the film makers from South India like Jairaj, who could make on significant film like 'Santam'. No more the so called art cinemas have been able to adopt to the changing trends but on the other hand the commercial Indian Cinema have been

gradually come over with meaningful themes like the 'Vicky Donor'. The commercial cinemas are using cinematographers of great values, bringing more visuals and content.

The commercial cinemas are invincible to ideas. The difference between commercial cinema and art cinema is being gradually flying out. There no longer exist the great divide like the digital divide of haves and have-nots. He ended his discourse by saying that all are standing at the cross-road, it is required to remember to cross the road. Standing still will make all float like sticks. All must be aware of what is happening around the world. Holding a camera is like holding a gun, it can be used to kill anyone. Therefore, camera need to be used with responsibility and that is what the post modernism is telling everyone.

Influence of Post Modernism in Sergio Rubini's L'anima Gemella (Soul Mate) (2001) : An Enquiry

Dr. Pallav Mukhopadhyay,

Key Words :

Influence, Post Modernism, Sergio Rubini, Soul Mate.

Abstract :

In this paper, the researcher considers the film L'anima Gemella (Soul Mate) (2001) by the Actor-Director Sergio Rubini that provides viewers instances of post modernism. By taking into account the unique combination of irony and nostalgia, the researcher has tried to investigate how Rubini's endeavour expresses post modernism. The film upholds metamorphosis (physical and psychological), denotes modes of cultural integration and reintegration and has registered the signature of reinterpretations of the past. Post modernism proposes a visual approach that is spatial, multilayered and inclusive. It stresses on a contemporary way of looking at the past. In fact, Postmodernist film is a classification for works that articulate the themes and ideas of postmodernism through the medium of cinema. Postmodernist film attempts to subvert the mainstream conventions of narrative structure and characterization, and tests the audience's suspension of disbelief. Typically, such films also break down the cultural divide between high and low art and often upend typical portrayals of gender, race, class, genre, and time with the goal of creating something that does not abide by traditional narrative expression. Postmodernism emerged in a time not defined by war or revolution but rather by media culture. Unlike modernism, postmodernism does not have faith in master narratives of history or culture or even the self as an autonomous subject. Rather postmodernism is interested in contradiction, fragmentation, and instability. Postmodernist film is often separated from modernist cinema and traditional narrative film by three key characteristics. One of them is an extensive use of homage or pastiche, resulting from the fact that postmodern filmmakers are open to blending many disparate genres and tones within the same film. The second element is meta-reference or self-reflexivity, highlighting the construction and relation of the image to other images in media and not to any kind of external reality. Another technique used to achieve meta-reference is the use of intertextuality, in which the film's characters reference or discuss other works of fiction. A third common element is a bridging of the gap between highbrow and lowbrow activities and artistic styles.

Rubini presents a pastiche of genres, styles and techniques. Representing the land and sea levels the director has explained how landscape and individual history assimilate together. The director's filmic vision offers us a particular impression of Italy, in which

irony plays a critical role within the narrative embodied by the types of characters. In this film, change is portrayed through the physiognomic transformation of Teresa (who becomes Maddalena) and Maddalena (who becomes Teresa). Critics argue that here metamorphosis is used to express modes of cultural integration and reintegration. This narrative interrogates the relationship between a geographical present and the past and between reality and imagination. Rubini's authorial presence also brings a self-reflective element to the film narrative, allowing him to be perceived as internal and external to the film diegesis. The film upholds Rubini's frequently usage of theatricality, a characteristic feature of southern culture where the line between the private and the public appears as thin. Rubini emphasizes how an audience's perception of the performance (both cinematic and extra-cinematic) is more important than the performance itself. Rubini's southern, aesthetic choices also highlight the sense of space through his utilization of light and colour. He considers his film as a metaphorical voyage through light, from the sharp contrastive use of red, blue and white in 'Soul Mate'. Rubini's 'Soul Mate', however, relies mostly on realistic and anthropological aspects of the magical South, as opposed to expressionistic visual effects. Rubini's film faithfully portrays southern practices - survival tactics, romance and work - against a backdrop of economic hardship and his camera conveys the magical aspects of this culture. Rubini's approach in 'Soul Mate' integrates reality and superstition, yet these two modes of representation do not collide. Rather, they coexist in a culture that embraces both. This is magical realism. Rubini reveals his irony through grand camera movements and the contrasting extra-diegetic rock-and-roll music accompanying archaic images of southern landscapes and people. He demystifies the South showing the audience the supernatural while simultaneously distancing himself from the events on-screen. By combining the genres of comedy, film noir, melodrama and biopic and by portraying contemporary and archaic cultural practices with both irony and affection, Rubini's version of post modernism presents a heterogenous and all-embracing vision of Mediterranean culture and geography. He has constructed the virtues and vices of the society through the visual narrative. In fact, Rubini presents a path through a paradoxical, slow-moving South that might offer the audience all a way to appreciate the origin, integrate a spectrum of ideas, open the audience to other cultures and use the past to inform the future.

Introduction :

In this paper, the researcher will try to investigate how ironic post modernism influence Sergio Rubini's film *L'anima Gemella* (Soul Mate) (2001). The researcher argues that Sergio Rubini's film 'Soul Mate' set in Apulia transcends the sentimental realism or heritage cinema. By post modernism, the researcher has taken Linda Hutcheon's description 'of an ironic double vision that acknowledges the final impossibility of indulging in nostalgia, even as it consciously evokes nostalgia's affective power'(2002 : 189-207).¹ The researcher has identified the influence of post modernism in Rubini's 'Soul Mate'. Post modernism proposes a visual approach that is spatial, multilayered and inclusive. It stresses on a contemporary way of looking at the past.

In fact, Postmodernist film is a classification for works that articulate the themes and ideas of postmodernism through the medium of cinema. Postmodernist film attempts to

subvert the mainstream conventions of narrative structure and characterization, and tests the audience's suspension of disbelief.^{2,3,4} Typically, such films also break down the cultural divide between high and low art and often upend typical portrayals of gender, race, class, genre, and time with the goal of creating something that does not abide by traditional narrative expression.

Postmodernism is a complex paradigm of different philosophies and artistic styles. The movement emerged as a reaction to high modernism.⁵ Modernism is a paradigm of thought and viewing the world characterized in specific ways that postmodernism reacted against. Postmodernism attempts to subvert and resist and differ from the preoccupations of modernism across many fields (music, history, art, cinema, etc.). Postmodernism emerged in a time not defined by war or revolution but rather by media culture.⁶ Unlike modernism, postmodernism does not have faith in master narratives of history or culture or even the self as an autonomous subject.^{7,8,9} Rather postmodernism is interested in contradiction, fragmentation, and instability.¹⁰ Postmodernism is often focused on the destruction of hierarchies and boundaries. The mixing of different times and periods or styles of art that might be viewed as "high" or "low" is a common practice in postmodern work.^{11,12,13} This practice is referred to as pastiche.¹⁴ Postmodernism takes a deeply subjective view of the world and identity and art, positing that an endless process of signification and signs is where any "meaning" lies.^{15,16} Consequently, postmodernism demonstrates what it perceives as a fractured world, time, and art.

Postmodernist film is a reaction to the modernist works of its field, and to their tendencies. "To investigate the transparency of the image is modernist but to undermine its reference to reality is to engage with the aesthetics of postmodernism."^{17,18} Postmodernism is in many ways interested in the liminal space that would be typically ignored by more modernist or traditionally narrative offerings. The idea is that the meaning is often generated most productively through the spaces and transitions and collisions between words and moments and images. Henri Bergson writes in his book *Creative Evolution*, "The obscurity is cleared up, the contradiction vanishes, as soon as we place ourselves along the transition, in order to distinguish states in it by making cross cuts therein in thoughts. The reason is that there is more in the transition than the series of states, that is to say, the possible cuts--more in the movement than the series of position, that is to say, the possible stops."¹⁹ The thrust of this argument is that the spaces between the words or the cuts in a film create just as much meaning as the words or scenes themselves.

Postmodernist film is often separated from modernist cinema and traditional narrative film by three key characteristics. One of them is an extensive use of homage or pastiche,²⁰ resulting from the fact that postmodern filmmakers are open to blending many disparate genres and tones within the same film. The second element is meta-reference or self-reflexivity, highlighting the construction and relation of the image to other images in media and not to any kind of external reality.²¹ A self-referential film calls the viewer's attention - either through characters' knowledge of their own fictional nature, or through visuals - that the movie itself is only a movie. This is sometimes achieved by emphasizing the unnatural look of an image which seems contrived. Another technique used to achieve meta-reference is the use of intertextuality, in which the film's characters reference or

discuss other works of fiction. Additionally, many postmodern films tell stories that unfold out of chronological order, deconstructing or fragmenting time so as to, once again, highlight the fact that what is appearing on screen is constructed. A third common element is a bridging of the gap between highbrow and lowbrow activities and artistic styles.^{22,23,24}

The use of homage and pastiche can, in and of itself, result in a fusion of high and low. For this reason, homage is sometimes accompanied by characters' value judgments as to the worth and cultural value of the works being parodied, ensuring the viewer understands whether the thing being referenced is considered highbrow or lowbrow.

