

Qualitative Analysis of Religious Drama in Hindi Cinema: A Study of Movie “Dharam Sankat Mein”

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ARTICLE INFO

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Dates:

Received: 25-02-2023

Accepted: 10-04-2023

Published: 25-06-2023

Keywords:

Hindi cinema, Religion,
Dharma sankat mein,
Mythological cinema

How to Cite:

Kumar, S. (2023)
Qualitative Analysis
of Religious Drama
in Hindi Cinema:
A Study of Movie
“Dharam Sankat
Mein”. *MediaSpace:
DME Journal of
Communication*, 4(1), 11-16.
doi: 10.53361/dmejc.
v4i01.02

MediaSpace:

DME Journal of Communication

e-ISSN: 2583-035X

Abstract

Films offer a platform where social issues can be projected and discuss. Now religion in India is emerged as a new concept or trend to discuss and nothing has been untouched by its effect not even politics. As we earlier said cinema works as a mirror for our society so for that concern this topic has also become a part of Hindi cinema where we can see the aspects of religion almost in all Hindi films as a social issue, different culture, symbols, rituals or ceremonies. The cinema also made a lot of effort to keep all the religions together. In two films of 21st century Veer Zaara & Bajrangi Bhaijan dealt with two different religions Islam and Hinduism at the same time. These films illustrate the positive power of religion which on one side shows the sacrifice of being separated but together and on the other hand all human beings as one unit. With reference to the above said the thing which the researcher is going to find out is the new term which emerges from religion is termed as a religious drama that we all have seen in contemporary cinema.

INTRODUCTION

India is a country of diversity and this diversity is also visible in the spheres of religion. In this country, religious diversity and religious tolerance have been recognized by law & society. During the entire history of the country, religion has been an important place in the culture of here. Religions have sacred histories and narratives, which may be preserved in sacred scriptures, symbols and holy places that main aim to give meaning to life. It also has symbolic stories, which sometimes said by followers to be true, that may have another purpose of explaining the beginning of life, the universe, and other things. These kinds of stories didn't hear from our family or teachers only but there is a huge role played by Hindi cinema that shows us the entire history through the lenses of its cinematography. And it is not wrong if we will say that we can see the entire religious history in different genres of cinema. Whether it is mythological or devotional, romance to gambling all shows the different aspects of a single term religion and present this in a different manner in different -different genres.

Hindi Cinema

Hindi cinema is observed to be crème of the Indian film industry which is not, unlike the previously stated Indian film industry. Hindi is a language that is

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spoken in a few northern states of India and works as one official language of the state. Even though the access to this language is very few in the other states but the cinema has conveyed its majority to those states. It is remarkable to see how an official language base film industry has become that much success and has managed every regional film industry in India. India has multiple languages and dialects, cast, culture, religion and practices. Hindi cinema has managed to absorb all these aspects of Indian culture and form a distinctive film industry that produces the integrity of India. Hindi cinema has a connection to the popular terms of address, reception, and aesthetics and has undergone significant historical and significant changes. First talkie movie produced in 1931. The post-independence cinema shows Nehru's vision of the nation's modernization. Films made during the emergency period reflect the critique of state and institutions and then the impact of women's movements in 1980 is visible on the avenging film genre and this is how cinema has gone through with different phases or genres with time.

Religious Hindi cinemas

Different genres have been found in Hindi Cinema since its beginning. Mythological, devotional, romance, nationalism are examples of such genres that we are seeing in the Hindi Cinema. This study is all about religious cinema so here the researcher is going to talk about that only. Religious cinema dived into three different genres so that it becomes easy to understand that concept.

Mythological cinema

Mythology is all about the collection of myths that different group of people carries with themselves to prove it to be true. Myths are stories that people tell about nature, history, and customs. It is a feature of every culture. In today's context, it becomes an explanation of existing rituals. Myths are the collection of such stories that deal with the human origins, human conditions, evil, life and death, and the god. The mythology in Hindi cinema is about representing the Hindu Gods. A film's typical narrative makes together various exploits of the Gods & Goddess: a God relationship with another

god, their personal conflicts with the Asura's and interestingly their co-dependent relationship with mortals. The stories that mythological genre adapts are from classical epics, the Ramayana & Mahabharata and various Puranas as found in different versions. In 1943, a movie has been released called Ram Rajya and that was the highest-grossing Indian film of that time.

Devotional cinema

This genre has been found as a well established with its own codes, graphics, narrative strategies which have been associated with a single screen theatre. This term devotional comes out from the box of the mythology, where God and Goddess are protagonists. With this new genre, movies were dedicated to deities, saints, and miracles. Sometimes the devotional film overlaps with the mythology which explores a faith's founding principle and fundamental value either through a tale about god & goddess (Jai Santoshi Maa, 1975), Saint (Shirdi Ke Sai Baba, 1977) or sometimes giving tribute to the religious site (Jai Amarnaath, 1983). Mythological and devotional films were the founding genres of Indian cinema (Rachel Dawyer, 2006, filming God).

