

**T.C.
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL STUDIES**

**THE IMPACT OF MODERNIZATION ON THE
REPRESENTATION OF INDIAN TRADITIONAL CULTURE: THE
GOLDEN AGE OF INDIAN CINEMA**

Sisa SISA

MASTER DEGREE THESIS

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Tlay ELİK

JANUARY - 2025

**T.C.
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**THE IMPACT OF MODERNIZATION ON THE
REPRESENTATION OF INDIAN TRADITIONAL
CULTURE: THE GOLDEN AGE OF INDIAN CINEMA**

MASTER DEGREE THESIS

Sisa SISA

Department: Cultural Studies

“This thesis was defended online on 29/01/2025 and was unanimously accepted by the jury members whose names are listed below.”

JURY MEMBER	APPROVAL
Assoc. Prof. Tuğba AYAS ÖNOL	Successful
Assoc. Prof. Özge Baydaş Sayılğan	Successful
Assist. Prof. Tülay ÇELİK	Successful

ETHICS STATEMENT

According to the Similarity Report received by your institute within the framework of the Implementation Principles, the similarity rate of the thesis work, whose information is given above, does not contain any plagiarism; I declare that I accept all kinds of legal responsibility that may arise in a possible situation where the opposite is determined and that I have received the approval document if Ethics Committee Approval is required.

Is an ethics committee approval document needed?

Yes ☐

No ☒

(The studies that require the approval of the Ethics Committee are as follows:

- All kinds of research conducted with qualitative or quantitative approaches that require data collection from the participants by using survey, interview, focus group work, observation, experiment, interview techniques,
- The use of humans and animals (including material/data) for experimental or other scientific purposes,
- Clinical studies on humans,
- Research on animals,
- Retrospective studies in accordance with the personal data protection law.)

Sisa SISA

29/01/2025

THE PREFACE

All praises to God who is the Lord of the universe.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Tülay Çelik, for her invaluable guidance, expertise and unwavering support throughout this journey. Her motivation, enthusiasm and extensive knowledge have been a constant source of inspiration. Her encouragement and mentorship have made a profound impact on my work.

Sisa SISA

29/01/2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	iii
LIST OF IMAGES	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ÖZET	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
1.1. Modernization Process in India	9
1.2. Post-colonial Studies and Essential Concepts	15
1.3. Post-colonial Cinema Studies	24
1.3.1. Indian Cinema as Third Cinema	25
1.3.2. Modernization and Melodrama in Indian Cinema	30
1.4. Indian Traditional Culture and Modernization	35
1.5. Golden Age of Indian Cinema and Melodramatic Universe	39
1.5.1. The Development of Indian Cinema	40
1.5.1.1. Major Periods in Indian Cinema.....	42
1.5.1.2. The Success of Melodrama in the Golden Age	44
1.5.2. Essential Characteristics of Melodramatic Universe	47
1.5.3. Representational Patterns of Indian Films	50
1.5.4. The Role of Indian Music and Dance in a Modern World.....	51
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY	54
2.1. Research Method	56
2.2. Sampling of the Research	57
2.3. Data Collection	58
CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	59
3.1. Analyses of <i>Shree 420</i>	59
3.2. Analyses of <i>Awara</i>	71
3.3. Analyses of <i>Mother India</i>	82
3.4. Analyses of <i>Mughal-e-Azam</i>	93
3.5. Discussion.....	105

CONCLUSION	114
REFERENCES	117
CURRICULUM VITAE	123



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Themes of Films	105
---------------------------------------	-----



LIST OF IMAGES

Image 1: Maya Gives a Harsh Look to Raj When He Asks His Share While on the Right Raj's Emotional Face Expressions as He Learns that He has been Conned by Maya.....	61
Image 2: Maya's Outfit Portraying Modernized Outfit and Lifestyle and Maya Shakes Hand with a Man, Portraying Modernized Value in Indian Cinema	63
Image 3: Raju Convinces Vidya to Accept his Financial Help but Vidya Refuses and Raju Shows Bundles of Notes to Vidya.....	65
Image 4: Raj's Roadside Friends Dancing, Enjoying Poverty While Maya is Seen Grooving on Modern Beats with Modern Outfit and Dance	67
Image 5: Rita Celebrates Her Birthday with Her Friends.....	73
Image 6: The Exaggerated Looks of Jagunath, Raj's Father and Mother	76
Image 7: Radha and Shamu are Seen Practicing Hindu Rituals	84
Image 8: Shammu and Radha on Their Wedding Night.....	86
Image 9: Radha Massages Shammu's Legs on Her Wedding Night	89
Image 10: Radha Feeds the Family and Remains Hungry	89
Image 11: Emperor Akbar is on Spiritual Journey for a Male Heir and Priests Perform Collective Prayer for Emperor Akbar	96
Image 12: The Sculpture of Lord Kirshina Worshipped at Akbar's Palace by Jodhabai, Practicing Hindu Rituals	96
Image 13: Anarkali Performs on the Most Popular Song, "Pyar Kia to Darna Kia" and Revolts against Akbar	98
Image 14: Artist is Seen Singing "Rag" the Classical Music of the Time While Salim and Anarkali are Seen in Romantic Scenes	99
Image 15: Anarkali is Seen Buried Alive Between the Walls After Akbar's Order to Save His Heir.....	101

ABSTRACT	
Title of Thesis: The Impact of Modernization on the Representation of Indian Traditional Culture: The Golden Age of Indian Cinema	
Author of Thesis: Sisa SISA	
Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Tülay ÇELİK	
Accepted Date: 29/01/2025	Number of Pages: vi (pre text) + 123 (main body)
The Golden Age of popular Indian cinema 1945-1965 produced a great number of films. These films had a great impact not only in India but globally too. These films, rich in melodramatic elements, were intricately linked to colonial discourse at various levels. The qualities of melodrama, a modern form, have contributed to the construction of a Western discourse in films. The aim of this study is to examine how modernization shaped the representations of traditional culture during the golden age. For this purpose, the study, which was based on a qualitative research perspective, utilized thematic approach and critical discourse analysis method. Four films <i>Awara</i> (Kapoor, 1951), <i>Shree 420</i> (Kapoor, 1955), <i>Mother India</i> (Khan, 1957) and <i>Mughal-e-Azam</i> (Asif, 1960) were selected through purposive sampling method were descriptively analyzed in terms of narrative and cinematographic elements. The findings were interpreted under two main themes: Elimination of religious elements and representation of cultural change. The analysis revealed a decline in religious references within these films, with religious representations lacking an organic connection to the overall narrative. Besides religious values were conveyed through more secular themes' characteristic of the melodramatic framework. The cultural shifts brought about by modernization were depicted through surface-level interpretations, reinforcing traditional values within the moral universe shaped by melodramatic elements. Ultimately, the study suggests that representations of traditional culture in Golden Age films were influenced by a Western perspective aligned with a modernist vision.	
Keywords: Indian Cinema, Modernization, Post-colonialism, Melodrama, Golden Age	

ÖZET	
Tezin Başlığı: Modernleşmenin Hint Geleneksel Kültürünün Temsiline Etkisi: Hint Sinemasının Altın Çağı	
Author of Thesis: Sisa SISA	
Supervisor: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Tülay ÇELİK	
Accepted Date: 29/01/2025	Number of Pages: vi (pre text) + 123 (main body)
1945- 1965 yılları arası popüler Hint sinemasının altın çağı olarak adlandırılır. Bu dönemde çok sayıda film üretilmiş ve bu filmler büyük yankı uyandırmıştır. Melodramatik öğelerin ağırlıkta olduğu bu filmler, çeşitli düzeylerde sömürgeci söylemle karmaşık bir şekilde bağlantılıdır. Modern bir form olan melodrama ait nitelikler, filmlerde Batılı bir söylemin inşa edilmesine katkı vermiştir. Buradan hareketle çalışmanın amacı altın çağ döneminde modernleşmenin geleneksel kültüre ait temsilleri nasıl şekillendirdiğini incelemektir. Bu amaçla nitel araştırma perspektifiyle yola çıkılan çalışmada tematik yaklaşım ve eleştirel söylem analizi yönteminden yararlanılmıştır. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenen 4 film <i>Awara</i> (Kapoor, 1955), <i>Shree 420</i> (Kapoor, 1951), <i>Mother India</i> (Khan, 1957), <i>Mughal-e-Azam</i> (Asif, 1960) anlatısal ve sinematografik unsurlar açısından betimsel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular iki ana tema altında yorumlanmıştır: 1. Dini unsurların ortadan kaldırılması 2. Kültürel değişimin sunumu. Buna göre, filmlerde dini referansların azaldığı görülürken yer alan dine ilişkin temsillerin filmlerle organik bir ilişki kurmadığı görülmüştür. Bununla birlikte dini değerlerin melodram evrenine özgü daha seküler temalarla ifade edildiği görülmüştür. Modernleşme sürecinde yaşanan kültürel değişimin ve korunması gereken geleneksel değerlere vurgunun yüzeysel çıkarımlar ve melodramatik unsurların inşa ettiği ahlaki evren aracılığıyla ortaya konduğu görülmüştür. Sonuç olarak, Altın çağ dönemi filmlerinin geleneksel kültüre ilişkin temsillerinde modernist vizyonla uyumlu Batılı bir bakışın etkili olduğu görülmüştür.	
Anahtar Kelimeler: Hint Sineması, Modernleşme, Post-kolonyalizm, Melodram, Altın Çağ	

INTRODUCTION

Subject of Research

Indian cinema achieved a prestigious cultural standing during 1940s, with filmmakers emerging as primary ambassadors of Indian heritage. The period from the 1940s to the 1960s, referred to as the Golden Era of Indian cinema, showcased a plethora of exceptional films, legendary performers, and remarkable directors, eclipsing all previous epochs in the industry's history (Hafeez, & Ara, 2016, p.65). The phase marked a departure from tradition as the influence of modernization took hold. Specific genres, particularly those centered around drama and absolutism, gained prominence in film and television production. The transformation birthed a thoroughly modernized Indian cinema, mainly Indian mainstream (Hindi) cinema. This era's profound influence on subsequent generations of Indian filmmakers remains unparalleled. Filmmakers and directors like Mehboob Khan, Bimal Roy, Raj Kapoor and Guru Dutt established and infused strong social themes (Hafeez, & Ara, 2016, p.65).

The heart of the Golden Era lay in melodrama, a literary genre characterized by its emphasis on sentimentality and heightened emotions, often employing exaggerated or improbable elements. Within Indian cinema, melodrama exhibited distinct features, notably the use of musical interludes to intensify the emotional impact of pivotal moments. These sequences frequently showcased song and dance routines, becoming emblematic of the era (Singh, 2021, p. 12). The melodramatic films of this time often revolved around romantic love stories, typically featuring star-crossed lovers overcoming challenges such as class divisions, familial opposition, or societal norms. Family bonds also held a central place in these films, depicted nostalgically and emotively to underscore their significance. Tragic conclusions were common, where protagonists faced dire adversity and often met a sorrowful fate. Characters conveyed their emotions in a heightened manner, often resorting to loud expressions of yelling, screaming, and weeping (Zapata, 2021).

The late 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s produced films that delved into profound themes: the oppression of the impoverished by affluent landlords, the virtues of sacrifice and honor, survival in urban environments, challenges of untouchability, evolving gender roles, clashes between urban and rural values, and the dichotomy of materialism versus

spiritualism. These films featured characters, plots, and emotional morals, captivating audiences and leading them to embrace the world of cinema as an avenue for fantasy and escape. The contributions of this period had a lasting impression on the collective consciousness. A dominant motif of this period was intense love triangles interwoven with tumultuous family dynamics, poverty, exploitation, and sorrow, creating a unique form of melodrama with a touch of modernization. This format, specific to Indian cinema, prominently showcased numerous songs and dance routines.

Although the success of popular cinema hinged on melodrama, extravagant musical sequences, and appealing to the middle-class audience – a powerful segment of society – the process of modernization introduced a Westernized undertone to Indian cinema. This transformation was partly influenced by the enduring fascination with fairness and foreign ideals that persisted even after colonial rule had ended. Cinematic stars projected idealized notions of beauty, evolving across generations. Notably, many roles portrayed in Indian cinema bore resemblance to those seen in Western films, often presenting women as objects of desire. The evolution of Indian cinema holds reflections of colonialism, engaging in reshaping the way representation functions. A critical analysis of visual representation involves decoding the dominant discourse of the post independent Indian cinema, exemplified by films that endorsed colonial dominance over colonies, influenced filmic representations.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate the transformation of traditional, religious, and cultural representation in Indian cinema brought about by the forces of modernization. As the research centers on Indian popular cinema during its globally acclaimed Golden Age, aiming to explore the adverse implications of modernization on Indian cinema, the core of this problem lies in the adoption of modernism and its incorporation of associated elements, notably melodrama. Indian cinema, for a multitude of reasons, has been scrutinized by scholars and researchers. Particularly for its portrayal of gender, class, religion, and ethnicity. Through its depiction, Indian cinema reinforces orientalist perceptions of India and South Asia, presenting them as exotic, primitive, and enigmatic. According to Mishra, this perspective aligns with Western notions of India as a mystical land populated by snake charmers, beggars, and holy men. Gender and

sexuality often emerge in patriarchal and heteronormative forms, alongside class representation where affluence is glamorized while the working class is often confined to stereotypes of poverty and marginalization (Mishra, 2002).