Lastly, contradictions of all sorts - whether it be in visual technique, characters' morals, or other things - are crucial to postmodernism, and the two are in many cases irreconcilable. Any theory of postmodern film would have to be comfortable with paradoxes or contradictions of ideas and their articulation.^{25,26}

The Narrative :

In a small village of Puglia lives Teresa, a spoiled, presumptuous, arrogant and frustrated daughter of a wealthy fish merchant who is getting married to Tonino, his father's employee. In fact, Tonino loves Maddalena, a sweet girl whom Teresa envied everything: the beloved, the beauty, the happiness, the simplicity. Teresa's envy is so strong to claim Maddalena's presence at her wedding, a function that, however, ends tragically with the no at Tonino's altar, which runs away with Maddalena. The two young men find shelter in a Lecce beach to wait for the wretchedness to calm, but Teresa has been offended in their pride and seeks all the means to avenge. Try all the means, lawful and illicit, until your aunt is brought to you by a woman in the country who can do small spells to good. The woman, the mother of the barber Angeloantonio, refuses to act because she believes that with magic can not console Teresa, but let her escape that she might do something great: to make her become like Maddalena, with the same body, the same face, but surely not with the same sweetness. Teresa promises everything to get the bill, coming to claim and threaten, but the woman refuses. The child's ingenuity, on the other hand, claims that the magic is made to collect the money and agree with Teresa, kidnaps Maddalena and meets Teresa in an abandoned quarry. Here starts the ritual that apparently seems to have failed, but then it happens and Teresa finds himself at home in a body similar to Maddalena. Teresa repays the barber but asks him to keep Maddalena seized and kill her, and then goes to Tonino, who is worried about waiting for her beloved. The two live a strong passion but Tonino begins to perceive that Maddalena (in reality Teresa) has changed. Meanwhile, Angeloantonio did not kill the true Maddalena, indeed, the mother who works the same ritual intervenes to give Maddalena the body of Teresa so that it can intervene to calm the treasure of Teresa's parents and save her beloved from danger. Magdalen therefore accepts the body of Teresa to intervene to calm the waters; in the features of his enemy, the girl succeeds in rescuing Tonino from the fury of Teresa's brothers, who is still being raped by one of them. However, he immediately understands that Tonino does not recognize her in this body and looks at the abandonment of her beloved. Tonino and Maddalena / Teresa are preparing the wedding but the boy feels dissatisfied and disappointed with the whimsical behaviors of his beloved; when he is accidentally in the

presence of Teresa (formerly Maddalena), he realizes that the attitudes of the latter have also changed and become sweet and quiet. In the last scenes, Tonino abandons Teresa for the second time as Maddalena and runs to find Maddalena in Teresa's body, recognizing in her her true twin soul.

The Analysis :

Rubini presents a pastiche of genres, styles and techniques. The director has offered a view of the past using dynamic cinematography, using high-contrast images and subdued palette. Representing the land and sea levels the director has explained how landscape and individual history assimilate together. Pan movement of camera, bird's-eye views and extreme long shots highlight the linkage of characters with the landscape. In fact, Rubini has challenged the limits of imagination, reality and time. The director's filmic vision offers us a particular impression of Italy, in which irony plays a critical role within the narrative embodied by the types of characters.

The theme of transformation as a way of gaining knowledge of others is significant in this film. In this film, change is portrayed through the transformation of Teresa (who becomes Maddalena) and Maddalena (who becomes Teresa). Critics argue that here metamorphosis is used to express modes of cultural integration and reintegration. Rubini's endeavour of exploration of the human condition has universalized regional themes and examinations of identity.

Recently, Italian film has been characterized by an increasing number of regional movements, which helped to redefine local identity through the representation of landscape and the appropriation and use of space. In 2000, film-maker and scholar Vito Zaggarro identified a recomposition of Italian film according to region, where similarities in style were generated by new production codes and not by a school or movement (2000 :14).27

The significance of landscape in Italian film dates back to the silent era, but after World War II it became an important character of Italian filmic identity. Under the influence of Neorealism, directors took their cameras out of the studio emphasizing on the assimilation of regional realism with social commentary. Rossellini, Visconti and others depicted war ravaged cities and the relationship between them and their inhabitants. This revealed the symbiotic relationship between culture and environment, between the individual and the space he or she occupied. But, most of all, this cinematic style represented a political landscape where the visualization of space was used to express anti-fascist sentiment. Today, renewed interest in rural and urban landscapes is being prompted by Italy's fast-changing social values, provoked by immigration, geopolitical change and inter-religious conflict.

Shot mostly in Apulia, the film 'Soul Mate' is an example Rubini's interest in questioning memory and identity. This narrative interrogates the relationship between a geographical present and the past and between reality and imagination. Like Allen and Godard who appear in their own films to function both inside and outside the frame, while remaining unconstrained by the story (2011 : 33)28, this authorial self-inscription can also be seen in 'Soul Mate'. Rubini's incursion into a South both real and imagined is accentuated by his use of comic-grotesque character. Rubini's authorial presence also brings a self-reflec-

tive element to the film narrative, allowing him to be perceived as internal and external to the film diegesis. As Angeloantonio, a character of 'Soul Mate', Rubini adheres to the narrative, as a director he creates the narrative and exhibits the character of Apulian filmmaker, which functions outside of his films. (Sayad 2011 : 22).²⁹

'Soul Mate' is Rubini's visionary trip through the landscape of his youth, revealing the popular significance of superstition and ritual. In this film, Rubini plays the theatrical barber Angeloantonio who, in his 40s, living with his mother still relies on her for financial support. He speaks in dialect and his ridiculous outfit of cowboy boots and an undershirt indicates his belonging to lower class.

The film upholds Rubini's frequently usage of theatricality, a characteristic feature of southern culture where the line between the private and the public appears as thin. Filmic satire depends on the understanding of the cinegoers and also on diegetic spectators. Public spaces like streets, churches, squares, bars etc. are therefore the stages on which the characters of the comedy perform. By stressing on facial expressions showing basic emotions like understanding, surprise, curiosity etc. Rubini emphasizes how an audience's perception of the performance (both cinematic and extra-cinematic) is more important than the performance itself. In the film, Angeloantonio, upset by his mother's refusal to perform witchcraft on Maddalena and her unwillingness to accept a significant amount of money, opens the door to the balcony and launches into a melodramatic performance. 'We do not need anything! We are billionaires!' Then he throws his mother's dishes from the balcony and threatens to kill himself by jumping off if she does not perform the witchcraft. The scene is accompanied by an old, sweet song performed by Claudio Villa and stresses the theatricality of his actions. Viewing the gesture, the audience may remember De Sica's 'L'oro di Napoli' ('The Gold of Naples') (1954), when the widower, played by Paolo Stoppa, stages an attempted suicide after the death of his wife. He threatens to throw himself from the balcony, but not before making sure people are paying attention.

Rubini's southern, aesthetic choices also highlight the sense of space through his utilization of light and colour. He considers his film as a metaphorical voyage through light, from the sharp contrastive use of red, blue and white in 'Soul Mate'. Grandios long shots and wide angles point out the power of the landscape in the 'Soul Mate'. The film witnesses the fast editing in the suspenseful sequences of the shamanic ritual.

The film's opening shot places the audience in a colourful domain between reality and magic in the South. It also introduces the paradigm of metamorphosis, which is the centre of mass of the film. Paolo Carnera's cinematography, with its intensely filtered and exaggerated lighting and contrast that sets the ochre of the land against the green of the sea or the drops of Teresa's blood against white gown is used to propel the narrative. The high-angle shot of a white bowl of water with drops of oil floating on its surface locates the events (southern fortune tellers use oil on water to tell the future). A disorienting zoom into the bowl fades into images of swimming fish and this magic leads smoothly to the hectic fish factory where that same fish is processed. The white of the bowl gives way to the blue of the fish and soon the blue neon light that illuminates the workers, captured on him in the fish factory with a medium shot. The dichotomy of colour is almost didactically adhered to through the first part of the film to stress the coexistence of magic, dreams and

reality. In the wedding scene, blue, white and red are the dominant colours. The ending, in Angeloantonio's renovated barbershop is Almodovar-like in its use of contemporary style and architecture, along with robust colour - dark orange and blue.

Visual expressionism enhances the metaphysical aspects of life helping common mass to better understand the human experience. In her book titled 'Metaphysical Media : The Occult Experience in Popular Culture', film scholar Emily Edwards has written that fantastical images enhance the suspension of belief that allows the spectator to become absorbed in the narrative and drama. The specialized use of traditional techniques such as camera angles and filters, as well as new capabilities such as digital special effects, help film-makers realize their supernatural visions (Edwards 2005 : 22).³⁰ Rubini's 'Soul Mate', however, relies mostly on realistic and anthropological aspects of the magical South, as opposed to expressionistic visual effects. In the transformation scene during which Teresa becomes Maddalena, she is unwell in the bathtub. The dim candles create an eerie and foreboding atmosphere. Teresa's immersion in the water is the first step of her imminent metamorphosis. Thereafter comes a suspenseful shot of the water in the bath. Rubini's camera slowly zooms out to a medium shot of Teresa immersed for the second time. No special effects are used here. Skillful editing creates the effect of a process undertaken and culminating with the emergence of Maddalena from the water. The supernatural in this sequence is created by a suggestive visual narrative and shrill extra-diegetic music reminiscent of Bernard Herrmann's score in 'Psycho' (Hitchcock, 1960).