Rationalism cinema

Since the early 1990's Indian society has faced or undergone some of the greatest changes. It shows up & downs of political parties who support Hindutva, while economic reforms brought in a new age of consumerism & liberalism. Apart from these changes, one change that occurred was the media revolution, the appearance of satellite and cable TV (1991), the communication revolution, new technologies (Audio Cassette, CD, and VCD). With the advent of these revolutions, the greatest change had emerged in the film industry. Religious epics that had been popular on television soon spread through the cable & satellite. With the advancement of these techniques, the way of presenting films has also been changed. Religious films have now become a religious drama wherewith more entertainment everything has showcased.

Objectives of this Study

- Find out the relation between Hindi Cinema and religion.

- Find out the different elements of religion in a religious drama film.

Research Methodology

The content analysis method is most suitable for this study so that reason the researcher has chosen a qualitative analysis of a religious drama film. Content analysis can be used to understand a wide range of themes such as social change, cultural symbols, changing trends etc. Religious elements of the film were taken into consideration while conducting the analysis. In this research, this method was used to observe different religious activities, values, themes, plots, and characters in the movie Dharam Sankat Mein.

Review of literature

Manjula.S, "Indian Cinema through the century", publication- Publication Division, edition-in his book author says the filmmakers of our country adopted the historical art or temple art but did not pay attention while it comes to the point of realities of life. We configured the deities mentioned in the Vedas in our images but left behind the real situation of the Vedic period, their struggle, their social struggle, their philosophy, their efforts, life cycle and their daily life. We made images of the characters enshrined in Ramayan and Mahabharata we could not project the life enunciated in these epics with authenticity.

Dwyer Rachel, "Filming the God: Religion and Indian Cinema", publication- Routledge, edition-2006, cinema have certain mystical qualities in that we may not understand films but we can feel them and respond to their emotions. Hindi cinema is a very disavowal of certain forms of realism and its unique modification of the melodrama allows the eruption of the religious. Sometimes an image actively engages in the drama that appears religion in everyday life.

Analysis of the Film Dharam Sankat Mein

Dharma Sankat Mein is a religious comedy film directed by Fawad Khan. This film tells the story of an ordinary Hindu man who discovers himself was

born as a Muslim and from that point, his journey of being Hindu and Muslim starts.

Dharam Sankat Mein & Its Issues

After the issue created by Rajkumar Hirani's film PK, CBFC had decided that all the films based on sensitive religious issues will be certified after all misgivings cleared. This film came into poster controversy from a religious Muslim leader. The poster of the film created a lot of noise. In one of the posters of the film, Anu Kapoor seen as wearing a cap that resembled a Muslim cap called "Tsaqiyah" that seem to have irked a certain section of the Muslim community as they took offense to it.

What does the name suggest Dharam Sankat Mein?

Dharampal (Paresh Rawal) and old man discovers himself as a Muslim and adopted by a Hindu family. His life came into trouble because he does not know which religion to follow. These signs of his religious confusion make his Dharam Sankat Mein. His entire worldview goes into confusion and he gets sad. He found himself in huge trouble and confusion after he came to know about his real religion.

Poster controversy

Paresh Rawal, Naseeruddin Shah, Anu Kapoor starrer film DharmSankat Mein also came into controversy after PK due to its poster which claimed that Anu Kapoor has seen as sporting a cap that resembled



Figure 1: Official Poster of Film Dharam Sankat Mein

a Muslim cap or Taqiyah that seems to have irked a certain section of the Muslim community as they took offense to it.

Findings of the Study

This is an era where new indignation is served on the menu every day and ban has become a part of our daily vocabulary. It is commendable to watch a film like Dharam Sankat Mein which manages to get past the censor board. This is a film that shows the positives and negatives of both religion Hindu and Islam.

This film questions the religious faith and blind faith in Goodman. This film is portrayed in the same way as Aamir Khan's PK but is largely associated with the film Oh My God!.

This movie is a religious satire which talks about religious tolerance and inanity of fanaticism. In OMG, Paresh Rawal does not believe in God through any religion and in Dharam Sankat Mein his dilemma is many-dimensional. He fights regularly with his neighbor who is Muslim Mehmood Shah (Anu Kapoor) and his world going upside down when he found himself that he is actually born in Muslim.

Dharampal finds his identity of 50 years ending within a split-second. An urge to meet his biological father comes with a rider: the Maulvi caretaker of his ailing father insists that Dharampal learn the ways of being a Muslim first before getting an audience with his father. On the other hand, the only way Dharampal can impress the family of the girl his son wants to marry is by becoming a follower of Hindu godman Neel Anand (Naseeruddin Shah). Torn between the two religions, Dharampal tries to first embrace both but finally realizes that it is karma and not dharma that determines one's identity.