Furthermore, after the independence Indian films started portraying Indian nationalism, which frequently echoed Western dominant ideologies and downplayed the diverse tapestry of Indian culture and history (Khan, 2020, p.2). Rather than challenging prevailing societal narratives, Indian cinema perpetuated and reinforced colonial and neo-colonial power structures (Khan, 2020, p.15). National film cultures are rooted in shared history, religion, and evolving artistic and literary traditions (Nochimson, 2010 p. 14). Prior to British colonization, India boasted a rich and distinctive cultural heritage. The arrival of the British in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and their rule until the mid-20th century profoundly impacted the cultural identity of the native populace. Even after gaining independence, India struggled to rekindle its original culture and values, which had been fervently defended and intended for future generations.

The modernization discourse in India emerged during the independence movement but intensified after 1947 under Jawarharlal Nehru's leadership. It became a state-driven process focusing on scientific progress, industrialization and a planned economy through five-year plans. Major infrastructure projects, such as dams and steel plants, symbolized development (Sharma, 2023). Noteworthy among these effects are the promotion of secularism, notions of white supremacy, pronounced emotional behavior, class dynamics, urbanization, and shifts in women's roles. This study examines the impact of modernization, on cinematic representations of Indian culture.

Melodrama, a pivotal genre of modern era, serves as a modern form that addresses and navigates individuals' fears and anxieties during the modernization process. Drawing on theoretical frameworks by Peter Brooks and Bill Singer, this study examines how melodrama mediates the tension between tradition and modernity. By analyzing iconic films from Indian cinema's Golden Age, the research aims to demonstrate how postcolonial Indian cinema grappled with cultural transformation, moral dilemmas and the reconfiguration of identity in newly independent India's rapidly modernizing society.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the Golden Age of Indian cinema in cultural studies cannot be understated. Spanning the years 1945 to 1965, Indian cinema played a vital role in shaping national identity, fostering national consciousness, depicting ideal family structures, critiquing class biases, and disseminating phenomena like globalization, westernization, urbanization, and modernization. However, the onset of modernization posed a profound challenge to Indian culture and identity, as popular cinema, while entertaining audiences, often showcased foreign cultures that overshadowed indigenous traditions. The acceptance of modernization within Indian cinema marked the crux of ensuing issues. From extreme nationalism to fantasies and melodrama, all these genres emerged from the embrace of modernization by post-colonial India's film industry. In contrast, Indian art cinema, which celebrates Indian traditions, culture, religion, and family values, remains relatively lesser known locally due to its opposition to utopianism and absolutism.

It entails an examination of the formal and content-related aspects influenced by modernization within the cinematic medium. The study aims to enrich the academic discourse on modernization's impact on Indian culture and tradition, particularly through the lens of Indian cinema during its golden age. Additionally, by crafting an ethnographic account of this phenomenon, the study endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of how post-colonial India navigated the process of modernization, resulting in shifts not only in cultural foundations but also religious and traditional expressions. This exploration is intriguing in exploring how Indian cinema embraced the essence of popular culture by incorporating a pivotal element of modernization, namely melodrama.

The realm of post-colonial works accentuates the uniqueness of Indian cinema. Bill Ashcroft (2012), in "Bollywood, Postcolonial Transformations and Modernity," positions Bollywood as a symbol of post-colonial transformation. It symbolizes a spectrum of practices undertaken by agents who position themselves within a counter-discursive discourse, employing the transformation of dominant technologies. This dynamic is an illustrative instance of the symbiotic relationship between modernity and globalization. As Marshall Berman (1982: 16) elaborates modernism and modernization have given rise to diverse visions that empower individuals to be both subjects and agents of change amidst the ever-changing world Echoing this sentiment, Achille Mbembe (2002, p. 634)

asserts that colonization, like Islam and Christianity, is a universalizing endeavor with the ultimate aim of assimilating the colonized into the realm of modernity.

K. Moti Gokulsing and Wimal Dissanayake (1998), in "Indian Popular Cinema, a narrative of cultural change," elucidate the association of Indian cinema with modernization. During the partition of India in 1947, India appeared as a nation with uncertain prospects for sustaining democratic institutions. Numerous scholars have highlighted the pivotal role of Indian films in fostering national unity. Indian cinema, particularly Hindi movies, is often perceived as a unifying force and a conduit through which historical patterns and inherited belief systems adapt to modernity, as highlighted by Mira Reym Binford (1989). The narratives portrayed in Indian cinema vividly articulate the formation of modern Indian consciousness. As such, delving into the experiences depicted in Indian cinema offers an invaluable opportunity to grasp the intricate phenomenon of modernization. Moreover, the research aims to shed light on the negative facets of modernization that are ubiquitous in modernizing nations. This study endeavors to reveal the obscured aspects beneath the veneer of magnificence, particularly within the realm of Bollywood. What is meant by this 'dark side'? It refers to the commodification of Indian culture, reducing it to Westernized patterns within the commercial sector.

The era of the golden age prompted an unquestioning acceptance of whatever was presented on screen. From elegantly attired gentlemen romantically embracing their partners to congregating in multiplexes for laughter and enjoyment, a fervent embrace of modern culture ensued. However, this acceptance was coupled with the neglect of art cinema, which portrayed authentic life experiences but failed to appease audiences seeking happiness. Consequently, popular cinema garnered nationwide and global popularity. Globalization bolstered the focus on the diaspora and its associated elements, while urbanization, industrialization, and modernization dominated big-budget commercial films. The study chiefly revolves around post-colonial Indian cinema's Golden Age and traces the emergence of modernization in this context, leading to a bifurcation between popular and art cinema. This evolution has implications for India's cultural and identity loss as a result of adopting modernization. The research emphasizes the shift in the representation of traditional values, including multiculturalism,

polytheism, and family and societal norms, within melodramatic framework in of Indian cinema's Golden Age.

Statement of Problem

The representation of Indian traditional culture in popular cinema during the Golden Age (1940-1960) is a complex intersection of modernization, colonial legacies and postcolonial identity formation. With the post-independence era witnessing the rise of modernization, Indian cinema became a crucial medium through which the nation grappled with the integration of traditional values into rapidly evolving social, political and cultural landscape. However, this period also marked a significant tension between the preservation of indigenous cultural norms and the influence of Westernization, industrialization and urbanization.

While the Golden Age of Indian cinema played an essential role in shaping identity and reflecting societal aspirations, it also contributed to the commodification and distortion of Indian traditions. The introduction and widespread use of melodrama in popular films became an important vehicle for presenting the narrative struggles between tradition and modernity, but it also led to the portrayal of idealized, often unrealistic representations of family values, gender roles and societal structures. These portrayals inadvertently reinforced colonial perceptions of India as exotic, primitive and in need of modernization, while also diluting the authenticity of India's cultural identity.

Thus, the primary problem this thesis seeks to address is the complex role of melodrama in the Golden Age of Indian cinema in representing the evolving cultural and traditional values of postcolonial India. Specifically, it investigates how these films both reflected and shaped the tensions between modernity and tradition, revealing the impact of modernization on the perception and portrayal of Indian culture in the post-independence cinematic landscape.

Building upon the aforementioned assumptions, this thesis delves into the following questions:

Research Questions

1. How did the modernization process affect Indian cinema?
2. How did Indian popular cinema promote modernization?

- a. What was the role of melodramatic elements in this change?
 - b. What is the role of music and dance?
3. How has the presentation of traditional values changed?

Method of the Study

In order to answer the research questions, a qualitative research approach was adopted in the study. The sample universe of the research comprises films produced during the "Golden Age" of Indian Cinema. 4 films, *Awara* (Kapoor, 1951), *Shree 420* (Kapoor, 1955), *Mother India* (Khan, 1957) and *Mughal-e-Azam* (Asif, 1960), selected by purposive sampling method, were analyzed as documents. Using a thematic approach and critical discourse analysis, the narrative and cinematographic qualities of the films were analyzed and interpreted descriptively.

The first chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the modernization process in India, exploring its historical trajectory and its intersection with postcolonial theory. Key concepts such as modernization, colonialism, and orientalism are examined to establish a theoretical foundation for analyzing Indian cinema. The discussion extends to third-world film principles and the evolving status of Indian popular cinema within its framework. Additionally, significant studies on the impact of modernization on Indian cinema and cultural values are revisited, with a particular focus on how modernization has influenced these transformations. Furthermore, this section delves into the Golden Age of Indian cinema (1940-1960), a period marked by the dominance of melodrama as a cinematic genre. The development of Indian cinema is traced, highlighting major historical periods and the success of melodramatic storytelling during the Golden Age. Essential characteristics of the melodramatic universe are analyzed, alongside recurring representational patterns in Indian films. In the second chapter of this study, research methodology and research methods are explained. Moreover, sampling of research and data collection methods are put forth in this section. In the third chapter of the research four films; *Awara* (1951), *Shree 420* (1955), *Mother India* (1957) and *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) are analyzed using critical discourse analysis. Each film's narrative and cinematographic features have been thoroughly analyzed and studied with a focus on elimination of religious components; the expression of cultural values alongside modern values; and superficial inferences about cultural change.

This study employs the postcolonial perspective to examine how colonial power dynamics continue to influence modern societies and how postcolonial studies look at the cultural, political, and social legacies of colonialism and imperialism. Critical Discourse Analysis is the main methodology in this study which examines the connection between language, power, and society. The application of Critical Discourse Analysis, which focusses on language, visual metaphors, and symbols, is used to find patterns in the representation of these themes. Popular Indian films from the 1945–1960 "Golden Age" of Indian cinema provided the study's source material. The aim of the analysis is to understand how melodramatic elements are employed to depict themes of modernization, tradition, and social dynamics in the selected popular Indian films by emphasizing several cinematographic and narrative elements, including acting, dialogue, composition, attire, and music.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

The section provides a comprehensive overview of the modernization process in India, exploring its historical trajectory and its intersection with postcolonial theory. Key concepts such as modernization, colonialism, and orientalism are examined to establish a theoretical foundation for analyzing Indian cinema. The discussion extends to third-world film principles and the evolving status of Indian popular cinema within its framework. Additionally, significant studies on the impact of modernization on Indian cinema and cultural values are revisited, with a particular focus on how modernization has influenced these transformations. Furthermore, this section delves into the Golden Age of Indian cinema (1940-1960), a period marked by the dominance of melodrama as a cinematic genre. The development of Indian cinema is traced, highlighting major historical periods and the success of melodramatic storytelling during the Golden Age. Essential characteristics of the melodramatic universe are analyzed, alongside recurring representational patterns in Indian films. Lastly, the role of Indian music and dance in a modernizing world is explored, shedding light on their significance in both preserving tradition and adapting to cotemporary cinematic narratives.

1.1. Modernization Process in India

The term "modernization," as articulated by S.H. Alatas, refers to the process of integrating modern scientific knowledge into society, with the ultimate goal of fostering a more enriched and fulfilling life in alignment with the values and aspirations of that society (Alatas, 1972, p. 212). Meanwhile, Professor Yogendra Singh asserts that modernization embodies a rational approach to issues and their assessment, devoid of a particularistic perspective. He further explains that modernization is grounded in a scientific worldview and is deeply interconnected with the spread of scientific knowledge, technological expertise and the utilization of available resources (Singh, 2012, p.61).

Zygmunt Bauman's seminal work on "liquid modernity" (2013) provides valuable insights into the dynamics of modernity, emphasizing the relentless pace of change in the "modern" world. Bauman observes that modern societies are in a state of constant evolution, experiencing changes that are occurring at an increasingly rapid rate. He underscores that contemporary individuals and entities may differ in numerous aspects, yet they are bound by their inherent fragility, impermanence, vulnerability, and insatiable

appetite for perpetual change (Bauman, 2013). Merely "being" is inadequate; rather, the essence of modernity lies in perpetual "becoming," defying finality and embracing ongoing transformation. This perpetual state of flux characterizes what it means to be "modern" (Bauman, 2013, p.66).