Magical practices still play an important role in the village of southern Italy. According to Ethnologist Ernesto De Martino, the pairing of magic and rationality is one of the important phenomena of modern civilization. De Martino has argued that in contemporary society, the culture of Southern Italy continues to provide a magical-mythical alternative to a rational world. The survival of archaic rituals surely results from the need of the population in the economically underdeveloped South for psychological self-protection against the difficulties of everyday life. Rubini's film faithfully portrays southern practices - survival tactics, romance and work - against a backdrop of economic hardship and his camera conveys the magical aspects of this culture. He therefore uses wide-angle and bird's-eye shots over a desolated foggy quarry where Teresa and Maddalena transform into one another. In this surreal *mise-en-scene*, Teresa's body lies like a sacrificial lamb on a rock in the quarry. The frequent use of zooms (on the kitchen utensils, for example, where the magical Benedetta and her friends look for bad omens in the droplets of oil floating in bowls of water each day) and expressionistic low-angle shots (in the quarry sequence, when Angeloantonio is the shaman performing the transformation ritual) alternate with more realistic extreme long shots of the landscape and medium and long shots of the characters. These devices blur the line between everyday life and the supernatural.

De Martino explains the supernatural ritual that includes acting in character, such as when the witch or shaman behaves like the characters being evoked. This is an act of suspension and removal from reality and replaces historical reality with meta-history. Psychological well-being is therefore achieved by repeating actions and words to remove a discomfiting history. This is effective because the community understands and recognizes them (De Martino 2002 : 8-9)³¹. Benedetta's magic works because the people of the village collectively acknowledge it. The magical symbols exhibited in the film (the drop of

Teresa's blood on the handkerchief and her wedding dress, the scissors that do not cut the wedding ribbon) need no decoding by members of this culture, they are internalized. Rubini's approach in 'Soul Mate' integrates reality and superstition, yet these two modes of representation do not collide. Rather, they coexist in a culture that embraces both. This is magical realism.

'Soul Mate's symbolism peaks in the cross cutting between the quarry ritual (where the mise-en-scene is at once contemporary, powerful and ridiculous, mixing post-industrial decay, religion and aspects of Italian comedy) and rosary scenes (where the camera pans across the old women's faces and as Benedetta prays desperately for her son's well-being). Rubini reveals his irony through grand camera movements and the contrasting extra-diegetic rock-and-roll music accompanying archaic images of southern landscapes and people. He demystifies the South showing the audience the supernatural while simultaneously distancing himself from the events on-screen. Through metamorphosis, Maddalena and Teresa have the chance to become the other and understand the otherness.

Conclusion :

Like his mentor, Fellini, Rubini demonstrates a longing to keep in touch with the spaces inhabited in the past, in this case to his native Apulia. The director has manipulated those recollections to create a place that better fits his idea of his roots. The land transformed by his creative memory expresses the change-ability of the Mediterranean region of his origins. By combining the genres of comedy, film noir, melodrama and biopic and by portraying contemporary and archaic cultural practices with both irony and affection, Rubini's version of post modernism presents a heterogenous and all-embracing vision of Mediterranean culture and geography. He has constructed the virtues and vices of the society through the visual narrative. In fact, Rubini presents a path through a paradoxical, slow-moving South that might offer the audience all a way to appreciate the origin, integrate a spectrum of ideas, open the audience to other cultures and use the past to inform the future.

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Session 3

Creativity and New Media

Chair : Dr. Tapati Basu

Prof. Dr. Tapati Basu

Prof. Dr. Tapati Basu was the Faculty of Department of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Calcutta for the last 30 years. She was also the Member of UGC and the Committee Member of NAAC. Prof. Basu was the only one who introduced the Journalism and Mass Communication at graduation level. She was also associated with the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI).

She took a plunge in her speech with the introduction of new media and the creativity of the new media. The speech forge ahead explaining - New Media is the form of media which is native to computers. Some examples which include are websites, mobile apps, multimedia, computer games, interface, animation, wi-fi, youtube. The new media do not include the newspapers, television programmes and the feature film magazines or books. Facebook and Twitter which are manifested to all as social media but they are also type of new media which belong to the category of social media. The formers are the online resources for acquiring information.

A glance of history says the communication in different languages started in 1950s. In India Personal Computers got introduced in 1997 but earlier in 1980 it got introduced by Allen K. and his co-workers. A parallel relationship could be seen in the late 1980s and early 1990s, between the social changes and computer design and webcom. A rapid transformation has been noticed in the 25 years on the use of digital technologies such as internet and video games. New Media v/s Cyber Culture, which include the iphones, mobile apps, online marketing, credit card etc. People have witnessed a lot of cyber crimes for using the new media application. Digital data are controlled by the software. Globalisation takes place due to the evolution of the new media.

Anything which is eventualizing at any place of the world through television or from the websites. Changes in the cultural, national, political institutions, reduced the geographical expansion. Through facebook it is get to be known about the crime and various activities that take place but crime itself takes place on facebook and matrimonial sites. The social sites such as the facebook and twitter where individuals give their personal information and those are readable by all. In the above mentioned sites people place their own views for which a large number of conflicts came up over the political parties and for which many of them were taken to the custody. This sort of crime not only took place in India but also in America and Britain too. These are the changes that came in our society. It made a great impact on the people. Earlier if a person needs to talk to anyone they had to write a letter but now this can be done over phone. Visual communication is also playing a vital role here.

The introduction of new media has increased the job opportunities. The new media has also spread its impact on the young generation which contains both beneficial as well as unpleasant things. As each and every one of them has a phone on their hand, they fulfill their entertainment on phone therefore they don't spend time with the family members. Political Campaign plays an important role in the new media. As a mass communication student, it is natural for everyone to get to know about it.

Are MOOCs the ultimate pathway to educate our nation? An insider's view

Subha Dutta

ABSTRACT

Massive open online courses captured the imagination of the academia in the West, in 2012. India is one of the first Asian countries to initiate MOOCs over two platforms - NPTEL and SWAYAM. Through quality courses offered over these two platforms, the Govt aims to level the playing field of higher education. Huge resources are being mobilized to make this vision a success. However, the pioneers of MOOCs in the West have gone through a trough of disillusionment after an initial crest of euphoria. The full potential of the new technology is still being understood. MOOC is not a second class substitution for face to face. It is an entirely new pedagogy. Interactivity, community building and customization are the key words in this pedagogy. The huge numbers, their cultural and academic diversity and their scattered isolation pose as much a challenge as an opportunity. Learning patterns have to be re explored and mapped with the big data generated through the MOOCs, if completion rates are to be pushed up. MOOCs are perhaps the only means of fulfilling the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of education. But in order to leverage MOOCs effectively, we have to effectively handle the challenges of massiveness. Instructors have to fine tune their pedagogy to reach out to the scattered and diverse "masses" and satisfy their needs.

Keywords

Online education, peer learning, interactivity, learners' community, customization, big data, disruptive technology

Introduction

Thomas Friedman wrote in an article in The New York Times, "Big breakthroughs happen when what is suddenly possible meets what is desperately necessary." In the same article, published on May 15, 2012, he announced the year 2012 as "The Year of MOOC" - massive open online courses that anybody could enroll into and acquire the necessary qualification. Coursera, UDACITY and edX made their presence felt in cyber space. They were all driven by the common mission of making quality education accessible to all. They were all associated with top notch universities of USA.

MOOC is being perceived as the next best thing after Gutenberg. If the printing press brought into circulation affordable text books and was instrumental in the spread of literacy, the new age education providers are keen to ensure that huge number of students reap the benefits from the best of teachers in ivy league institutions. They were keen to break the 'exclusivity' of quality education. They were keen to level the playing field of higher education. Universities in USA, Canada, Mexico, Europe and Asia announced partnerships with education providers. Wikipedia uses the word "stampede" to characterize this rapidly growing trend.

Massive

Let us examine one by one the alphabets in the acronym MOOC. How massive is 'massive'? Daphne Koller, the co founder of Coursera elucidated in her Ted talk published on August 1, 2012:

Andrew Ng offers "Machine learning" class at Stanford every year and he has typically 400 students in his class. When the class was thrown open to the general public, there were 100,000 students registered. This means, Andrew Ng would have to teach "Machine learning" for 250 years. So, the only solution was to go online.

Anant Agarwal mentioned in his Ted talk published on January 27, 2014, 155,000 students from 165 countries enrolled in a course in Circuitry in Electronics offered by MIT. It was the first course offered from the edX platform. Agarwal says, "155,000 is a big number - bigger than the alumni strength of MIT with a legacy of 150 years." 7,200 students passed the course. It will take 40 years to get this number of successful students by physically taking the course @ two semesters a year.

When Daphne Koller gave her talk in 2012, Coursera was running 43 courses from four universities. 640,000 students from 190 countries were enrolled in these courses. Today Coursera has 24 million registered users for more than 2000 courses. Coursera courses typically have a duration of four to ten weeks. Every week, there are one to two hours of video lectures. These courses provide quizzes, weekly exercises, peer-graded assignments, and sometimes a final project or exam. Courses are also provided on-demand, in which case users can take their time in completing the course with all of the material available at once. As of May 2015 Coursera offered 104 on-demand courses.

Therefore the term 'massive' is not only applicable to the number of users, but also to the diversity of subjects offered on the different platforms. No brick and mortar university can offer as many as 2000 courses on topics as diverse as 'algorithms' to 'Big data' to 'Food security'. MOOC certainly looks promising as the future of higher education.