There is one another religious practice where a priest asked Dharampal to take gomutra (cow's urine) like holy water. This will help him to clean all his internal souls from the darkness of the outside. Due to all this, he makes himself more confused and makes his own situation more complex. His all situations seem more comedian when we watch it on the big screen however it certainly shows our own reality of the religious society of being confused. It shows how a religious factor affects us that much we cannot even think about what we are doing is right or wrong.

The movie takes a turning point when Dharampal burns Muslim taqiya (cap) in front of Neel baba followers to impress them because his son has a relationship with a girl whom the father is a great follower of Neel Baba. At that time someone has recorded that incident and it goes viral among all people. After being pleased with Dharampal Baba comes to his house and asks him to become a dharma rakshak, just then, a Muslim mob arrives and Dharampal is arrested for breaking the peace with a communal act. Faced with police action, he tells the mob he too is a Muslim. They forgive him but his family left him. Through the main characters, this film shows increasing communal riots due to mutual intimacy in two religions.

This film also teaches us about our religion which is humanity. At last, Dharampal also talks about how his journey of being Hindu for his son and Muslim for his father affected his all relations and in the end, he lost everything.

Religious Codes in the Film

- This is an era where indignation is served on the menu every day and ban has become a part of the daily vocabulary in the Indian film industry, it is commendable that a film like Dharam Sankat Mein not only gets made but manages to get past the censor board. This is a film that not only shows Hindu a Hindu or Muslim a Muslim but also presents it's a positive and negative side.
- This film questioning religious beliefs and blind faith in Godmen in the same way as Aamir Khan's PK but is largely associated with Oh My God the 2012 released religious satire. In OMG, Paresh Rawal the main lead does not follow the path of God via religion but in Dharam Sankat Mein two different religion shows their (Paresh Rawal as Dharampal and Anu Kapoor) regular fights due to their different religion until the main lead does not know which religion is he actually from.
- This film shows different religious practices at the same time when Dharampal(Paresh Rawal) the main lead comes to know about his real religion "Muslim" however he does not deny to his previous religion "Hindu" as his family belongs to that religion only.

- He plays a major role when get to know about his birth from other religions. This film shows religious practices like taking Cow's Urine (Gomutra) as holy water to clean all his internal soul. He also went to Mosque, wearing Taqiyah (cap).
- This film shows the blind faith of Baba's followers. Naseeruddin Shah (Neel Anand Baba) played that role. This film exposed the real faces of such kinds of Gurus who make people fool for their benefits.

Controversial Issues

- It might be impossible if we think of Indian cinema without controversies because it always does whenever the movie comes out from a producer's box. It is not new in the industry but since 2014 we discussed it a lot as it also belongs to religious sentiments and what cinema is going to show about our religion one always wants to know and sometimes ready to blast if it does not according to the reality. The tradition of ban and controversies is not famous only in India but also in western countries (Alan Randolph Jones, 2017).
- Religion becomes a very sensitive issue in India because there is a limit to religious sensitivities. Sense and intolerance are being seen in the form of communal hatred, resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths during various physical realities and incidents. There has been a history of derogatory reactions and intolerant behavior against the controversial cinematic estimates of the religions of India. PK is a recent example of such controversy. But this is not the only movie. Many movies in the past have faced hostility from various religious groups and organizations. These groups said about these films, these religious symbols were controversial and harmful to rituals and practices
- If we looked back, there were numerous examples of these kinds of Hostilities. In 1996, Deepa Mehta's Fire (film) released and it talked about the issue of homosexuality. That was the time when these kinds of issues not even discussed in the public sphere and she raised the voice against it. It was considered as anti-

Hindu and violating Hindu religion by Shiv Sena, a Hindu parochial party. This party does not even stop here; they also raised their voice further in the name of Hinduism. Shiv Sena came forward against 2009 released "Kurban". They were against Kurban's poster starring Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor because it showed Kareena's bareback.

CONCLUSION

Indian society is a package of different religions where different people practice different religions in different ways, people have an extension of belief beyond their personal life and in social order too. There is a deeply rooted devotion to Godman in Indian society. The study of religion leads us to the multiple aspects of the texts and their diverse histories. Religion, political, economic and sociological text represents India's different storytelling tradition. The Indian film industry has been depicting saints, gods, and goddesses from its very beginning, sometimes as mythological or Devotional. And often cinema presented all this in a stereotypical manner that also confirms the religious conservatism. With the advancement of technology, many things have changed now. This film shows the religious elements that we find easily in today's era, such as beliefs, religious organizations, emotions, rituals, and ceremonies, sacred objects, sects. This film also shows how religion is becoming an organization of beliefs and emotions. Conservative thinking of the people for religion has to challenge the cinematic representation of the religion, culture, symbols, and codes. This conservatism is the only genuine thing that can be absorbed easily and fraud people take them for their profitability.

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