The effects of modernization in Indian culture have been profound and multifaceted. India, characterized by its vast diversity in terms of language, religion, tradition, and socio-economic conditions, has undergone a complex transformation in the wake of its independence from British rule in 1947. While the country's strong artistic, cultural, and religious traditions have historically played a unifying role, the advent of modernization introduced through Western contact, particularly during the British colonial era, ushered in significant changes in Indian society. Modernization in India, initially driven by Western ideals, represented a seismic shift in culture and social structure. The contact with the West had a transformative impact, leading to the adoption of modern cultural institutions and altering traditional practices. It's essential to recognize that this process of modernization wasn't a straightforward replacement of tradition but rather a coexistence of both. Traditional institutions also experienced reinforcement alongside the introduction of modern ones, highlighting the nuanced and dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity. The historical context of British rule in India played a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of modernization. As India embarked on a journey towards nation-building and post-independence, it enthusiastically embraced Western ideals of progress and development. This embrace of modernization, while driven by a desire for growth and transformation, underscores the complexity of India's socio-cultural evolution. The coexistence of fundamentalism and orthodoxy with scientific progress exemplifies the dichotomy that modernization introduced, challenging simplistic notions of tradition versus modernity (Kashyap, 2004, pp. 342-345).

In essence, the effects of modernization in Indian culture reflect a nuanced and intricate interplay between the country's rich traditional heritage and the transformative forces of Western influence. This historical backdrop lays the foundation for a comprehensive examination of how modernization has influenced the representation of Indian traditional culture, a central theme in the thesis.

Nonetheless, there are recurring themes and concepts that support the values, views, and practices of the prevailing civilization. Generally speaking, Indians are very proud of the

distinctiveness and variety of their culture. The 'Indian identity' has changed throughout time along with the political and religious structures both within and outside of India. For instance, from 1858 and 1947, the British Raj significantly altered the nation's political, cultural, and economic landscape. Following its independence from the British in 1947, India was split into the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of India. The complexities of Indian identity tied to religion are shown by partition. Linking Hindu identity and aspirations to Indian national identity is one temptation. This connection has existed since British colonization. But this kind of thinking tends to misrepresent the religious and cultural diversity of India (Sen, 2012; Srinivas, 1995; Keay, 2011).

Indian conventional and religious conceptions of life come up against views of a Western and contemporary style of life within the worldwide system of financial and cultural interchange. For the last 200 years, religious and political events in India have been strongly influenced by the concept of modernity found in Western culture. In his 1966 paper, M.N. Srinivas defines "westernization" as the change in Indian society caused by British colonial influence. The domains of change include things like food, clothes, technology, and adjustments to people's habits and lives. He asserts that westernization occurs in three phases. 1) Primary: where a limited number of people were exposed to and benefited most from western culture. 2) Secondary: those facets of Indian society that had direct contact with the main recipients. 3) Tertiary: people who gained knowledge of the technologies introduced by the British in an indirect manner. But not all aspects of Indian society have been equally or consistently westernized. While Srinivas cites humanitarianism and equality as positive characteristics of westernization, others see it as a template for a "impersonal, non-cultural, and non-sovereign state" and a type of cultural and cognitive colonization (Srinivas, 1995; Barnouw, 1993).

Westernization has led to a fresh emergence of a pan-Indian culture. The west has had an effect on a number of fields, including education, law, science, and technology, new forms of politicization, urbanization, industrialization, the press, transportation, and communication. According to Y. Singh, the revival of these institutional foci is known as "cultural modernization." The influence of the west has spawned "a new great heritage of modernization." This undoubtedly creates a tension between the indigenous and western traditions on Indian land. There has been a synthesis between the two, especially with relation to the upper classes of Indian society. The effects of "globalization" on Indian

society today are much greater. In truth, India is in the midst of becoming into a major international marketplace and hub for business and professional activity (Singh, 2012; Henderson, 2002).

Consequently, they are frequently used interchangeably and synonymously. Many sociological classics and studies on modernization from the 1940s and 1950s are deeply entwined with the foundational institutional structures of European modernity and the cultural ideals of modernity prevalent in the Western world (Naidu, 2006, pp. 66-69). Besim F. Dellaloğlu, (2016, pp. 141-150) in *Mentality Realm of Modernization: A Tanpınar Fetishism*, explains that the apparent dichotomy between political stances in the context of modernizing societies such as Europe's combination of traditional societies, illustrates a widespread "modernization syndrome." This phenomenon is evident in various societies, leading to a blindness that inhibits the recognition of the interplay between tradition and modernity. The facets of modernity, whether represented by the internet, industrialization, or remarkable advancements in fields like science, healthcare, and medicine, find their relevance in the contributions of Max Weber. Weber's engagement with the late 19th-century transformations was influenced by his firsthand experience of witnessing the emergence of the first German national state. This drove him to delve into the understanding of contemporary society. In his writings, Weber focused on several attributes that have come to define the modern world and have been the subject of sociological inquiry for over a century. These attributes include modernism, social stratification, rationality, and bureaucracy. Weber's key insight was that the shift from traditionalism to modernity hinged on shifts in thought, not just methods of production or social integration. Traditional thinking embraces a fundamental order to the universe, while modernity challenges conventions and questions the status quo. The essence of modernity lies in its disposition to scrutinize and reevaluate, unlike traditionalism that accepts the world's inherent order (Dellaloğlu, 2016).

He further draws attention to the distinction between Westernization/modernization and being Western/modern. While the West has embraced modernity while retaining its traditions, in countries like India and across Asia, modernity has been associated with a rejection of tradition. It is essential to explain the concept of colonialism for a better comprehension of the modernization process. Colonialism refers to the practice of acquiring political control over another country, occupying it with settlers and exploiting

its resources for economic and political gain. It has been a significant force in world history, shaping societies, economies and cultures across different continents. The primary motives behind colonial expansion included economic benefits, territorial expansion and the spread of religious and ideological beliefs. European colonial powers, such as Britain, France, Portugal and Spain, used various strategies to maintain control over their colonies, including direct governance, economic dependency and cultural hegemony (Loomba, 1998, p.4). One of the most profound consequences of colonialism was the restructuring of indigenous societies. Traditional governance systems were replaced with Western administrative models, indigenous economies were reshaped to serve the interests of the colonizers and local cultures were often marginalized in favor of European norms and values. The introduction of European languages, education systems and legal frameworks significantly altered the social fabric of colonized societies. Additionally, colonial rule often led to the suppression of native identities and the imposition of racial hierarchies, reinforcing a system of inequality that persisted even after formal decolonization (Loomba, 1998, p.8).

While culturally, colonialism introduced a dual identity crisis among the colonized people (Hogan, 2000). On one hand, they were encouraged to adopt Western values and ideologies, while on the other, they faced discrimination and exclusion from the privileges of colonial rule. This created a fractured sense of identity, leading to struggles between modernity and tradition in postcolonial societies. These impacts extended into various fields, including art, literature and cinema, where indigenous narratives were either erased or reshaped through a colonial lens (Loomba, 1998, p.8 paragraph 2). India was one of the most significant colonies of the British Empire, ruled by the British East India Company from 1757 to 1858, and later by the British Crown from 1858 until independence in 1947. The impact of colonialism in India was profound, affecting its political structure, economic policies, cultural identity and social hierarchies. Economically, Colonial rule transformed India into a supplier of raw materials for British industries while simultaneously serving as a lucrative market for British manufactured goods. Traditional industries such as textiles suffered under British policies, leading to economic dependency and widespread poverty (Karmakar, 2015, p. 229).

Politically, British rule dismantled India's indigenous governance systems, replacing them with a centralized colonial administration. Laws were introduced to consolidate

British authority, often favoring colonial interests over the needs of Indian society. The divide and rule deepened existing religious and social divisions, fostering long-term communal tensions (Mukherjee, 2009). Culturally, British colonialism imposed Western ideals, language and education on Indian society. English became the language of governance and elite education, creating a new class of Western-educated Indians who were often caught between traditional Indian values and European modernity. The colonial narrative frequently depicted Indian culture as inferior, reinforcing orientalist stereotypes that painted India as an exotic, mystical and backward civilization. These portrayals played a crucial role in shaping Western perceptions of India, influencing everything from literature to cinema (Mukherjee, 2009).

However, the influence of colonialism on Indian cinema was multifaceted, shaping both the content and structure of the industry. The introduction of film technology can be traced back to the British colonial period when the Lumiere Brothers' films were first screened in Bombay (presently Mumbai) in 1896 (Barnouw & Krishnaswamy, 1980). However, in its early years, Indian cinema was largely influenced by Western filmmaking techniques, storytelling styles and thematic concerns (Rajadhyaksha & Willemen, 1999). Indian film struggled with the effects of colonial rule and the difficulties of modernization during the post-colonial era (Vasudevan, 2011). These conflicts were mirrored in Indian cinema's Golden Age (1940s–1960s), which produced films that examined subjects of national identity, rural vs urban life, and tradition versus modernity (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2004). During this time, melodrama emerged as a significant genre that provided a way to address societal concerns about modernization and cultural change. Historical and nationalist themes were explored in movies such as *Mother India* (1957) and *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960), which presented an image of India that respected its customs while embracing modernity (Majumdar, 2009).

Colonialism has a long-lasting effect on the Indian cinema industry's structural dynamics. Indian filmmaking and consumerism were impacted by the continued reliance on Western narrative structures, cinematic styles, and storytelling strategies (Vasudevan, 2011). Additionally, ties from the colonial past that made it easier for Indian films to be distributed to viewers abroad might be partially credited with Bollywood's worldwide financial success (Virdi, 2003). Both the thematic content and the structural evolution of Indian film were significantly influenced by colonialism (Dissanayake, 1994). Indian

filmmakers strongly opposed colonial narratives that attempted to present India through an orientalist perspective, utilizing film as a means of preserving culture and establishing national identity. The postcolonial era further reinforced cinema's role in negotiating the complexities of modernization, globalization and cultural identity, making it a vital medium for understanding India's historical and social transformations (Mehta, 2010).

1.2. Post-colonial Studies and Essential Concepts

In the past several decades, postcolonial studies have gained significant traction within academic circles. Its inception can be traced back to the domains of literary and cultural studies, originating as a response to the exclusion of non-Western literatures from the canon. According to Chibber (2013), Postcolonial studies not only delve into the study of colonial history but also assert its role as a tool for political activism. The intent was not merely to generate scholarly discourse but also to emphasize its potential for intervention, as highlighted by Robert J. C. Young (2016), prominent figures within the realm of postcolonial studies have perceived it not just as a theoretical framework, but also as a practice or even a movement. Recent introductions to the field portray postcolonial studies as a theory applicable to those who share a collective commitment to challenging and interrogating the dynamics of domination and subordination within society. Consequently, the focus on imperial civilizations and colonial dominance represents only a fraction of the expansive scope of this field. Its purview has extended to encompass a broad spectrum of social practices (Chibber, 2013, pp. 1-2).

The essence of postcolonialism lies in the celebration of triumph over colonialism rather than the colonial era itself. The 'post' element commemorates several significant victories that deserve recognition in the annals of history. In its very name, the postcolonial era pays homage to pivotal historical achievements in resistance against colonial rule. Paradoxically, it also encapsulates the subsequent conditions that persist, where numerous power structures remain largely unchanged. The roots of postcolonialism can be traced back to historical movements of resistance against colonial occupation and imperial authority. These successful endeavors laid the foundation for radical challenges to the political and conceptual frameworks that underpinned such dominance. Consequently, postcolonial theory emerges from revolutionary Marxism, the national liberation movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, subsequent political and cultural

transformations, tricontinental critiques of economic and cultural paradigms during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, along with the historical ramifications of both forced and voluntary migrations, past and present. This theory integrates historical viewpoints with a theoretical examination of modern culture (Young, 2001, pp. 60-61).

Numerous influential theorists, including Ahmed, Amin, Appiah, Bhabha, Chakrabarty, Dirlik, Guha, Hall, Mazrui, Mudimbe, Said, and Spivak, have devoted extensive periods to exploring postcolonial phenomena. This prolonged engagement with postcolonial theory has led some to label it as *trahison des clercs*, particularly in the view of Indian nationalists. Those who most vehemently articulate the implications of this theory have played a significant role in shaping its direction. The emergence of postcolonial critique within Western academia is deeply connected to the history of postwar immigration (Young, 2001, p. 63). Initially rooted in comparative literature, postcolonial theory has become deeply engaged with representation within the realm of media studies (Ponzanesi, 2018). It introduces novel interventions that examine how visual representations contribute to shaping the boundaries between East and West, Europe and the Rest, self and other. This involves a reevaluation of how visual imagery conveys the workings of power that require deconstruction and decoding. Empire cinema, for instance, perpetuated specific modes of perception, producing films that validated the dominion of colonies by colonial powers. These colonial depictions of gender, race, and class carried intricate ideological undertones (Ponzanesi & Waller, 2012).