Euphoria and disillusionment

Before we take up the other alphabets of the acronym, let us digress a little into the crests and troughs of the 'hype cycle'. Within a year, the initial euphoria was followed by a trough of disillusionment. One reason for disillusionment for the service providers, was the low success rate and high drop out rates. This was attributed to lack of motivation to go through the rigours of completing the course unless the course was linked to the student's career growth or acquiring academic credit points. Learners might find the courses

too easy or too difficult or the language of delivery may not be lucid enough or the assignments may be too demanding. Sometimes low connectivity and sometimes to the lack of a peer group dynamics led to drop outs.

One student who had enrolled in 11 courses and completed only 2 of them, gave an overall teacher performance as B, scope for interaction with the teacher as D and the fact that the videos could be watched any time anywhere as A. Indeed, 'learn at your own time and at your own pace' is the most satisfactory factor of and MOOC.

Learning patterns of all those who enroll in MOOCs get recorded. So it is easy to access this data and analyse the emerging trends in learning patterns. Stanford University's Learning Analytics have conducted this study and they have identified four types of students: auditors, completers, disengaged learners and sampling learners. Auditors sit through all the lectures, but do not take the tests. Completers diligently submit assignments and take tests. Disengaged learners lose interest and drop out early. Samplers engage with the work from time to time. The same research also found a strong correlation between completing a course and being active on the discussion forum. On an average, 5 to 7% of the learners watch the complete videos. For a course on Bio electricity offered by Duke University, 12,725 students enrolled, but only 7,761 ever watched a video, 3,658 attempted a quiz, 345 attempted the final exam, out of which 313 passed and were awarded certificates.

Average completion rate of MOOCs is about 15%, although some studies have shown completion rates of about 3 to 5%. The early Coursera courses had a completion rate of 7 to 9%.

In addition to monitoring the time spent by the learner in the portal, the discussion boards too are worthy of analysis. Every course has a discussion board meant for peer to peer learning. According to an analyst, "Smaller discussion boards paradoxically offer the best conversations. Larger discussions can be really, really thoughtful and really, really misguided, with long discussions becoming rehashes or "the same old stale left/right debate."

Today, after five years, the effectiveness of MOOCs is an open question. Completion rates are substantially lower than traditional online education courses. Alraimi et al. (2015) identified in their research model, four factors responsible for the intention to continue using MOOCs. These are perceived reputation, perceived openness, perceived usefulness, and perceived user satisfaction. Perceived reputation and perceived openness were the strongest factors and have not previously been examined in any research in the context of MOOCs

Open

This brings us to the second alphabet in MOOC - O for open ness. What exactly does an 'open' course mean? One meaning of 'open' is that the course is open to everybody. Anybody, irrespective of age, gender, nationality, level of education can join in. In another sense of open ness, the course content may be open. The learner can embellish the already existing course content, but keep it open. Early MOOCs relied more on this connectivity factor and the open ness of content. Since then MOOCs have been classified as cMOOCs and xMOOCs. xMOOCs are more traditional and are heavily mentor centric. The PI or the principal instructor is the expert provider of knowledge and student interactions are limited

to asking for assistance and getting clarifications on difficult points. In the discussion forum, questions are always addressed to the PI and almost never to co learners. The contents of xMOOCs resemble television shows and digital text books.

cMOOCs on the other hand, demand greater creativity on the part of the learner. They are based on principles from connectivist pedagogy indicating that material should be aggregated (rather than pre-selected), remixable, re-purposable, and feeding forward (i.e. evolving materials should be targeted at future learning). cMOOCs instructional designs connect learners to each other in problem solving and participation in collaborative projects. cMOOCs are more constructivist in their approach and emphasize on knowledge building. While xMOOCs focus on scalability, cMOOCs focus on community and connectivities. One of the earliest MOOCs, Connectivism and Connective Knowledge was a cMOOC that emerged from the Open Education Resource movement. However, all the Coursera courses, NPTEL courses and SWAYAM courses are xMOOCs.

X MOOCsC MOOCs

Emphasis on scalability	Emphasis on community building and connected learning
Open access, copyright reserved	Open access and open licence
Individual learning in single platform	Networked learning across distributed platforms
Student expected to acquire targeted knowledge and skills	Students develop shared practices, knowledge and understanding

Online

Distance learning has always been a challenge. Towards the end of the 19th Century, correspondence courses emerged to solve the problem. Then radio and television were used for broadcasting lectures and other enrichment material. Sometimes these media were used for live interaction between teachers and learners. India's first attempt at distant education was SITE. TV sets for community viewing were set up in 2400 remote villages in six states - Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The villagers watched programmes on health, agriculture and development in their local language. Arthur Clarke hailed the SITE experiment as "The greatest communication experiment in history". It was a collaborative effort between ISRO and NASA.

After SITE came Countrywide Classroom, IGNOU, Gyan Vani and Vyasa channel. Then the internet changed everything. It is the greatest repository of resources and a platform to cultivate collective intelligence. When the World Wide Web is used to launch a course, it should be in tune with the characteristics of the medium. The video on MOOC, embedded in the Wikipedia page, says that a MOOC is participatory, distributed and ensures life long networked learning. The video goes on to assert that MOOC is not just an online course. It is a way to connect and collaborate, engaging in the learning process. The work put together by the facilitator and the participants is shared. The resource material is distributed in the blog posts, discussion forums, other related links, twitter posts and Face Book updates. The learner gleans information, posts her own findings, participates in discussions and learns in the process. Online learning is a non linear mode of learning and should be

kept that way.

A MOOC instructor has shared his personal experience, "They have had better interaction with their professors in the online space than they have had in the face to face space."

Course

A course always has a start date and an end date. It has an evaluation mechanism integrated into its design and there is a certification at the end of the course. The certificate bears the grades of the learner as an indication of his/ her level of achievement. A course also means that there is at least one instructor who plays a pivotal role in running the course. What is important in an online course is that the learners can stay connected and continue to learn from each other even after the course gets over. Also, in an online course, the course material can be flexible and to a large extent, user defined.

Indigenous MOOCs

Among the major education service providers offering MOOCs worldwide, 14 are from USA, 7 from different European countries, 2 from Australia, one from Western Pacific region and 2 from India. Out of these, 7 are non for profit ventures and 14 are commercial ventures.

It is noteworthy that 27.7% of Coursera enrollees are from USA. India is a distant second with 8.8% enrollees. Among the Asian countries, India has woken up early to meeting the demands of higher education and skill enhancement. In 2015, the seven IITs and IISc, Bangalore got together to form NPTEL (National Programme for Technology Enhanced Learning). NPTEL offers more than 950 courses in science, technology and engineering. The courses are basically based on video lectures. The NPTEL portal has more than 30,000 video hours of lectures, which have got more than 640 million views from teachers, students, research scholars, project developers, doctors. In addition to science and technology, there are courses on English language skills, Carnatic music, ethics, soft skills, educational technology etc. Each course is custom made as per the instruction from the PI.

India's MOOC initiatives are in many ways a continuation of the SITE Experiment of 1976. Both NPTEL and SWAYAM (Study Web for Active Learners for Young Aspiring Minds) are Govt initiatives, where the Govt has invested in crores to pool in the best of academia and make their resources and expertise available to the length and breadth of the country. The SWAYAM website announces, "All the courses are interactive, prepared by the best teachers in the country and are available, free of cost to the residents in India. More than 1,000 specially chosen faculty and teachers from across the Country have participated in preparing these courses."

NATIONAL CO ORDINATORS OF SWAYAM

School education Out of school education Undergraduate education Postgraduate education

NCERT	IGNOU	CEC	NPTEL
NIOS	NPTELIIM (Bangalore)		
	IIM (Bangalore)	UGC	

The courses delivered through SWAYAM are available free of cost to learners. The pilot phase of SWAYAM was initiated in January 2017, with eight national co-ordinators offering a total of 339 courses. The course design has a four quadrant approach, consisting of video lectures, text material, additional resources in the form of web links and case studies and assessments. Assessments are two pronged - self assessment and assignments to be evaluated by the PI or the teaching assistant. Proctored examinations are also a part of the certification process, where the learners have to report to a centre and take an examination.

The SWAYAM platform has been indigenously developed by MHRD and AICTE, with the help of Microsoft Corporation. When fully operational, it will be able to support 2000 courses and 80,000 hours of learning. The courses are being designed for Class IX to post graduate curricula, as well as specialized curricula in engineering, management, media etc.

Support system for MOOCs

An instructor has to spend minimum 100 hours to design a 15 to 20 hours course on any subject. He will need the help of technical personnel to do the video recording editing, add animation and package the content into attractive modules. Once the course is uploaded and goes live, the portal has to manage the registration of students, track their performance, answer queries of students and keep the database up to date. Even though technology dependent, MOOCs are a human resource intensive system.

New challenges

Is MOOC really a disruptive innovation that is going to upset the applecart of our education system? In the Indian scenario, will MOOCs be able to eradicate the malady of private tuitions? The answers to these lie in how cleverly we are tapping into the potential of the technology.

MOOCs are an important tool to achieve Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The advantages of MOOCs need not be underlined. There is no doubt in anybody's mind that MOOCs are the only way to address the higher education needs of a country. For the student it means self paced learning, it means having access to quality education anytime anywhere at practically no cost and being a part of learners' community. It also means choosing a subject of one's liking from a wide array of subjects and acquiring expertise in a niche area. However, for MOOCs to be most effective and taken seriously, they have to be blended with the curriculum in brick and mortar universities. Flipped classrooms are one way of blending MOOCs with face to face learning. In a flipped classroom, the student attends the lecture online and when he/she comes to the class, she engages in problem solving applying the knowledge acquired online.

MOOC is not a second class substitution for face to face. It is an entirely new pedagogy. The instructor has to understand this new pedagogy and invent new ways of interacting with the learners. Interactivity is at the core of any teaching learning dynamics. Without an interaction the teacher will not know how effective the teaching has been. But how does the teacher handle the interactivity of a large, heterogenous and scattered learner base? How does the teacher understand the diverse needs, expectations and motivation levels of

the students? How does the teacher keep them motivated to learn?

All MOOCs have a discussion forum for generating interactivity between instructor and learner and between learners. However, past experience of the undersigned has shown that students post queries only when they are stuck on a technical point or do not understand certain parts of the assignments. In spite of seeding discussions on topical issues, the learners do not participate in the discussions. Indian students are by and large much too shy and much too polite. They would never contradict their teacher on a public forum and they are too shy to express their opinion freely. Therefore, the discussion forum goes by and large underutilized.

Without the students opening up on the discussion forum, how would the instructor know the level of understanding of the student? The lectures and study material are in English. In a country like India, proficiency in English has a huge range. How would the teacher know whether the lectures are making sense to the learner? Live interactivity with the teacher is one option, where the teachers takes the queries of the students via video conferencing. However, SWAYAM has not put this technology in place as yet on the platform. What SWAYAM has offered is, a platform for forming groups of learners. The learners may be grouped by their geographical locations or by their expectation from the course. For example, in a course in script writing, some learners may be college students who have taken up this course because it is a part of the curriculum, some learners may be professionals in the industry and some learners may be casual learners. Each group will have a different motivation level and a different drive. Perhaps different sets of assignments have to be designed for each group and each group has to be engaged in a different level of discussion. The group dynamics will begin to function well if opinion leaders emerge from among the peers in each group. These opinion leaders are also called 'local cohorts'.

In this context one may mention that five Stanford faculty have come together to design an app - a peer discussion system, "Talkabout", using which learners can freely discuss academic and other matters. Talkabout helps them to stay connected, understand each other's perspectives and learn from each other. It was found that those who used Talkabout and stayed connected, performed better in quizzes and assignments.

Dr. Doug Guthrie, former Dean of George Washington University's School of Business, says that the heart of education is interactivity, community building and customization. Internet offers a great scope for community building. But a MOOC community is yet to emerge. The instructor has to be a catalyst in the process of this community building, without having an overpowering presence.

As for customization, Dr. Guthrie says that the big data generated in the MOOCs can be churned to assess the student's needs and expectations and the course can be customized to meet these expectations. SWAYAM has initiated the scope for conducting a survey before the onset of the course. This survey can be utilized to understand the student better and slot him into a particular category of learner.

MOOC per se may not be a disruptive technology. The disruptive elements in MOOCs are the internet, distance education and big data.

In conclusion

In India, qualitative or quantitative research has not yet been initiated to assess students' satisfaction level with MOOCs. As a MOOC progresses, it generates a lot of data. This data is a goldmine for research on the future of education.

The MHRD Minister Prakash Jhavdekar is taking personal interest in SWAYAM. Soon after SWAYAM was officially launched, he called a meeting of all the stakeholders and urged them to be more creative in their approach. Guidelines were strictly laid down about the quality and duration of the videos and the assessment criteria of the courses.

The SWAYAM team is doing a wonderful job in giving the necessary technical support, answering all queries and in trouble shooting. So a good beginning has been made. However, it is too early to predict the impact of SWAYAM in the higher education scenario of our country. The questions that rankle in one's mind are:

" Will the universities accept a SWAYAM certificate as equivalent to university credits?

" What is the mechanism to ensure high quality of the courses offered?

" Can the MHRD discard its top down approach and facilitate in creating a truly networked community of knowledge seekers and knowledge givers?

And finally

" SWAYAM has been created to serve the millennial sustainable development goal. But can SWAYAM be a self sustaining venture?

In Dr. Guthrie's words, "We're not quite there yet".

- Subha Das Mollick
- (Principal instructor for the course Penning for Frames running on SWAYAM)

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Drones in News Media

A Study of Drone Technology in the Indian Media Landscape

Arkaprava Chattopadhyay
Archan Mitra

Abstract:

The news media landscape has been transforming at a progressive rate in India. A new feather to the cap, facilitating this transformation is drones. The media now possess a new means to cover the news story and approach it in a new manner. According to data from BI Intelligence, the need for drones for news media have been increasing since 2014 and is predicted to rise by the year 2021. However, the problem herein lies that, there are no consistent set rules to govern the regulations for licensed use of drones in India. Apart from the legal aspect there is a grave concern about the technology used in the operations related to drone maneuvering and aviation. Hence, the researchers are trying to enquire into the technological and legal aspects of use of drones for news media in India. The research is an endeavor to study how incorporation of new media technology like drone would change the face of journalism in India. Apart from journalism drones can also be used for various other aspects like anti-poaching in wildlife sanctuaries, human rescue and search operations in disaster situations and furthermore.

Keywords:

Drone laws, Gimbal Technology, Drone Technology

Introduction

Human beings have always been fascinated by the art of flight. It inspired them with imaginations and aspirations to reach out and touch the sky. Finally, the arrival of aviation technology empowered us. We now have the ability to reach high altitudes, explore and fly. The contributions of the Wright brothers transformed the perspective of the world, into one which has not just been explored and conquered by land and water, but also by air. This empowerment of sorts is an evolution of human abilities that has presented us humans, with wings.

Drones are unmanned aerial vehicles or rather robots that can fly. They are a component of a system which includes an unmanned aerial vehicle, a ground-based controller, and a communication system between the two. Technological progress and innovations in regards to each component has enhanced the possibilities of using a drone, in various fields of life. There are a host of purposes that can be fulfilled by the proper implementation of this

technology. Although the foremost utilization has been implemented by the army, drones have the capacity to contribute in various fields of life, comprehensively.

The army uses drones for transporting explosives and surveillance. But then surveillance is an integral function that can be implemented, for purposes such as the preservation of the environment, cinematography, photography and research. Drones can venture into places that are difficult to access, can follow wild animals from close range for their benefit, can record situations and events from aerial vantage points, explore into unknown places at minimal risk and provide critical information from a bird's eye perspective. Since their inception, drones originated mostly in military applications but their application is rapidly expanding to commercial, scientific, recreational, agricultural, policing, peacekeeping, surveillance, product deliveries, aerial photography/cinematography, and agriculture (wikipedia.org, n.d.).

From the above proposition we can infer that drones have a high value when it comes to being a powerful medium for recording information. Therefore talking about the changing media landscape and the need for paradigm shift being evident from research, the using of drones as a tool for journalism is the crux of the research. Journalism using drones is essential for the dissemination of concrete information, especially during natural calamities and large scale events. It is hard, in words and ground based images, to convey the scope and scale of calamities. The credibility of factual references is best conveyed when comprehensive evidence is provided along-with. Drone shots provide a bird's eye view, establishing the situation comprehensively (newsmedia, n.d.). In terms of journalism based on environmental communication and research, drone technology induces the scope for discreetness, unique analytical perspectives and comprehensive documentation of content. Therefore the research is an endeavor to enquire into the ways in which we can incorporate change in the aviation laws in our country and break new frontiers in drone based news media 'drone journalism'.

Research Gap

The problem lies in the fact that in India, there are laws restricting civilian use of drones due to security concerns. This diminishes the capacity of professionals from various fields such as journalism, filmmaking and environmental communication, to utilize drone technology. There are only four countries in the world, namely, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, in which, civilian drone use is banned. So far countries that do not allow drones at all are:- Belgium, 10 mts flying allowed in private property. 90 mts with license.- Nicaragua- Morocco- Fiji, has an almost impossible registration process to be able to fly your drone- Zambia same as Fiji- North Korea, - Cuba - Dubai- Saudi Arabia, they could take your drone at customs and may not return- Canada, insane restrictions to fly only 90 mts high and away 70 meters of everything. In Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh drones not banned but heavy restrictions.

The justification behind this restriction lies in the fact that drones can be used for negative purposes such as smuggling, transporting explosives and surveillance for terror purposes. Hundreds of drones have been confiscated at Indian airports on arrival, as

civilians tend to purchase these from online sites who courier these goods from other countries. The buyers are asked to provide an aviation license at the airport, which are awarded to professional airplane pilots only (Farrukh, 2017). A balanced solution is thus needed so that the latest technologies of the world are implemented, keeping intact the security of the people and the state. Hence the researchers' are trying to find a synergy between the use and gratification of such a device in the new media millennium Objective of the Study

To make a comparative analysis of the international and national laws on the use of drone technology: Drone technology is used in various countries with varying laws governing it. In India however, the use of drones are limited for military purpose while in other countries there are other usefulness as a commercial tool.

To lay down a working framework for the use of drone technology and its nuances: To use the technology effectively we must understand its working technological framework.

Methodology of the Research

Phase I: During this phase the researchers explains the laws which are prevalent in the USA and India regarding the drone technology. Literature review method has been employed for this phase to fulfil the first objective.

Phase II: This phase contains the technological framework, where the researchers have used the observational research method to come up with the framework of using the drone technology to fulfil the second objective.