The interplay between postcolonial studies and film studies came to the fore toward the end of the 1970s, coinciding with the advancement of semiotic theory and post-structuralist thought (Sinnerbrink, 2012, p. 68). As cited by Ponzanesi in *Postcolonial Cinema Studies* (2012), scholars such as Hamid Naficy (2000), Laura U. Marks (2000), Katarzyna Marciniak, Aniko Imre and Aine O’Healy (2007) have contributed a range of interconnected innovations in filmmaking that engage with postcolonial cinema. Concepts such as cinemas of exile and diaspora, haptic cinema, transnational feminist cinema and national cinemas shaped by migration, interculturality and hybridization (e.g., British-Asian, Black-British, French Beur, African-Italian and Turkish-German cinemas in Europe) are defining and significantly expanding visual narratives. These developments respond to the rapidly shifting global economic, demographic and geopolitical landscape. Naficy (2000) has extensively explored the attributes of an

"accented" cinema of exile and diaspora, delving into both its conceptual underpinnings and artistic manifestations. Accented cinema probes into language utilization (multilingualism, orality, acoustic qualities, accents, and inflections), narrative modes (autobiographical, epistolary, telephonic, SMS texting, and email), and the incorporation of haptic elements. It simultaneously questions notions of belonging, identity, containment within foreign borders, and yearning for a distant "home," appealing to sensory experiences like touch and smell (Waller, 2012, p. 8).

Post-colonialism

Post-colonialism is a critical theoretical framework that examines the effects of colonial rule on formerly colonized societies and the ways in which these nations navigate their political, cultural and economic realities after gaining independence (Laurie, Stark, & Walker, 2019). The theory was originated in the US in the late 1970s and subsequently, proliferated throughout Europe and became a global cultural force. It is not merely a historical phase but an ongoing process of grappling with the residual structures of colonialism, which continue to shape national identities, economic dependencies and socio-political hierarchies (Young, 2011). Post-colonialism explores the tensions between indigenous traditions and imposed Western norms, analyzing how colonial power structures persist in contemporary global politics (Iverson, 2015).

Postcolonial theory is frequently criticized for ontologizing the West-East divide by rejecting the universalizing categories of Enlightenment theories as being Eurocentric and inadequate for comprehending the realities, practices, and experiences of the non-European world. If, as universalism's proponents claim, people have needs and interests that are universal despite historical, cultural, and economic differences, then the postcolonial attempt to "provincialize Europe" and show particular histories of diverse contexts is called into question. It is also used as an excuse to reject emancipatory politics and to exoticize the East as something different when the Renaissance and its violent legacy are criticized (Chakrabarty, 2000).

Furthermore, the theory of post-colonialism delineates the distinctions between the East and the West. It is referred to as the extension of civilization, ideologically rationalizing the self-proclaimed cultural and racial superiority of the Western world over non-Western societies. Western domination persisted in Africa under France and subsequently

extended to Asia under Great Britain. The British established colonies in most Asian countries, with the Indian subcontinent being the largest British colony in Asia (Thomas, 2014). Consequently, the society of the Indian Subcontinent is imbued with the manifestations of post-colonialism. Subsequently, these manifestations of post-colonialism not only permeated literature but also infiltrated cinema, with numerous films from the Indian subcontinent portraying post-colonial themes (Lee, 2020, pp. 43-53).

As described by Vasudevan (2011), Postcolonialism plays a crucial role in understanding cinema, as the film industry has been a major site for negotiating national identity, cultural heritage and the impact of colonial rule (p. 17). The British colonial presence in India not only shaped political and economic structures but also deeply influenced cultural expressions, including literature, theater and cinema (Mathur, 2007). Indian filmmakers have historically used cinema as a medium to resist colonial narratives and reclaim indigenous cultural narratives (Rajadhyaksha & Willemen, 1999).

During colonial rule, British authorities utilized cinema as a propaganda tool to reinforce the legitimacy of their control over India, often depicting Indian society as primitive and in need of Western governance (Mukherjee, 2023). Indian culture was frequently portrayed through an orientalist lens, emphasizing exoticism while dismissing indigenous knowledge and traditions (Said, 1978). However, Indian filmmakers countered this by creating films that celebrated India's rich mythology, history and spiritual traditions. Dadasaheb Phalke's *Raja Harishchandra* (1913), for instance, was a direct response to Western cinematic influences, aiming to establish a distinctly Indian cinematic identity (Gopal & Moorti, 2008).

Postcolonial themes became especially prominent in Indian cinema during the struggle for independence and the early years of nation-building. Films like *Kismet* (1943) subtly included nationalist sentiments, inspiring resistance against British rule despite strict censorship regulations (Kabir, 2011). The post-independence period, often referred to as the Golden Age of Indian cinema (1940s-1960s), saw the emergence of films that grappled with the challenges of modernity, globalization and the preservation of Indian traditions (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2004). Movies like *Mother India* (1957) and *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) exemplified these struggles by presenting narratives that honored India's cultural heritage while addressing themes of progress and social transformation (Majmudar, 2009).

Orientalism

In order to gain better understanding of postcolonialism, it is essential to discuss Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). He laid the foundation for understanding how colonial powers constructed the East as an inferior, exotic and irrational counterpart to the rational, civilized West. His research revealed the characteristics of Western imperialist culture's hegemony. At the same time, Said's cultural imperialism gave rise to a fairly complete postcolonial cultural theory system. This system significantly impacted the development of postmodernist literature and cultural studies, as well as the expansion of postcolonial theory research. His book focusses on how these cultures are represented in the West rather than their traditions or ideologies. Said demonstrates how this field developed concurrently with European expansion into the Near East and how it was fostered and reinforced by a number of other fields, including literature, history, philology, anthropology, philosophy, archaeology, and anthropology. One could argue that *Orientalism* launched a new field of colonialism studies (Said, 1978).

This discourse, rooted in European imperial expansion, has significantly influenced representations of India in Western narratives, including cinema. Postcolonial studies examine how these colonial constructions persist even after formal independence, shaping cultural production in former colonies. Indian cinema has both resisted and internalized *Orientalist* tropes, negotiating a postcolonial identity in response to Western perceptions. During British rule, India was frequently depicted in colonial literature and early Western cinema as a land of mysticism, poverty and exotic rituals reinforcing *Orientalist* discourse that justified imperial control. Despite India's independence in 1947, the legacy of *Orientalist* imagery continued to influence Indian cinema, particularly in films that targeted Western audiences. Some postcolonial scholars argue that certain internationally acclaimed films, such as *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), perpetuate neo-*Orientalist* stereotypes by emphasizing poverty, crime and exotic mysticism rather than showcasing the full complexity of Indian society. While these films gained recognition in global markets, they often reinforced Western perceptions of India as a place of both suffering and spiritual wonder, a framework deeply rooted in colonial narratives. Said's critique of *Orientalism* also highlights the construction of gendered stereotypes, which are reflected in Indian cinema. Western colonial discourse often depicted Indian women in

binary terms: the virtuous, submissive (Sati-Savitiri) versus the exotic, hypersexualized courtesan.

Indian cinema has grappled with this representation, sometimes reinforcing and at other times subverting them. While mainstream cinema has often adhered to these colonial constructions, parallel cinema and feminist filmmakers have challenged these narratives. Postcolonial feminist discourse in Indian cinema continues to evolve, examining how Bollywood's portrayal of gender intersects with colonial legacies. Indian films have been significantly influenced by postcolonialism in terms of its ideas, aesthetics, and storytelling. The complexity of a postcolonial national identity is reflected in the ways that Orientalist representations have been both rejected and embraced in Indian mainstream and parallel film. Indian cinema is a vibrant platform for postcolonial discourse because of the ongoing evolution of the relationship between colonial legacies and cinematic representation. A more thorough examination of how Indian filmmakers negotiate past and present power systems while recreating their own cultural narratives in the postcolonial age is made possible by an understanding of these influences.

Said employs the term *Orientalism* in a number of ways. First of all, Orientalism is a particular academic discipline that focusses on the Middle East and Asia. Additionally, he recognizes it as a practice that contributes to the definition of Europe by establishing a consistent representation of its constitutive outside, or other. In order to manage and displace European anxieties, orientalism uses a series of binary oppositions (rational/irrational, mind/body, order/chaos) to create a contrasting image or idea of Europe. Secondly, Said highlights that it is also a way to organize and categories knowledge about the Orient in order to exercise authority. This discursive approach differs from the idealist perspective that scholarship is neutral and disinterested, as well as from the materialist perspective that knowledge is merely a reflection of political or economic interests. In line with Foucault, Said characterizes discourse as a type of knowledge that is itself a form of power rather than being employed as a tool to further it (Said, 1978).

Thirdly, Said discusses some of the Orient's forms and patterns, such as how Orientalism creates dichotomous contrasts between the Orient and the Occident, with the Orient representing everything the Occident is not. Orientalism is a delusion of the West. Western perceptions of the Orient are often the product of Western fancies and desires

about the region rather than being grounded in reality. Orientalism produces a false image. It functions as a venue for the dissemination of ideas, opinions, and hypotheses regarding the Orient as factual information. Orientalism is the root cause of racism. They stand for the angry and murderous Arabs, the slothful Indians, and the mysterious Chinese folks. Gender stereotypes are embodied by orientalism. The whole East is seen by them as effeminate or as the exotic, sexually promiscuous oriental woman. An Oriental guy lacks adequate masculinity. Oriental women are often portrayed as objects of sexual desire, naked. According to orientalism, masculine colonists had a twisted craving for the orient. In contrast to the West, which often presents us with culturally sound and civilized individuals, Oriental characters are consistently depicted as cowards, lazy, uncivilized, etc. (Said, 1978). Undoubtedly, Said's Orientalism gave rise to a whole new field of study known as the colonial discourse. The word "Orientalism" may refer to a variety of things, including an academic idea, a method of contemplating, and the corporate structure for the Orient, all of which are interrelated. (Said, 1978, pp. 4-6).

The Other

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, a prominent postcolonial theorist, explores the concept of The Other through a critical lens, particularly in her seminal essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988). Its influence has been felt "across the disciplines of literary studies, women's studies, cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, and history, among others." Although the notion of The Other has been previously discussed by thinkers such as Hegel, Sarte, Lacan and Simon de Beauvoir, Spivak's analysis is distinct in its postcolonial and feminist approach. She critiques how colonial and Western discourses have constructed and silenced The Other, particularly the subaltern, a term she borrows from Antonio Gramsci to describe marginalized individuals who exist outside hegemonic power structures (Spivak, 1988).

In postcolonial theory, The Other refers to individuals or groups who are defined in opposition to a dominant cultural identity. As discussed by Said earlier in Orientalism, which illustrates how the West constructed an exoticized and inferior image of the East to justify colonial rule. Spivak extends this argument by emphasizing that the subaltern, those at the lowest levels of social hierarchy, such as colonized women and lower-caste individuals are not only Othered but also silenced. According to Spivak, their voices are

erased through two primary mechanisms: first by colonial rulers who imposed Western intellectuals who claim to represent them but in reality, reinforce their subjugation (Spivak, 1988).

Spivak's argument is crucial for postcolonial studies as it challenges Western knowledge production and its claim to offer objective and universal truths. She critiques Eurocentric scholarship, particularly the works of the theorists like Foucault and Deleuze, for failing to recognize how power structures prevent subaltern voices from being heard. Spivak asserts that even well-intentioned Western scholars, by attempting to "give voice" to the oppressed, often reinforce intellectual imperialism rather than allowing the subaltern to articulate their own narratives (Spivak, 1998). This issue is central to postcolonial discourse, as it highlights how colonialism's effects persist not only in economic and political structures but also in cultural and academic institutions (Young, 2001).

The key contribution of Spivak's work is her critique of colonial "rescue missions." She examines how British colonialist justified interventions in India, such as the banning of sati (widow-burning), under the pretext of "saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak, 1988). However, rather than empowering Indian women, these interventions served to reinforce British superiority and undermine indigenous agency. This perspective is significant in postcolonial discourse as it exposes how colonial powers weaponized gender issues to maintain control, shaping both historical narratives and contemporary global interventions (Loomba, 2005).

This phenomenon is evident in post independent Indian cinema, where modernization introduced Western-centric ideals, shaping representations of identity and marginalizing indigenous perspective. The cinematic portrayal of urban modernity versus rural tradition often positioned the Westernized elite as progressive while depicting rural or traditional characters as regressive. This dichotomy is a clear manifestation of the *Othering* process, where the West or Western-influenced characters are seen as superior, while traditional Indian characters embody outdated, backward values (Spivak, 1988, p. 276). Films from the Golden Era, such as *Awara* (1951) and *Pyaasa* (1957), illustrate these tensions, as protagonists grapple with modern aspirations and deep-rooted traditions, reflecting anxieties about cultural authenticity and Western influence (Zapata, 2021).

Hybridity

Homi K. Bhabha, a significant figure who has introduced key concepts to the field of post-colonial studies, including "hybridity," in his work "The Location of Culture" (1994), he delves into the theory of hybridity, which he views as a paradigm of colonial anxiety. His perspective on cultural hybridity emphasizes the fusion of diverse cultures, leading to the emergence of new cultural expressions within a multicultural framework. This concept of "hybridity" is often seen as an outcome of globalization, reflecting the dynamic interplay of cultures in the modern world. According to Bhabha's theory, intercultural communication and literary inheritance involve the incorporation and enrichment of different cultural elements, resulting in an embodiment of multiculturalism or cosmopolitanism. This notion is particularly relevant in the context of diasporic literature, where characters traverse different cultural landscapes, capturing the essence of postcolonial experience (Bhabha, 1994).

The concept of "diaspora" is central to discussions of cultural displacement and change. Diaspora encompasses both physical and psychological displacement, reflecting a simultaneous geographical, economic, emotional, and cultural transition. Mishra's term "diasporic imaginary" highlights the notion of ethnic enclaves that define themselves as groups living in displacement, engaging in a delicate dance between their own cultural identity and the nation-state they inhabit (Bhabha, 1994). This notion creates a complex interplay between self-definition and opposition to the dominant national identity, ultimately contributing to a nuanced understanding of cultural belonging. Bhabha's theory of hybridity serves as a framework to comprehend how post-colonial Indian cinema grapples with conflicts arising from indigenous traditions and Western colonial influences. This cinema seamlessly blends Indian and Western cinematic traditions, creating a hybridized style that captures both local and global elements. However, it's important to note that while Bhabha's theory highlights the positive aspects of hybridity, it can also have negative effects, particularly in the context of modernization. The fusion of cultural aspects can lead to syncretic behaviors and beliefs, blurring the boundaries between different traditions. This syncretism can be seen in religious contexts, such as the emergence of Sikhism or the Bhakti movement. Moreover, the incorporation of foreign elements has influenced Indian languages, creating hybridized forms that reflect evolving linguistic expressions. The influence of English terms in Indian languages, for

instance, can symbolize education and sophistication, In essence, Bhabha's theory of hybridity provides a lens through which post-colonial Indian cinema's intricate negotiation between cultural traditions and modernization can be understood. This concept sheds light on the liminal spaces where cultures converge, interact, and give rise to new cultural forms. It is a tool that highlights the complexity of identity formation and cultural exchange in a rapidly changing global context, while also recognizing the potential challenges and benefits of hybridization in various cultural domains (Bhabha, 1994).

1.3. Post-colonial Cinema Studies

Postcolonial theory has seldom been a distinguishing paradigm in the field of cinema studies. Although there are many connections, postcolonial theory has not received much attention. It evolved from departments of cinema and media studies as well as comparative literature. Nevertheless, there are more similarities and obvious intersections between the two areas than would be apparent at first. For instance, by the end of the 1970s, postcolonial theory and cinema studies emerged in tandem with the development of semiotic theory and poststructuralist philosophy. The subject of representation, which describes how a language, whether cinematic or not, portrays reality as "mediated" and "discursive," and therefore impacted by power dynamics, is central to both disciplines. Rethinking how the other is depicted has been greatly aided by postcolonial theory, which has addressed long-standing biases and clichés about racial otherness and cultural difference. This calls for fresh approaches to the enforcement of boundaries between the East and the West, Europe and the rest of the globe, and the self and the other, as well as a rethinking or redoing of the manner in which the visual field communicates the use of a skill that has to be decoded (Grieverson, 2011).

For instance, by producing films that justified colonial powers' control over colonies, empire cinema contributed to the development of unique perspectives. The ideological connotations of colonial representations of gender, race, and class supported imperial epistemologies and racial taxonomies, depicting indigenous people as barbarians, primitives, and outsiders in both fictional and documentary films. A variety of perspectives may be promoted via the unique formal and aesthetic qualities of film as a medium. The rule of urban centres over colonial colonies was often justified by empire

films. Colonial representations of gender, race, and class validated imperial taxonomies and epistemologies by depicting indigenous people as barbaric and primitive, subjects outside of modernity (Waller, 2012). The phrase "empire cinema" is not used in Italian film studies, claims Ruth Ben-Ghiat. French and Italian film scholars favor the phrase "colonial cinema." The distinction between colonialism and imperialism is crucial, according to many scholars, even if the words are sometimes used interchangeably. The mindset that propels the activity is known as imperialism (political and economic domination, but also an ideological investment), whereas colonialism is the practice of capturing a nation and taking use of its riches. For the dissemination of these ideological discourses, whose effects endure long after colonization was formally over, cinema was the perfect medium (Ben-Ghiat, 2006).

Mussolini's most effective tool was cinema, which was used deliberately as a component of a well-planned political propaganda campaign to win support. Italian ideals of virility and racial supremacy were promoted by colonial films depicting Roman grandeur during the invasion of Ethiopia (known as Abyssinia before to 1935). Their imperial policies, which were glamorized in front of Italian audiences at home via spectacles, were promoted by means of new technology. Both the building and the fall of empires were influenced by cinema. According to Priya Jaikumar's book *Cinema at the End of Empire*, which we quote in our epigraph, cinema had a paradoxical and ambiguous function on both sides of the imperial divide. Both the height of colonialism and the rise of anti-colonial liberation movements occurred at the same time as the invention of cinema. In her postface to this volume, Jaikumar explores the relationship between imperialism, a dying ideology, and the emergence of a new medium whose delivery to the colonies as a cutting-edge technological tool led to both the assimilation of its language and codes and the potential for their appropriation, giving new countries a potent tool for decolonization and self-representation (Jaikumar, 2006, pp. 17-18).

1.3.1. Indian Cinema as Third Cinema

In the late 1960s, Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino coined the term "Third World cinema," also referred to as "Third Cinema" or "Cinema of the Third World," to describe a filmmaking movement that arose in developing countries, primarily in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Third world film is distinguished by its critical

examination of the social, political, and economic issues that these areas confront, often emphasizing the hardships and daily lives of marginalized groups (Solanas, 1969).

The rise of third world cinema was a response to prevailing cinematic norms, including Hollywood and European art cinema, which were perceived as representing the interests and perspectives of advanced Western countries. Third World filmmakers sought to challenge the cultural and economic dominance of Western nations and regain control over how their realities and experiences were portrayed (Armes, 1987, p. 87). This cinematic movement can be viewed as a critique of the modernization process and its consequences for developing countries. The filmmakers' aim was to subvert the conventional narratives of modernization, which prioritized economic growth and technological advancement over social, cultural, and human development. Third world cinema often showcases the negative outcomes of modernization, such as inequality, cultural displacement, and environmental degradation, while highlighting the struggles and aspirations of marginalized individuals in the face of rapid societal changes (Ukadike, 2009, pp. 185-189).

Additionally, third world cinema promotes communal identities and community values in contrast to individualistic and consumerist notions often associated with modernity. By advocating for social justice, human rights, and cultural diversity, it provides a platform for those whose voices are often marginalized. This cinema challenges dominant modernization narratives and advocates for more inclusive and egalitarian development visions. Despite employing a variety of techniques, genres, and approaches to address their respective cultural contexts, Third World filmmakers collectively share a critical interest in the impact of industrialization on underdeveloped nations and a desire to assert local identities and perspectives in cultural representation and social transformation (MacBean, 1975, pp. 282-283). Third Cinema emerged as a unique movement to oppose the linear expansion of western modernity into developing countries (Solanas, 1976, p. 35).

Third Cinema's rejection of the concept of development challenged the idea that modernization equated to cultural imperialism and the reinforcement of first-world power dynamics. Instead, it positioned cinema as a realm of conflict concerning representation, identity, and power, rejecting the notion that film served as a neutral tool for modernization. The objective of Third Cinema filmmakers was to create a new cinematic

language rooted in the social and political realities of the developing world, capturing the struggles and aspirations of its marginalized populations. This involved experimentation with alternative forms of visual storytelling, departing from prevalent Hollywood and European cinematic norms (Solanas, 1976, pp. 35).

Distinct from conventional entertainment, Third Cinema viewed film as a tool for political mobilization and enlightenment. It explored unconventional narrative techniques and visual expressions, deviating from established norms of character development, storytelling, and cinematography. Filmmakers associated with Third Cinema were part of a broader movement for social and political change, often aligning their works with larger struggles for social justice and anti-colonial liberation. Frequently produced on limited budgets outside of the commercial mainstream, Third Cinema films were shown in non-traditional venues such as community centers and political gatherings (Solanas, 1976, pp. 37).

Third Cinema was intended to be a revolutionary cinematic movement that addressed problems of race, class, faith, and national identity while focusing on the people and using cutting-edge cinematic methods to express its political goals (Sandra, 2012, p.20). Using documentaries from Argentina, Chile, Algeria, and the British environment to chronicle social realities, Third Cinema became a deliberate ideological alternative to Hollywood. In their early essays on the topic, the filmmakers first associated with national freedom. The anti-imperialist fight of Third World peoples, both within and outside imperialist nations, as the focal point of world revolution was the main objective of Third Cinema, according to Solanas and Getino's manifesto (Getino, 1970, pp. 1–10). In line with their vision, Third Cinema accepts the possibility of creating free individualities in order to decolonize culture while also acknowledging the enormous creative, scientific, and cultural expressions of our time (Wayne, 2016). Third Cinema explores the subtleties of daily life and cultural creation, embracing a close acquaintance with culture in both narrow and wide perspectives. Given that colonialism and imperialism often attack culture in order to dominate values, ideas, and identities, it examines culture as a battlefield for political conflicts (Getino, 1970, p. 46).

It is crucial to include Indian cinema while discussing Third cinema in this perspective. Because it offers affordable entertainment and resonates powerfully with the Indian diaspora, frequently serving as their only connection with the homeland. Indian cinema

is "the dominant cultural institution and product in India," according to Jyotika Virdi's article "The Cinematic Imagination". Additionally, it is one of the primary cultural sources that "intergenerational culture diasporic families share" outside of India. With a history that included Hindu mythological (based on Hindu myths) films, fantasy films, song-dance-action films, melodramas, and orientalist stories with overt criticism of colonial-nationalist conflicts, contemporary Hindi cinema has evolved from the most well-known earlier styles to Indian art cinema, which is best represented by Satyajit Ray's films, to the avant-garde forms of quite diverse, Third, counter-cinemas (Virdi, 2003, p. 13).

According to Armes (1987), Indian cinema has a unique place in the world of film since it was "the only major film industry to emerge under colonialism (p.111)." Particularly in movies produced during and after the independence movement, which frequently dealt with themes of nationalism, identity, and resistance, and the historical background significantly influenced its identity. This philosophy is best demonstrated by the works of filmmakers like Ritwik Ghatak, Mrinal Sen, and Satyajit Ray. Their films, which are frequently included in the Indian Parallel Cinema movement, eschew Hindi cinema's escapist plots in favor of realism and an emphasis on the plight of the underprivileged (Gopal & Moorti, 2008).

The phrase "Indian cinema" refers to a broad range of diverse cinematic productions that are differentiated by their respective regions. Bollywood (Hindi language movie centered in Mumbai/Bombay), a term coined by combining the terms Hollywood and Bombay, is the mainstay of Indian cinema. As before, Indian film, which went under the moniker Bombay City, was well-liked until the 1970s. However, the modernizing postcolonial nation was still heavily impacted by Western culture. The contention is not that Indian film is a puppet theatre of the West, but rather that changing Western concepts may be utilized to either fix or disfigure national narratives or to substitute western standards for genuine Indian values and customs. As noted by Rosie Thomas: "Indian cinema has historically resisted the cultural imperialism of Hollywood while evolving as a distinct form. Although it has consistently adapted and incorporated elements from Hollywood and other influences, Indian cinema has maintained its unique thematic structural identity" (Thomas, 1985, p.281).

In the same way that Hollywood represents the homogenizing effects of American capitalism on global cultures, an analysis of Indian film offers a useful way to map the opposite trend of modernization in popular culture. Subconsciously or intentionally, Hollywood's cultural capitalism is then projected onto India's commercial film industry (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2013, p.141). Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) draws attention to the hybridity of Indian cinema's Third Cinema approach, which combines modernist aesthetics with traditional storytelling forms while simultaneously criticizing colonial and neo-colonial regimes. Ghatak's works, for example, show how cinema may act as a bridge between the local and the global by contrasting mythological themes with the brutal realities of Partition. Similar to this, Aparna Sen's feminist films support Third Cinema's objectives of cultural decolonization by opposing both patriarchal systems and the commercialization of women's bodies in popular cinema (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2013). It "openly addresses class conflicts" and "shows materialistic industrialists, middlemen, moneylenders, traders, and landlords as exploiting workers, the landless, and the underprivileged" (Virdi, 2003, p. 14).