Rationale of the Study

Enthusiasts using toy drones, are majorly deprived of the smooth, stabilized and cinematic feel that are unique to gimbal enabled professional drones, which are unfortunately restricted in India. This creates a divide between the film makers of the world and Indian filmmakers who are talented, but handicapped in this regard. This curb is an artistic restriction depreciating the comprehensiveness of the freedom of our citizens to express themselves. In the US, drones are being used to transport pizzas. This is the magnitude of the lack of a liberal approach in our country, in regards to technology.

Drones can be utilized for a host of critical utilities Most of which that are utilized that are security based. Surveillance and monitoring by the police and the army are efficiently undertaken by drones in terms of border patrolling, as a carrier weapon, police reconnaissance and monitoring of terror activities. But the limitations lie in the civilian applications such as film making, environmental monitoring, destination planning and recreation. Since the rest of the world has realized the need for liberty in this regard, the possibilities of this technology certainly deserves to be made available to the people of our country. An approach that is balanced in regards to liberty and security, should be framed so as to provide our citizens with the latest technologies as is the case with other countries of the world. Technological deprivation based on security, is not the way forward as we can analyze from human history that all technological advances such as electromagnetic radiation, radio, mobile connectivity and the internet have all been subjected to restrictions, before making their way into the homes of mass number of citizens for their personal use. The

possibilities are limitless and the journey has just begun.

Regulations for Drone use in the USA

The University of Missouri organized a workshop program on the rules of flying an unmanned aircraft which focused on the Small Unmanned Aircraft Regulations (SUAR Part 107) of the FAA's new rules in the United States. The regulations are as follows:

Operational Requirements

The little UAS administrator controlling the powers of an automaton ought to dependably keep an eye on drone and never work in an imprudent or rash way. One should keep One's automaton inside the sight. Then again, if one utilizes First Person View or comparable innovation, One should have a visual eyewitness dependably to keep Ones flying machine inside unaided sight (for instance, no binoculars). Be that as it may, regardless of the possibility that one utilize a visual eyewitness, one should, in any case, keep ones unmanned drone sufficiently close to have the capacity to see it if something sudden happens. Neither one nor a visual spectator can be in charge of more than one unmanned drone operation at once. One can fly amid sunlight or in sundown (30 minutes before official dawn to 30 minutes after dawn and dusk) with proper against crash lighting. Least climate permeability is three miles from One's control station. The most extreme passable height is 400 feet over the ground, and higher if One's automaton stays inside 400 feet of a structure. The most extreme speed is 100 mph.

One can't fly a little UAS over any individual who is not straightforwardly taking part in the operation, not under a secured structure, or not inside a secured stationary vehicle. No operations from a moving vehicle are permitted unless one is flying over a meagerly populated zone. One can convey an external load if it is safely joined and does not unfavorably influence the flight qualities or controllability of the flying machine. One likewise may transport property for pay or contract inside state limits gave the automaton - including its connected frameworks, payload, and load - weighs under 55 pounds aggregate, and One complies with the other flight rules. One can ask for a waiver of most operational limitations on the off chance that one can demonstrate that Ones proposed operation can be led securely under a waiver. The FAA will make an online gateway accessible to apply for such waivers.

The Indian Scenario

However, in a country like India, an immense aerial photography division is flourishing in the uncertainty as conventional avionics controller DGCA is yet to issue a warning on the utilization of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) for nonmilitary personnel purposes. The organization restricted the usage of automatons for business purposes in October 2014. It turned out with a draft arrangement for operations of drones in April 2016, which brought some cheer for the firm. The last strategy is yet to see sunshine. Utilization of drones went under the scanner because of security worries as authorities brought up that the vehicles can be utilized to complete airborne assaults and represent an extraordinary danger if not directed.

As the interest for powerful automatons has gone up complex, it has offered to ascend

to a dim market transparently offering these doohickeys at a top-notch cost. Bollywood films, top of the line weddings and expensive shows are regularly shot utilizing automatons to get a falcon eye view and catch the scale. As per specialists, the draft DGCA arrangement is in a state of harmony with best universal practices followed in Australia, Netherlands, the US, and Canada. Under this, not exclusively would a man need to get his contraption enlisted, however, will likewise require a preparation endorsement before flying it. Making the use legitimate for regular folks will open entryways for ethereal reviews, business photography, flying mapping, wedding shoots, recording shows and occasions. Indeed, even general society area sees an enormous potential for rambles since over the most recent eight months upwards of 36 tenders were glided by government offices.

After a drone is intercepted by customs officials at the airport, the buyer is asked to get a clearance from the wireless planning and coordination wing. The WPC is a branch of the Ministry of Communications in India. This is the wing that issues Ham radio licenses as well. One has to clear a test to get that license. Drones use radio waves to communicate back to the controller, so that's where the WPC comes in. The buyer will also need to get a clearance from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

The regulations around buying or flying drones are still unclear. The DGCA recently published a draft consultation paper, on regulating drones in India. The following are some key points in this regard.

1. Every drone sold in India must have a Unique Identification Number (UIN).
2. Every person flying a drone must have a permit.
3. When flying a drone below 200 feet from ground level, a permit from the local administration is required.
4. When flying above 200 feet, a permit will be required from the DGCA.
5. An application must be submitted for this permit at least 90 days before you actually fly a drone.

Thus, a license and a number plate is essential. The government considers drones a 'major security threat.' There is an import restriction on them. One can't even buy a drone abroad and bring it to India, because it has to be declared at the airport. Drones are part of 'Prohibited and Dutiable' items for the Indian customs now (buying-a-drone-in-india).

'Gimbal' an Interface between Camera and 'Drones'

The popular way for civilians to access drone technology in India is in the form of acquiring Hexa-copters and Quadra-copters which are actually high end toys. Budding film-makers tend to fix light weight cameras with 4K resolution in search of the perfect bird's eye view shot. But then, the surrealistic drone shots that are truly cinematic and smooth are a result of the fusion between Drone technology and Gimbal technology. A gimbal is a pivoted support that allows the rotation of an object about a single axis. A set of three gimbals, one mounted on the other with orthogonal pivot axes may be used to allow an object mounted on the innermost Gimbal to remain independent of the rotation of its support (Wikipedia/Gimbal).

Gimbals fixed to the drones ensure stabilized cinematography as has been adopted by companies such as 'DJI' and 'GoPro'. This provides hi resolution cinematic shots that

showcase the surface of the earth from a grand high altitude perspective. The popular drones available all over the world include the 'DJI Spark', 'DJI Phantom', 'DJI Mavick Pro' and the 'GoPro Karma' (flipkart.com), These are however not available in the open market in India. When purchased online, these products are intercepted at the airports (Farrukh, 2017).

The following illustrations are a showcase of the fusion between drone technology and Gimbal technology.

Fig 1: Source: (www.skynexglobaldrones.com)

Fig 2: Source: (www.skynexglobaldrones.com)

Fig 3: Source: (www.skynexglobaldrones.com)

Framework for Operating the Drone Technology

The following are the components that come together to enable us to utilize drone based technology for cinematic magic.

- Drones are remote controlled quadra-copters or hexa-copters that are extremely light weight and run on batteries.
- The remote control enables the operator to fly the drone in any direction, at various speeds.
- The takeoff and landing must be carefully undertaken without damaging the components.
- A small light weight camera is mounted upon the drone with or without the aid of Gimbal based technology.
- As the drone vibrates with crosswinds and friction on air, the gimbal stabilizes the camera and prevents it from vibrating.
- The camera angle can be changed through pan and tilt movements that are controlled by the operator using the remote control.

The pictures and videos captured by the camera while on air is available to the operator real time, as the data is transferred by the camera to an installed application such as 'DJI Go', for live viewing, on a digital device such as a mobile phone, tab or laptop. This transfer happens through Bluetooth technology. The range varies from device to device. The operator's decision making process is based on what the person perceives on the

digital application. The battery lasts for a limited period of time and thus the drone must be flown back and landed before it runs out of battery.

Conclusion

Drone journalism though farfetched in India, but it may be a possibility in the future. Keeping in mind this possibility the researchers have laid down the legal and the technological requirements to use this technology which encompasses a plethora of different technological and legal aspects. Both the objectives discussed above have been addressed in the paper. Finally we can say that there is no concrete research work on the utility of drones in India as a media tool. The researchers wish this study could be paving stone for further research.

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The Virtual Maze-How You Tube Videos Infuses Symbolic Reality and Hybridization of Identities: An Audience Analysis

Dr. Sujata Mukhopadhyay

Abstract:

The virtual maze of Social Media and its allied application based communication systems have transformed society on two levels- one, it has forever metamorphosed the individual, who has transcended boundaries, crossed different identity stages, and is now in a state of hybridity. Two, society too has undergone a sea change with technology dominating social consciousness. In this complex situation, it needs more understanding and extended media literacy to decode the underlying messages of You Tube and Whatsapp videos. Hence, proper media literacy juxtaposed with the apt understanding of the Public Sphere is needed to get out of the confusion that Social Media has created. Quoting Habermas, the Public sphere is in a state of transcendence, and human consciousness has gone into a spiral of silence(Newman).

1.0 Introduction: New Media and The Communication Spectrum

The prophecy that Darshan Perusekh made more than a decade ago when New media was at a very nascent stage seems to have attained a mammoth figure today. He suggested an excellent metaphor for the new shift in the Balance of Trade between the First world and the Third World in which, all images that are being produced- including cinema, books, camera techniques, locations, literature is arising from erstwhile colonies while the technological apparatus, like latest dubbing instruments, special effects, makeup, sets is emanating from the Western Metropolitan countries which process these Third World images and apparatus with sophistication.

Sitting at the threshold of the 21st century, it is thus not surprising to find that globalization that revolutionized the communication spectrum in its entirety, has not only created a multimedia superhighway, but has added more and more ammunition to it. The advent of New Media- and creation of user based interactive applications like You Tube and Whatsapp videos today has been instrumental in creating a state of contradiction, a virtual warfare. Technological determinism, as proposed by Marshall McLuhan has reached its peak with new Media Technology eating into the lives of people. Termed "social" media, the wide range of Apps developed daily has actually alienated the individual from reality. He now lives in a symbolic world, mostly cut out from reality, with images and sounds juxtaposed in a manner that suits the intention of the content maker. Like a wand,

the institution that creates content on YouTube and Whatsapp videos have been highly successful, with masses gobbling up videos that are morphed, framed, primed or otherwise. In the name of bringing consensus among people and enhancing democratic features, multimedia files uploaded on YouTube have fostered separatist tendencies, fuelled religious intolerance, increased caste based discrimination, morphed images to subvert reality, families have become fragmented, relationships more complex. The qualitative changes in YouTube content and the sheer visual elements seen at the click of the mouse have forever transformed the individual identity, and the way he encountered images.

1.1 YouTube News Clips and Video Footages: Subjective vs. Objective Reality

To many scholars, the universalization of YouTube and Whatsapp across countries has led wealthy and superior countries to export and market framed news items earning handsome revenues in the information poor developing countries like India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan. In the recent past, India has been witness to communal riots, uprisings and the advent of several micro and macro movements, all emanating from some form of video clip or the other. It has been alleged in most progressive news channels of India too, that political leaders have fanned religious fundamentalism, discrimination on castes by morphing pictures of public lynching of antagonistic communities from Pakistani channels and using them to promote riots. News videos keep on being uploaded, ranging from the most outrageous escapades of Gurmeet Ram Rahim, the self proclaimed Dera Saccha Sauda Sadhu, later identified as a sex maniac, to the superimposed Pakistani Flag in an Indian procession sparking communal riot, to uploading lynching, arson and destroying places of worship of the Hindus and the Muslims. In the words of Barker, "It raises crucial questions about culture and cultural identities for.....(YouTube and Whatsapp videos) are a major disseminator of cultural maps of meaning and a resource for identity construction."

The interplay of the various protagonists, their relationships amongst one another, and common emotions such as love hatred jealousy, and revenge all take place within the context of the drawing, sitting or the dining room make them a perpetual favourite of millions of peoples across the world. Irrespective of peculiarities in cultural moorings and ideology, these clippings, seen either publicly or privately, bring forth a unique viewing experience as its main ingredient is sensationalism and voyeurism. Somewhere down the line, it blurs the identities of the spectators, who are on one hand the producer, as well as the consumer of the contents produced in the news clippings. For example, most of the whatsapp videos, memes are local in character, using local dictions, mannerisms, culture, fads and fashions. When the audience produce these clips, they have a specific intent in mind, which can range from blatant fundamentalism to expressing their nascent feudal character.

However, when the same producer turns audience to other peoples memes, they change their character totally. In order to perpetuate the image of a rational human being, they start protesting against the misogynist contents that are often uploaded on YouTube and whatsapp.

Not only this, a constant exposure to different news clips, ranging from child prostitution to liberalization measures to promoting a clean "swacch" environ, makes him a hybrid over time, who becomes a mere spectator, bombarded with images, but unable to take a stand on any issue. The magic bullet theory, once redundant has become true with the onslaught of videos on YouTube. Research reveals that young people are hooked on to this all the time, detached from reality, creating and linable green environment, yet living in their own symbolic world, deciphering incidents as perpetuated by the System.

It is this subliminal flow of both individual and collective identities that create a culture that is neither global nor local or both-it is a kind of hybrid identity, where one draws inspiration both from his own individual identity and the global influences that he undergoes. This convergence between the global and the local is an ideal seat for a hybrid identity. In fact, no audience can today boast of being entirely original, unperturbed by other cultural forces .

It is this hybridisation of identities that goes in making the modern democratic man. He is international in his beliefs on issues like Liberalisation of the economy and the entry of Walmart, the initiation of SEZs, developed infrastructure and new consumer habits, shopping malls and flyovers, yet he becomes local as far as religious values are concerned, and that includes rituals and festivals, caste and religious consciousness. He is a sensitised individual who fights for sustainable green environment, and yet does all to destroy it by testing chemical weapons. Research on the comments given by individuals on the top 10 rated YouTube videos have revealed that a particular individual responds in various news video he sees, contradicting himself. A person who tweets or vlogs his dissent of American Military forces conducting drone warfare in Gulf States becomes fanatic regarding arson committed by his own brethren on other community. A man vouchsafing for gay marriage conducts honor killing in his home state.

1.2 The Glocal YouTube Audience: Juxtaposition of the Majority with the Marginal

Gone are the days when international news could only be viewed on CNN or on BBC World. Today, any layman has his own views on the remotest of issues be it ranging from the War on Iraq, to the use of biological weapons, the victory of Trump, to the Plight of Osama bin Laden to the altered position of India in the Security Council post 9/11 attacks via YouTube clips. People give comments, subscribe to these contents. Not only international news or events, public who regularly watch YouTube news videos give their own representations of the key global issues, thereby creating their own specific truths and constructing a very particular reality.

At the same time the marginal audience, the local has also raised its voice in the form of exporting their culture, like rap and reggae to the West. The peculiar ways of dressing and the cosmetics derived from Ayurveda has a huge market in the West, as is for Oriental notions of Karma and Nirvana. Not only this, even pop stars like Madonna has made the liberal use of the Mehendi on her palms and sported the nose ring. As with the case of the musical videos, they are not at all influenced by the ideology of the capitalist nations, but the whole process is mediated by the 'ideology of mass culture'. Some communities imbibe certain traits of a particular culture which corresponds to their own culture and interpret it

in their own ways.

Notwithstanding the fact that Interactive Social Media such as YouTube and Whatsapp can and must be applauded for injecting and inculcating a new consciousness not seen earlier, be it in socio-political or economic frontiers, yet it has rendered us helpless in front of the teeming multitude of imagery, thwarting us forward without any prior intimation to a global culture for which the mind is not yet prepared.

1.3 YouTube Videos Triggering Sex and Violence: A Public Sphere in Transition

In the words of Mike Featherstone in his book 'Global Culture' he says, "There may be merging sets of Third cultures which themselves are conduits for all sorts of diverse cultural flows, which cannot be merely understood as the product of the bilateral exchanges between nation states. It is misleading to emergence of Third cultures as an embodiment of logic which points at homogenization, are binary logic which seeks to comprehend culture via the mutually exclusive terms of homogeneity/heterogeneity.,. must be discarded. At best, these conceptual pairs work on one face only of the complex prism, which is culture. Rather, we need to inquire into the grounds the various generative processes involving the formation of cultural images and traditions as well as the inter group struggles and interdependencies which led to these conceptual oppositions becoming frames of reference for comprehending

culture within the state society which then become projected onto the globe."

The incorporation of Music videos, news clips, advertisements has set forth a new semiological environment where texts are decoded keeping in view the recipients' cultural assimilations. The feeding of violent portrayals like mob rampages, gunning spree, terrorist activities, self immolation, suicide bombers, torture on illegal immigrants has bred a new generation of audience who viciously imitate what ever is being shown.

For example, a teenager who cannot distinguish clearly between real and morphed/superimposed or framed images might vent his anger on his younger brother by beating him up with a rod without realizing the implications of it. Recent clips of a depressed soul to commit suicide by reclining him to do various tasks the Blue Whale Syndrome repeatedly provokes an individual to commit suicide after 50 days of the completion of various self harming 'tasks'. The game provokes the player to complete daredevil suicidal stunts, leading to several fatal accidents and even death. Moreover, a person who cannot assimilate culturally with the foreign depiction of violence, inundated with exotic settings, different from his own

finds it utterly confusing to react to the violence though he is thrilled with the new experience. It can be said that in spite of existing in a social milieu where the tradition of tolerance and non-violence is rooted, the very fact that violence is portrayed in so many forms, is registered in his immature brain, recorded to its minutest detail.

Whatsapp, a very personalised and encrypted interactive social medium too is not able to escape GIFs or even video clips, often ranging between one and five minutes. Said to entertain these clips often perpetrate images of sodomy, rape, masochism, that lay latent in

the minds of the people who create such content, who often garb these visuals in the form of humor. Be it clips on Savita Bhabhi, a desi nymphomaniac, to memes of individuals, most content creators according to research want to vent hatred and fear against their peers. There is a latent aggression that lay hidden in the mind of the child who shares his parents cellphone during play ,and he matures into an adult, negotiating the meanings that are produced and reproduced on whatsapp videos.

2.0 Uses and Preferences of YouTube Audiences: A Research Study

For this study, a random sample survey of 100 users of YouTube between age 12 and 18 were interviewed. The first phase of the survey involved informal interviews with the help of a pre-designed questionnaire. The questions related to their viewing habits and their likes and dislikes. Ten of them were later interviewed again for detailed interaction in homely environment.

Out of this study's sample, 55 per cent said they preferred to watch films or film songs on YouTube. The rest preferred to watch tutorials, news clips and cartoons. 10 per cent preferred preferred horror and crime videos. 5 per cent liked sports - mostly cricket . Of the largest group that liked films and film songs more than anything else, 39 gave films especially violent and fighting movies as their first choice.