This is especially true of Hindi films. Class, caste, and ethnic identity are very "conscious" in Indian culture. Therefore, by maintaining the "heterosexual romance, which itself is largely a creation of Hindi films' imagination," the picture conforms to these requirements. In Indian cinema, the subject of gender is framed within a colonial framework. The representation of women in Bollywood films is an important part of this discussion since they were equally affected by colonialism. As diasporic identity in general is being recreated via Bollywood stories, it is noteworthy that the agency of the female character in Bollywood films has evolved in tandem with the changing status and role of women in India. The woman is shown as "a besieged one, a site on which colonial and communal conflicts have been fought through the twentieth centuries" in both Indian history and film (Virdi, 2003, p. 15). In opposition to Western beliefs, gender issues have been mobilized "as a sign to unify" India, and Hindi films expand on the notion of a single country with the woman as its distinctive icon. Furthermore, although being "constitutionally outlawed" in India, caste and religious problems continue to appear in films as "a subtext buried within class distinctions." However, melodramatic genres that depict love or caste and class conflict inside the home are not the main focus of Indian Third cinema. The historical narrative includes significant events like the 1950s peasant

rebellion, the 1960s green revolution, famines, and shortages; the 1970s and 1980s rise of workers, women, and ecological movements; the rise of Hindu fundamentalism; the 1990s economic liberalization; the Indo-Pak Kargil War; the 1990s caste wars and regional separatist movements; and the nuclear testing by these two nations at the end of the twentieth century (Virdi, 2003, p. 16). Many Indian films serve as visual records of the social, cultural, and political changes occurring in the subcontinent because Hindi cinema "constantly reimagines the nation."

1.3.2. Modernization and Melodrama in Indian Cinema

Modernization and melodrama in postcolonial Indian cinema reflect the nation's evolving identity, negotiating between colonial legacies, cultural heritage, and aspirations for progress. Modernization in postcolonial Indian cinema refers to the socio-cultural, economic, and aesthetic transformation that reshaped the film industry after India's independence in 1947. As India sought to establish a distinct national identity and move away from colonial influences, cinema became crucial medium for negotiating the tensions between tradition and modernity (Chakravarty, 1993, p. 27). In this context, modernization is closely linked to industrialization, urbanization and the influence of western ideologies, particularly those introduced during British colonial rule (Dwyer & Patel, 2002, p. 8).

In Indian cinema, modernization manifested in various ways, including changes in narrative structures, character development and visual aesthetics. Films began incorporating Western-style storytelling techniques, urban settings and evolving gender roles (Vasudevan, 2008, p. 142). The romanticization of modernity often emphasized aspiration for progress, portraying cities as spaces of opportunity while simultaneously highlighting the alienation and moral dilemmas associated with urbanization (Rajadhyaksha & Willemsen, 1999, p. 213). The influence of Western ideals of beauty and lifestyle was evident, with actors embodying fair-skinned, Eurocentric beauty standards and storylines increasingly reflecting Westernized characters and values (Mishra, 2002, p. 97). However, modernization also introduced new challenges, particularly in reconciling traditional values with the rapid societal changes brought about by independence and economic shifts. This tension is evident in the films of the Golden Era,

where protagonists frequently struggled between modern aspirations and deeply rooted traditions (Gopal & Moorti, 2008, p. 45).

While, melodrama in postcolonial Indian cinema functioned as a powerful narrative tool that not only entertained but also conveyed deep social, cultural and political meanings. Rooted in traditional Indian storytelling forms such as Sanskrit drama and folk theatre, melodrama in Indian cinema became a dominant mode of expression, particularly during the Golden Era (1940s-1960s) (Vasudevan, 2011, p. 89). It was characterized by heightened emotions, moral conflicts, exaggerated character expressions, and an emphasis on familial and societal struggles (Thomas, 1995, p. 67). One of the key features of Indian cinematic melodrama was the integration of music and dance sequences, which served as emotional amplifiers and narrative devices. These sequences, rather than being mere entertainment, played a crucial role in intensifying dramatic tension and reinforcing themes of love, sacrifice, and duty (Gopal & Moorti, 2008, p. 112). The emotional excesses in melodramatic films resonated deeply with audiences, reflecting their lived realities and struggles in post-independence India (Mishra, 2002, p. 130).

Melodrama also acted as a site of ideological negotiation, addressing themes such as class divisions, gender roles, and the conflict between tradition and modernity. Many films of the Golden era depicted protagonists grappling with the forces of modernization, often positioning urbanization and Westernization as both alluring and corrupting influences (Dwyer & Patel, 2002, p. 74). The melodramatic mode enabled filmmakers to critique the socio-economic inequalities of the time, while also reinforcing moral values and cultural continuity (Chakravarty, 1993, p. 55). There have been several studies on other cinemas that have addressed the conflict between tradition and modernity.

Tradition and Modernization: Contemporary Hungarian Popular Cinema by Balázs Varga offers a comprehensive and perceptive examination of the intricate relationship between tradition and modernization in current Hungarian popular cinema. It sheds light on the methods used by filmmakers to cope with social and cultural change, as well as the challenges and possibilities posed by the tension between tradition and modernity. Varga argues that Hungarian popular film during this period has been marked by a struggle between the desire to embrace modernity and the necessity to preserve ties to the country's cultural heritage. He examines how this conflict has been handled in films by narrative developers, characters, and visual artists. The inconsistent nature of its convention

(repeated ruptures and resumptions), the vital role of local popular culture in the development of Hungarian popular cinema, and the relatively limited variety of genres in Hungarian popular cinema are, in short, the three most important features of Hungarian popular cinema. Hungarian film is often characterized by middle-range genres (mainly comedies) rather than a wide variety. Science fiction, horror, and thriller films are uncommon in Hungarian cinema, even when contrasted with other Eastern European theatres (Varga, 2013).

The second study is from Çağrı İnçeoğlu's "Modernization and Turkish Cinema" that explores the relationship between modernization and the development of Turkish cinema. The article makes the case that Turkish cinema's growth during this time was greatly influenced by the country's modernization process, which started in the early 20th century and picked up speed in the 1950s and 1960s. İnçeoğlu argues that Turkish cinema during the modernization period was marked by a tension between traditional and modern elements. On the one hand, Turkish cinema drew on traditional storytelling techniques and themes, such as melodrama and folk tales, to appeal to local audiences. On the other hand, it also embraced modern filmmaking techniques and themes, such as realism and social critique, to engage with the wider global cultural context. The article looks at how Turkish filmmakers of the era dealt with this tension and how they used film to express and navigate the complicated social, cultural, and political changes that were occurring in Turkey at the time. Additionally, İnçeoğlu examines how larger global trends, such as the impact of Hollywood and European cinema, influenced Turkish cinema. It draws attention to the complex relationships between local and global cultural influences and shows how film can be utilized to communicate and negotiate social and cultural change (İnçeoğlu, 2008).

Ashish Rajadhyaksha's "Indian Cinema in the Time of Celluloid: From Bollywood to the Emergency" is used in the discussion of modernization in Indian film. The author looks at how Indian cinema used film as a medium for political activity and social criticism in response to the changing social, political, and cultural landscape of the time. According to the book, Indian cinema at this period was distinguished by a "double-voicedness," where filmmakers used their work to simultaneously endorse and challenge dominant social and political ideals. Rajadhyaksha shows how Indian cinema both mirrored and was impacted by broader social and cultural changes of the era, including the growth of

nationalism, the formation of a middle class, and the challenges of postcolonial modernity. Rajadhyaksha also provides in-depth evaluations of significant films from the time period, including the timeless films "Mother India" and "Pyaasa," among others. He serves as an example of how these films addressed contemporary issues like gender, class, and national identity while also using cinema as a vehicle for social and political change (Rajadhyaksha, 2009).

Indian cinema has been significantly impacted by modernization, both in terms of the content of the movies and how they are made and released (Ganti, 2004). While there has been considerable scholarly discussion and analysis of the relationship between melodrama and modernization in Indian cinema. While some academics such as (Rajadhyaksha, 2009; Jaikumar, 2006; Raghavendra, 2014) contend that melodrama is a timeless and universal genre that can be found in all cultures and eras of history, others contend that the emergence of modernity in India has caused the melodramatic form to undergo a transformation. One explanation for the relationship between modernization and melodrama in Indian cinema is that modernity has disrupted traditional social and cultural structures, resulting in an identity and meaning crisis (Spivak, 2023).

According to this perspective, melodrama offers a strategy for overcoming this crisis by providing a moral framework that aids viewers in navigating the uncertainties and complexities of contemporary life. These studies have helped me analyze how modernization has affected Indian melodrama. My investigation of how melodrama acts as a cultural response to current difficulties has been influenced by the idea that it provides a moral framework in the face of uncertainty. The quotations in this paragraph that have been highlighted show how these studies support this argument. My goal in writing this thesis was to ground my research in a cogent and persuasive argument by highlighting the relationship between melodrama and the resolution of identity and meaning crises.

The works of Rajadhyaksha, 2009; Jaikumar, 2006; Raghavendra, 2014 have guided my study in a direction that will help me comprehend melodrama's role as a narrative device in Indian cinema in a more sophisticated way. They have additionally inspired me to research the cultural and social conditions that affect the development of melodramatic narratives more thoroughly in response. Characters in dramatic stories frequently struggle to uphold their moral principles in the face of social and economic pressures, but they ultimately find redemption through moral courage and self-sacrifice.

Other scholars such as (Vasudevan, 2011; Mazumdar, 2007) argue that modernization has changed the nature of melodrama in Indian cinema, causing the genre to adapt to reflect shifting social and cultural values and issues. For instance, some contend that a new genre of melodrama that focuses on the difficulties and conflicts faced by young, intelligent, and upwardly mobile Indians has emerged as a result of the audience's shift to a more urban and middle-class one (Vasudevan, 2011; Mazumdar, 2007). Themes like individualism, consumerism, and the conflict between tradition and modernity are frequently explored in this style of melodrama. According to Vasudevan 2011, there are some significant modernization processes that have impacted how melodrama is portrayed and how it works in Indian cinema.

Urbanization: Indian melodramas' themes and plots are influenced by the new social and cultural issues that have arisen as a result of the country's urbanization. Melodramatic movies frequently explore the new forms of inequality, cultural hybridity, and dislocation that urbanization has brought about. **Globalization:** Indian cinema has been significantly impacted by the expanding influence of international media and culture. India's melodramatic film industry is now influenced by international media and culture, creating new hybrids and innovations in the genre. **Technological developments:** With the advent of new filmmaking technologies like digital imaging and sound, filmmakers are now able to give audiences more lifelike and immersive melodramatic experiences.

Changing social norms: Melodramatic film themes and plots have changed along with Indian society's opening up and progress. For instance, in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of movies that examine gender, sexuality, and class issues.

Economic liberalization: The 1990s saw a new wave of entrepreneurship and consumerism in India, which had an impact on the themes and plots of melodramatic movies. In today's movies, topics like entrepreneurship, consumerism, and the difficulties of the new market-oriented economy are explored.

In order to get an improved grasp of the processes of modernization occurring in Asia is by examining melodrama in connection to Asian film. In terms of cultural variations, it aids in our understanding of several crucial aspects of societal modernization. Consequently, the dialectic between artistic creation and social life becomes more defined and profound. In his perceptive review of the well-known Indian melodrama *Andaz*, for instance, Paul Willemen contends that the movie depicts the conflicts and inconsistencies

that arise when pre-capitalist social relations are adopted in a capitalist setting, "forgetting" that the Indian bourgeoisie is a colonial legacy in the process (Mutlu, 2010, p. 420).

1.4. Indian Traditional Culture and Modernization

With more than 1.39 billion inhabitants, India has a vast cultural variety with regard to various languages, geographical areas, religious customs, and socioeconomic classes. Because of the wide demographic variety, the descriptions that follow are not meant to be representative of all Indians. The Indian culture is the legacy of social norms that have their roots in or are associated with the ethnolinguistically diverse country of India. Outside of India, the term describes nations and cultures—particularly those in South and Southeast Asia—whose histories are closely tied to India by immigration, colonization, or influence. India's many regions have different languages, religions, dances, music, architecture, families, and traditions.

One of the most powerful systems for governing civilizations, tribes, and countries is the family culture. In contrast to Western culture, where the family structure has been lost, South Asia's family system is still strong, according to discussions throughout the world. Like a body's skeleton and muscles, families have both structure and function. The structure of a family determines its size and form. Additionally, much as the body's organs carry out essential tasks to maintain bodily functioning, families too need some essential duties to be healthy. According to this perspective, society is a complex system whose components cooperate to foster stability and unity. It makes the claim that social structures—which are comparatively constant patterns of social behavior—direct our lives. Our lives are shaped by social structures, such as those found in families, the community, and religious organizations. Our daily lives are also given structure by specific rituals or intricate religious rites. Every social structure serves a purpose or has an impact on how society operates overall. Social ties and any social institutions that exist within a society are examples of social structures. For instance, social structures include the family, the economy, the law, religion, and class (Dhami, 2020).

The most significant institution that has endured throughout the years in India is the family. India is a collectivist culture that prioritizes family unity, loyalty, and integrity, much like the majority of other older, less industrialized eastern nations. A prominent institution in both individual and communal life in India has been the family (Mullatti,

1995, p. 12). Kinship relationships and extended family are very important to Hindu families. Families in India are seen as strong, stable, close, robust, and lasting, and they adhere to family value orientations (Mullatti, 1995, p. 14). In India's past, the joint family has been the ideal, preferred, and conventional family structure. In addition to kinship, a joint family often consists of three to four living generations, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews who reside in the same home. It is a collection of many family units residing in different rooms of the same home.

These members worship the same gods, share a shared income and property, consume meals prepared at a single hearth, and are linked to one another by kinship. According to Chekki (1996), the family gives stability, a feeling of solidarity and unity, cares for widows, unmarried people, the handicapped, and helps during times of unemployment. In Indian culture, the joint family has traditionally been the ideal family structure, and the majority of Indians have lived in a joint family at some time in their life (Nandan and Eames 1980). As previously said, families are significant institutions that are fundamental to Indians' lives. Being a collectivistic society, Indians cherish loyalty and mutual reliance highly. Individual interests are often subordinated to family matters, and choices that affect one's personal life, including marriage and career paths, are often made in consultation with one's family. Because one person's actions may affect how the community views the whole family, people often operate in the best interests of their family's reputation.

The mixed family structure is becoming less popular among younger generations as a result of urbanization and modernization. According to some academics, the modified extended family has supplanted the conventional joint family since it lacks a hierarchical power structure and does not need physical closeness or professional engagement (Nandan and Eames 1980; Mullatti 1995; Shangle 1995). Regular visits, financial support, help and support with childcare and housework, and engagement and participation in life-cycle events like births, weddings, funerals, and festival celebrations are all encouraged by this new family structure. As a result, the kinship and family ties are preserved. The nuclear family is deeply ingrained in the extended kinship matrix, and many functional extensions of the old joint family have been preserved even in India's more modern and nuclear families (Nandan and Eames 1980).

Talcott Parsons' theories on the family have garnered the most interest and discussion. Parsons (1954) contends that the rise of the "isolated nuclear family" is a result of contemporary industrial society. Because this family is not an essential component of the larger kinship group, it is structurally separated. The family is a dynamic social institution that is always evolving. A number of new variations of the modern family, or more accurately, the post-modern family, are also emerging (Dhami, 2020).

After the family, two other key characteristics of Indian traditional culture can be defined as multifaith and multiculturalism. Indian society has long been distinguished by its polytheism and multiculturalism. The cultural legacy of India is vast and varied. The nation's cultural environment, which is home to several faiths, languages, and ethnic groups, has been shaped by a complicated history of migration, commerce, and conquest. This variety is recognized by the Indian Constitution, which includes the multiculturalism concept in its provisions. Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution protect the socioeconomic and educational rights granted to religious and linguistic minorities, while Article 15 prohibits prejudice on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. Yet, there have been difficulties in India with the practice of multiculturalism. But yet it is still a vital and important part of Indian society. A variety of festivals and cultural events are held to honor the nation's cultural diversity, which is represented in its literature, music, art, and food. Millions of tourists visit India's historical sites and landmarks every year, attracted by its rich cultural legacy. The significance of multiculturalism in India's economic and political development has gained more attention in recent years and actively attempting to promote diversity and inclusion (Smith, 2009; Heehs, 2002).

Polytheism is an expanded religious culture in India due to religious reasons. India's rich religious history is associated with pride since it is the birthplace of Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism. Even though the majority of Indians (79.8%) identify as Hindu, the nation's religious landscape is varied. However, contemporary culture continues to influence this diversity, and secularism is one of the main effects of modernization that threatens Indian identity. In contrast to the majority of English-speaking Western nations, religion is practiced more freely in India. This is evident when you look at the number of locations that are regarded as holy and sacred. Examples of 'ashrams' (monasteries or gathering places) include temples (mandirs), shrines, and distinctive landscapes like the Ganges River, which are home to sizable populations of monastics or academics. Hindu

temples, Muslim mosques, and Christian churches are often found within walking distance of one another, demonstrating the rich religious legacy seen in architecture (Heehs, 2002; Khilnani, 2004).

India is a multireligious country where Hindus make up the majority. Religious authority is broadly dispersed in the Hindu society, in contrast to its "Christian counterpart where faith dominates in churches," and the family and caste structure are at the heart of Hindu religious life. There is no true Hindu equivalent to the church, synagogue, or mosque as places of prayer and learning. However, who is a Hindu in reality? Savarkar, the founder of Hindu nationalism, defined a Hindu as someone who considers the region from the Indus to the Seas to be both his homeland and his fatherland. This definition is religious (Holyland), genealogical (fatherland), and geographical (land between the Indus and the Seas). Since they fit all three requirements, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, and Hindus may all be included in this description (Varshney, 1993, pp. 2–5).

In pre-Christian Greek, Persian, and later Arab chronicles, the term "Hindu," which comes from the Sanskrit word "Sindhu," which means "River Indus," first referred to all Indians and then, only subsequently, to adherents of a specific religion. Although the terms Hinduism and its various European equivalents were coined until about 1830, Christian missionaries and subsequently Orientalists used them to refer to the Hindu faith. (Bajpai, 2015; Varshney, 1993; Madan, 1994). Given the expanse of the Indian subcontinent and the cultural and linguistic variety of its inhabitants, this is to be expected. Hinduism is very multifaceted and includes almost every kind of religious practice and belief, from academic and ascetic traditions to pagan superstition (Indian Culture, n.d.). Hinduism is still practiced in contemporary India, and its various festivals, artworks, and temples influence people's social interactions and day-to-day lives. Film and television are also resurrecting the traditional 'epic' stories of the Mahabharata (The Great Epic of the Bharata Dynasty) and the Ramayana (Rama's Journey). The Krishna Lila (Krishna's Playful Activities) is another well-known tale in many communities. Portraits of divine beings are present in both public and private spaces throughout the year. The elephant-headed deity Ganesh is especially well-liked due to his purported capacity to eliminate obstacles. Natural environments, including particular trees or rivers, are also held in high regard. There are hundreds of thousands of gods and goddesses in the Hindu pantheon because of regional and localized manifestations. Additionally, a number of festivals

honoring different Hindu mythology and deities are celebrated all around the nation. Portraits of goddesses and deities are present in both public and private spaces throughout the year. The elephant-headed deity Ganesh is especially well-liked due to his purported capacity to eliminate obstacles. Natural environments, including particular trees or rivers, are also held in high regard. There are hundreds of thousands of gods and goddesses in the Hindu pantheon because of regional and localized manifestations. Additionally, the nation has a number of festivals honoring different Hindu tales and deities (Pattanaik, 2003; Harshananda, 1982; Khilnani, 2004).

Fundamental to comprehending Hinduism is the fact that the "Great Tradition" encompasses a vast array of beliefs and customs. Its foundations are found in religious texts and the precepts of traditional moral codes like the Manusmriti. By putting old wine in new bottles, D.J. Phalke, the founder of Indian cinema, set the trend by recreating classic Indian stories like Raja Harishchandra, Lanka Dahan (The Burning of Lanka 1917), and Krishna Janma (The Birth of Krishna 1918). This allowed him to appropriate the new medium of cinema to create "Indian" identity by drawing large audiences who could readily relate to well-known Indian mythological stories. Phalke was a master of special effects who used a wide range of methods, such as animation and alienation effects, to reproduce Indian mythical stories in a number of films (Bose, 2006, p. 53). After having this inspiring encounter, he developed an obsession with making "Indian images," or Bharat Chitre as he refers to them, and he had the prophetic passion to carry out his goal in spite of all obstacles. Sanskrit classics were studied as part of Phalke's upbringing. Phalke believed that the core of "Indianness" was embodied in the two major epics, Ramayana and Mahabharat, as well as the traits of its main characters. His early films include Satyavan Savitri (The Story of Satyavan and Savitri), Mohini Bhasmasur (The Demon Bhasmasur), and Raja Harishchandra (King Harishchandra). These tales, which included outstanding visual effects, were among the subplots of the two major epics. Instantaneous and overwhelming was the audience's reaction to the "Indian images." (Chakravarty, 2011; Dwyer, 2006).

1.5. Golden Age of Indian Cinema and Melodramatic Universe

This section will explain the "Golden Age" of Indian cinema, which spanned from the late 1940s to the 1960s, and the "Melodrama" which emerged as a prominent genre in

Indian cinema during its golden age. The popularity during this era can be attributed to several key factors. Melodrama's heightened conflicts and exaggerated emotions resonated deeply with Indian audiences, touching their sensitive hearts. The genre frequently explored universal themes like love, family, sacrifice, and societal ideals, allowing viewers to emotionally connect with the characters and storylines. Indian melodrama also drew from the rich tapestry of the country's culture, incorporating elements like customs, family bonds, and societal norms, making the films relatable. This era saw the rise of legendary actors known for their powerful melodramatic performances, which further bolstered the genre's success. In essence, the success of melodrama during the Golden Age of Indian cinema can be attributed to its emotional resonance, cultural relevance, star power, technological advancements, social commentary, and the influence of unforgettable music, solidifying its place as a dominant genre in Bollywood during this remarkable period.

1.5.1. The Development of Indian Cinema

The Indian cinema, one of the oldest and most dynamic industries, began in 1896 when the Lumiere Brothers screened six silent films in Bombay. Filmmaker Hiralal Sen set the early trend with *Flower of Persia* (1898), India's first short film. Inspired by *The Life of Christ* in 1913, Dadasaheb Phalke pioneered Indian feature film with *Raja Harishchandra*, blending Western cinematic techniques with Indian mythology, laying the foundation of the industry (Hafeez 2016, p. 04).

The movie *Life of Christ*, which was shown at a picture palace named America India in Mumbai in 1911, captivated Dadasaheb Phalke. He talks about his first cinematic encounter as if it was a mystical awakening. After having this inspiring encounter, he developed an obsession with making "Indian images," or *Bharat Chitre* as he refers to them, and he had the prophetic passion to carry out his goal in spite of all obstacles. Sanskrit classics were studied as part of Phalke's upbringing. Phalke believed that the core of "Indianness" was embodied in the two major epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat*, as well as the traits of its main characters. His early films include *Satyavan Savitri* (The Story of Satyavan and Savitri), *Mohini Bhasmasur* (The Demon Bhasmasur), and *Raja Harishchandra* (King Harishchandra). These tales, which included outstanding visual

effects, were among the subplots of the two major epics. Instantaneous and overwhelming was the audience's reaction to the "Indian images" (Ganti, 2012, p.5).

In essence, Phalke was recounting tales that people were already familiar with from their childhood. From the keertankar's musically enriched performance to the proverbial grandmother's lap, both the educated and the illiterate have heard them in different ways. A keertankar's strengths are often their melodic voice, strong command of spoken language, and improvisational skills, and this art form is still performed today. Proscenium stage plays, which were part of the old Indian theatrical tradition, had a large audience in Maharashtra because the sangeet natak (musical theatre in which dialogue and songs were equally vital for the plot) had reached adulthood. Among the earliest and most well-known plays in Marathi with mythical themes were Annasaheb Kirloskar's *Shakuntal* and *Saubhadra* (tales called for the female characters), written about 1880 CE. Therefore, there was already a kind of prerequisite for the mythology-based movie plot that Phalke created. The fact that Phalke himself referred to his film plays as natak (play) is noteworthy. In addition, the many folk forms found across India fostered a theatrical history that placed equal value on discourse and music, including dance (Dissanayake K. M., 2013, p. 271).

Phalke introduced a new perspective to the Indian cinema by incorporating Sanskrit epics and casting men in female roles. BY 1920, the industry grew, producing 27 films annually, which increased to 207 by 1931. During this period, new production companies and directors explored various genres. Jameshedji Framji Madan pioneered India's first movie theater chain, distributing ten films yearly across the subcontinent (Hafeez 2016, p. 62). While European-American films had a direct impact on Indian cinema in the first half of the 20th century, the preponderance of Indian religious and mythological themes strengthened a nationalist identity that was opposed to British colonial principles. However, Indian cinema's religious component went beyond simple anti-British sentiment. The rigid and fundamentalist aspects of Indian cultural traditions were also questioned. Indian film is a distinctive expression of modernist aesthetics because of this confluence of elements. Specifically, by fusing several genres like melodrama, Indian modernist film continued to be essentially paradoxical and constantly inconsistent long after colonial authority on the subcontinent ended (Sapra, 2015, p. 109).