When asked who decides what is to be watched, an interesting picture emerged. When watching alone, 87 per cent users watch whatever they want; only 13 per cent users are told - in absentia - what they should be watching and what not. It was not clear how many of them actually listened to their parents' instructions.

Fondness for Crime and Horror- Horror and crime serials and news followed as second and third priorities. But during sports events, sports programmes took precedence over all other kinds of programmes. Many of the younger users interviewed said they believed the cartoons to be real characters. The parents interviewed mentioned a number of behaviour problems that they attributed to overexposure to YouTube, were defiance of authority, lack of concentration and swings in moods.

Vishnu Rajan, a fifth standard student of Bhavan's Vidya Mandir,58 Kochi, says that he will go in only for Van Heusen shirts and Park Avenue trousers when he grows up. Concern for appearance is not new. But it was never the obsession that it has turned now. Mrs.Greeta Girish, a beautician, noticed that her clientele longed to get younger, trendier and more beautiful. "With so many channels there is so much of awareness today.

The youngsters in music videos on YouTube all days and by the evening want to look like them," she opines. Mrs.Beeda Antony, 59, a Kolkata -based school counsellor backs Mrs.Greeta's views as she has found young girls, barely into high school, plucking their eyebrows and waxing their legs.

Erotica is so casually tossed into most of these videos that it leaves the users a harried lot. To Sigmund Freud,however, there is nothing alien about youngsters indulging in such spectacles. In describing the aggressiveness, which he took to be a characteristic of human beings, Freud quoted the words of the Roman playwright Plautus "Homo Hominy Lupus"- man is a wolf to man. Freud viewed aggressiveness among humans as the expression of

'Thanatos' or the drive towards Death and destruction that is opposed and harnessed to the drive towards life, creativity and love, or Eros. In his words, "Their neighbor is for them not only a potential helper or sexual object, but also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill Him."

Some younger users see the horror serials 'X-Zone', 'Anhonee', 'Kohra' etc. with great excitement. However, a closer scrutiny reveals that most of the episodes deal with adult problems like extramarital affairs, love triangles etc. where the murder occurs. Hence, sex is mixed with violence, creating an atmosphere of fear. Children, thus not only experience fear of the horror scenes but also participate voyeuristically at the shameless passions of crime. It is this sense of excitement and fear that is greatly capitalized by the producers who love to give users the "thrill". It is this latent voyeuristic gaze that remains with them for their later years, being vented during times of aggression.

2.1 Misogyny, Torture and Pseudo Patriotism-

Many YouTube videos which go viral demonstrate a woman being tortured and humiliated, this will be the orientation with which they will view their own lives, waiting for it to surface. This in the future manifests in one way or the other, permeating the social environment with violence- thus forming the background for a popular culture where violence pervades. Thus violence in the context of our popular culture is reflected by and is itself a reflection of Social Media Platforms. The excitement of inflicting pain or death and the terror of seeing these up close, they suggest we may so learn to steel ourselves, to become better able to "take" the violence before our eyes. A common accompaniment of such learning is to come to look at the infliction of suffering in a purely aesthetic way, to make judgments about the expertise or the strength or the courage of the combatants, or to look for elements of beauty in the encounter itself.

The Indian orientation towards violence as said earlier, is also the by-products of its tensions with Pakistan, the entire political map being inundated with fears of war, disasters, terrorist attacks, and riots. This animosity also finds reflection in TV serials and films where the patriotic sentiment is exploited to the fullest, giving sanctity to war for the benefit of the motherland. In news programs like 'Hindustani' we find Indian soldiers whose actions are dramatized, showing how they create all kinds of violence in order to defend their motherland. Recently, after the resuming of fresh tensions on the borderline of India and Pakistan, increase of terrorism and abductions the theme of patriotism pervades our popular culture. These viral news clips in their endeavour to boost patriotism among the masses, actually succeeds in creating mass hysteria against the Muslims. Pakistan or rather Pakistanis are branded as Zealots and traitors who perpetuate violence. Indian serials depicting patriotism often goes on to filmic excesses, hailing the country as Mother and that Indian soldiers can stoop to any limits to protect their sovereignty, if it is even at the cost of other peoples lives.

As William James points out, "What excites and interests the looker-on at life, what the

romances and the statues celebrate and the grim civic monuments remind us of is the everlasting battle of the powers of light with those of darkness, with heroism reduced to its barest chance, yet ever and anon snatching victory from the jaws of death." The same notion is reiterated by Bok in her book 'Mayhem' pg. 29 in regard to the film 'Independence Day' that "appeal to the sense of delight we know from childhood in wreaking havoc, knocking down towers, and seeing fireworks explode and buildings crumble to dust. It is when the harms done to the victims is to be enjoyed for its own sake that the paradox of entertainment violence is most striking to the uninitiated."

2.2 Viral Horror Videos, Real and the Vicarious-

The boundaries between reality and unreality are especially permeable for young users of YouTube. They are unable through at least the age of 13 or 14 to distinguish fact from fantasy. Even older users rarely manage to keep "real life" and vicarious experience in watertight compartments. Children are also more likely to conclude that violence on the screen reflects real life abuses if they have any personal experience of abuse in their family or neighborhood.

For them, what they witness at home and on the streets reinforces what they see on the screen. They are exposed, before they are in any position to distinguish what they see on the screen from real life, to amounts and levels of entertainment violence that are potentially more brutalizing than many adults.

In Britain, the video 'Child's Play 3' was at issue when two 10 year olds tormented, then murdered a toddler, James Bulger, after viewing and later when a teenager Suzanne Capper, 65 The fear that inanimate objects could come alive to terrorize us is an old one; many a ghost story and Twilight Zone episode has been based upon it. The scariest element, though, is the uncertainty involved in the object's animation. Is the doll actually alive, or is the character being plagued by foe doll simply going insane? And how are we, as viewers, supposed to tell the difference? There are other serials that bring out the condition of the Indian society.

'Haqqeequat' is a hard hitting dramatized version of real life stories of atrocities ranging from child abuse to child labor, dowry deaths, custodial torture, rape and death, immoral traffic, domestic violence and so on. Having dealt with several Human Rights violations including the famous Bhagalpur Blindings Case⁶⁶, Haqqeequat also featured recent news items where it dramatized the modus operandi of two women who were convicted and sentenced to death by hanging by the Supreme Court for their crime of kidnapping kids, forcing them to beg and later kill them. Another recent incident whose dramatized version telecasted related to the fake mental asylum in Erwadi near Chennai where mentally deranged people used to be chained caught fire in which all the 25 patients were burnt alive.

Also shown were episodes on militancy in Kashmir and the August 6* incident in Muzaffarpur where their parents hanged the two young lovers because they were against their progeny's love for each other. Not only this, if we analyze the construction of gender and nation in the YouTube clips, we would actually encounter the ideological assumptions underlying and reinforcing the stereotypical definitions of Indian nationhood. Prahlad

Kakkar, owner of an Advertising Agency in North India, has observed: -" The household usage of women is truly exploitative, showing women as dowdy, unattractive housewives who slave for their families without any personal ambition of enslaving."

3.0 Conclusion and Observations

The backbone of the present study of YouTube videos, news clips, musical videos and how it is situated in the contemporary global order clearly indicates a basic assumption that New and Interactive Social media like YouTube plays in the role of human behaviour modification, both on an empirical plane as well on an intuitive plane. As far as the question of impact of mediated messages are concerned, the level at which it occurs is still incohesive or blurred. Numerous researchers and field studies have been carried out to gauge the layers at which media impact is at its height, but no conclusive evidence has been found relating to the fact that New Media is the sole cause of a certain effect or impact in any individual". However, one can infer with certainty that mediated messages do have an effect both in terms of long-term

cultural transformation as well as change in individual perception. This perhaps would furnish an explanation regarding the influx of advertisements in the YouTube media content.

Now that the question of New media effects is on the affirmative, one can advance an interesting as well as illuminating subject of media studies - interpretation of mediated messages. It is evident from related literature that people of different cultures interpret mediated messages differently. Thus, the question of the influence of television violence on children will be treated from different angles across different cultures. This could either negate or affirm the erstwhile predominance of the western theorising on media effects.

This research has focus mainly focussed on a number of issues- the first being how YouTube as a medium is perceived by young urban users, how and in what form do programs containing violence influence them. The second question that this research tries to address is how it manifests itself.

It should be mentioned at the outset that this study is done keeping in mind the regional and cultural differences between the two parts of the globe. As such, India as a developing country is typified by certain characteristics as far as propagation of New media is concerned - it is denoted as a "high-context" culture as elaborated by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1977). According to Hall, mass media operates differently in different contexts. Hence for the feasibility of our research, we must operate keeping certain basic tenets into consideration. First, communication in a culture such as ours is typically short, pithy and poetic. They can be understood by members of the "in group" in question by a member of the group in question but will be baffling to outsiders. When dealing with touchy issues, our communication style is not particularly specific, but weaves a web of inference around that issue assuming that the parties involved can draw their own conclusion.

Keeping in mind the throngs of illiteracy in juxtaposition with New media spear-heading like an imperialist it remains to be seen whether violent content in television immunises

users forever or whether it is the cause of latent tension and aggression which manifests itself from time to time. Working on an area of such magnitude is not an easy task as the main respondents had very strong individual and often contradictory opinions on the portrayal of violence.

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