The regional film industries in Mumbai, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal are all included in the Indian film industry. Bollywood is the most well-known and well admired form of Indian cinema among them. (However, Bollywood is often used to refer to all of Indian film rather than just Hindi cinema.) The scope of the study is restricted to Indian cinema. Every year, more than 1000 Indian films in at least 20 languages are distributed to moviegoers throughout the globe from places like Hyderabad, Chennai, and Mumbai. With over 3.9 billion domestic viewers and over half of the world's 7.8 billion theatre admissions, the sector has surpassed Hollywood in terms of box office viewership since 2004 (Sapra, 2015, p. 109). With comparable renown in the Middle East, South East Asia, South Asia, Britain, America, Australia, and Africa, Indian cinema has become a worldwide phenomenon in the modern century (Ganti, Producing Bollywood, 2012, pp. 2-3).

1.5.1.1. Major Periods in Indian Cinema

The Major Periods in Indian Cinema section offers a chronological summary of the development of Indian cinema, emphasizing its significant historical periods and cultural relevance. The Golden Age of the 1940s and 1950s, marked by legendary filmmakers and socially concerned stories, is examined, as is the emergence of melodrama.

1930's Period: Due to the development of three major centres in Bombay (Mumbai), Kolkata (Calcutta), and Madras (Chennai), the 1930s are referred to in Indian film as the decade of social protest. The technology and style of filmmaking underwent a radical shift in Indian cinema in the 1930s, with Bombay emerging as the hub for popular national films while Madras and Calcutta were known for their regional output. Alam Ara, India's first talkie film, was directed by Ardeshir Irani and released in Hindi and Urdu in 1931. It was an immediate box office success and established a new trend in Indian cinema history. In 1930, it was the country's biggest cinematic milestone. The introduction of talkies in India brought success to a number of movie stars, particularly singers and artists. In South India, Alam Ara also signaled the beginning of the talkie era. The first talkie in Benagali film, Jumai Shasthi, was released in the same year in Telugu (Bhakta Prahlad) and Tamil (Kalidass). The emergence of Indian Melody Films at this time also gave birth to timeless songs like Devi Devyani and Indra Sabah, which marked the beginning of

song and dance in Indian cinema. The popularity of the Devdas movie in 1935 drew viewers from all around the country (Hafeez, 2016, pp. 63-64).

1940s to 1950s: India in this period witnessed turbulent incidents that includes Great Depression in sub-continent, World War II and Partition of sub-continent in India and Pakistan. The Great Depression's troubles were alleviated by watching movies. People were enthralled by the films. The effects of the Great Depression were profound. Nearly all Hollywood and Bollywood firms were compelled to reorganize, seek government assistance, reduce staff and budgets, and shut theatres as earnings fell in the early 1930s. Although there was a significant decline in the number of moviegoers, between 60 and 75 million people still attended to the movies each week, even during the worst of the Depression. In order to boost public morale by enthusiastically repeating values like thrift and persistence, filmmakers had to blend escapist enjoyment with conveying the harshness and cynicism of the Depression. At that time, Indian cinema was mostly escapist, with few artists addressing relevant socio-political issues in their works. The 1940s and 1950s saw a lot of dancing, singing, and music in Indian cinema. During this time, "playback singing and dubbing" also became popular in movies; the Indian cinema industry as a whole was dominated by vocalists like Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhonsle, Muhammad Rafi, and Kishore Kumar. The majority of film historians refer to this era as the "Golden Age" of Indian cinema because it produced the most gifted, energetic, and bright filmmakers and artists, each with their own distinctive craft style, who made their mark on the globe. One of these directors, Satyajit Ray, made a significant contribution to the Indian film industry with his 1953 masterpiece "Pathar Panchali," which won the renowned Cannes prize for best film and garnered numerous other accolades both domestically and internationally. Other popular films from this period include Guru Dutt's Pyasa and Kagaz Ke Phool, Mehboob Khan's Mother India, Raj Kapoor's Shree 420 and Awara, and Bimal Roy's Do Bigha Zameen. Neo-realism, also referred to as the new wave in Indian cinema, was introduced by these films, which focused on the socioeconomic and working-class circumstances of the average person (Hafeez, 2016).

1960s to 1970-80s: The Indian Film Finance Corporation changed its emphasis from paralleling the commercial film sector in response to state committee criticism, which led to the rise of commercial films in the 1970s. The violent action themes about gangsters replaced love stories in this era, but it also produced stars like Rajesh Khanna,

Dharmendra, Sharmila Tagore, Mamtaz, Helen, and Amitabh Bachan, who marked the beginning of the Indian film industry by playing the main roles of irate young men in films by the middle of the 1970s. Movies like *Sholay* (1975) were shown nonstop in one Bombay movie theatre for five years. However, it had a dismal reaction when it first came out, and its box office potential didn't start to show until the soundtrack, which included now-famous dialogue snippets, was released. According to Sinha, (2005), pp. 178-179, *Sholay* is really about the struggle between two powerful and obstinate individuals. Written by Salim Javed and directed by Yash Chopra, *Deewar* (1975) is a criminal drama that pits a police officer against his own brother, who leads a gang engaged in smuggling; it is based on the true tale of a smuggler played by Amitabh Bachan (Hafeez, 2016). These films have often been interpreted in terms of urbanization, the growing importance of the criminal underworld, and the deep disenchantment of young Indian men without jobs. The heightened brutality of urban life for the impoverished has been cited as the reason for the importance of these films' intricate combat scenes (Sinha, 2005, p. 163). Kamal Amrohi's *Pakeeza*, Raj Kappor's *Bobby*, Ramesh Sippy's *Sholay*, *Kabhi Kabhi*, Amar Akbar Anthony, *Hum Kissi Se Kam Nahi*, and *Muqaddar ka Sikanadar* are among the classic Indian films that have seen a surge in production this decade.

1.5.1.2. The Success of Melodrama in the Golden Age

Melodrama became a popular genre in Indian films, during the "Golden Age" of Indian cinema. Several things contributed to melodrama's popularity at this time, including: Resonance on an emotional level: Melodrama's heightened conflicts and exaggerated emotions were appealing to Indian audiences' sensitive hearts. Since the movies frequently featured universal themes like love, family, sacrifice, and societal ideals, audiences were able to relate to the characters and plots on an emotional level. Melodrama in Indian cinema frequently drew from the social and cultural fabric of Indian society, combining components like customs, ties to the family, and social standards. Indian audiences found the movies sympathetic since they could recognize their own lives and experiences reflected on the screen because to these cultural allusions (Fernández, 2015; Anantharaman, 2008; Roy, 2022).

During the Golden Age, a number of legendary actors rose to fame and developed devoted fan bases. These celebrities, like Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, and Nargis, were well-known

for giving strong performances in melodramatic parts. Their star power helped entice viewers to the theaters, which in turn helped melodrama succeed in Indian cinema. The age also saw important developments in the field of filmmaking, including enhanced methods for sound recording, editing, and cinematography. Filmmakers were now able to produce technically competent and aesthetically pleasing melodramas that captivated viewers' attention. While melodrama frequently addressed social concerns like injustice, casteism, poverty, and gender norms, the movies were viewed as a vehicle for social commentary and introspection, and spectators who were dealing with these concerns in their own lives found resonance in the films (Kidwai, 2018; Saiani, 2012).

Melodramatic films that included memorable songs and musical numbers defined Indian cinema's Golden Age. In addition to providing amusement, the songs contributed to the movie's emotional effect by enhancing the melodramatic components and making an impression on spectators. In this scene, Rousseau seems to have introduced the term "melodrama," which originally meant "a drama accompanied by music," to describe a play in which he attempted to achieve a new emotional expressivity by combining pantomime, orchestral accompaniment, and soliloquy. The term was later used to describe a popular play that was drawn from pantomime and was musically accompanied, although it did not fall under any of the recognized genres (Brooks, 1995). A significant component of Diderot's aesthetics, music was granted a long-lasting place in 19th-century theatre before becoming a mainstay in the modern medium that replaced melodrama: the movie (Rex, 2003).

The idea of melodrama is explained by Peter Brooks in "The Melodramatic Imagination" from the viewpoints of Henry James and Balzac. This excerpt from Balzac's first major work, *Le Peau de Chagrin*, illustrates how drama is created and, more broadly, how the melodramatic imagination creates its representations. The way that Balzac dramatizes human interactions tends to be intense and exaggerated, removing the surface of manners to expose the core tensions at play—moments of symbolic collision that perfectly express the parameters of the drama. One extreme example that supports Balzac's vulgar theatrical portrayal is "Gobseck," where the sinful Comtesse de Restaud fights to get her two illegitimate children's inheritance. The use of exaggerated characters, lurid and extravagant events, disguised bonds and hidden identities, abductions, slow-acting, clandestine organizations, enigmatic parentage, and other melodramatic elements to

depict cheap, overwhelmed, and hollow versions of life has been criticized repeatedly. His insistence that life is always viewed through highly colored lenses and his prompting of the narrative tone to the breathless pitch of melodrama have also been criticized. One of the main characteristics of the melodramatic method seems to be the urge to communicate everything. The protagonists stand on stage and express their darkest emotions, say the unthinkable, and dramatize the entire course of their relationship with their heightened and divisive words and actions. Nothing is spared since nothing is left unsaid. They convey fundamental psychological states and take on the roles of father, mother, and kid. In this narrative, life progresses towards more focused and fully expressive movements and declarations (Brooks, 1995).

First appearing in the 18th century, melodrama gained popularity in the 19th and early 20th centuries as modernism gained traction. Melodramas usually highlight emotions and sensationalism while making a distinction between good and evil individuals. They usually depict battles between morally pure heroes and morally tainted foes, and they often deal with themes of love, betrayal, and societal injustice. Melodrama comes in a variety of forms. For example, dramatic melodrama is characterized by sensationalism, elevated emotions, and an emphasis on plot and narrative. Themes of love, family, morality, and society issues are usually covered, and people are usually shown as either morally righteous or morally bad in stark contrast (Brooks, 1995).

Melodrama frequently captures the emotional experiences of people and communities during periods of societal upheaval because of its emphasis on heightened emotions and sensationalism. People may feel alienated, lose their old ways of life, and have conflicts between traditional and new ideals during periods of fast industrialization and urbanization, which are frequently important aspects of modernization. Basically, melodrama and modernity are connected in part by the sociological and cultural changes that come with them. Traditional social structures and ideals may be questioned or altered when cultures modernize, causing a sense of unease, displacement, and emotional turmoil. Characters in melodrama who are pulled between the old and new ways of living and who struggle with the emotional difficulties brought on by such societal transitions might express these experiences. Melodramatic stories can highlight the conflict between custom and modernity as well as the emotional problems people may have as they adjust to these changes (Gledhill, 1987).

Melodrama may also be viewed as a reflection or critique of how society is evolving as a result of modernity. Melodrama frequently exaggerates or sensationalizes these changes, for instance, as class conflicts, gender roles, and power dynamics may alter as societies grow more industrialized and capitalist. Melodramatic stories can draw attention to the hardships of characters who are subjected to modernization's oppression or marginalization, or who become embroiled in its social conflicts. Melodrama may also be used as a means of escape or imagination during periods of societal upheaval. People may turn to melodramatic stories for solace as cultures progress because they offer emotional release, moral clarity, and a feeling of closure. Melodrama may give a way of working with the psychological difficulties of modernity and can offer a feeling of closure or conclusion that may be missing in real life (Gledhill, 1987).

1.5.2. Essential Characteristics of Melodramatic Universe

"Melodrama" originally referred to a stage play with music and is derived from the Greek word *melos*, which means song. Melodrama, as the name was used in the early nineteenth century, referred to a romantic and emotional play that used songs and music that were thought to be suitable for heightening the scenarios on stage. The French author Jean Jacques Rousseau is usually credited with coining the word "melodrama" in this context. Supposedly the first melodrama in the West, Rousseau's *Pygmalion* was originally staged in Lyon in 1770. The word was introduced to other European civilizations from France. Later, music was no longer an essential component of melodrama; instead, the term came to refer to a type of drama that featured strong action, brutality, emotional intensity, hyperbole, sensationalism, moral polarities, rhetorical excesses, brutal villainy and its eventual abolition, and the triumph of good. Originally used to define and assess elements of stage plays, the terms "melodrama" and "melodramatic" have now spread to literature and movies (Dissanayake W. , 1993, p. 1).

Gledhill asserts that melodrama is a method of viewing the world rather than just an aesthetic technique (Gledhill, 1987, p. 1). This perspective demonstrates the significance of taking into account both the global setting of melodramatic vision and the variety and fluidity of melodramatic traits. The universe of human perception and emotion is drastically altered by modernity, which undermines old religious beliefs, patriarchal traditions, the sense of stability, and the comprehension of certainty. Melodrama reflects

this by attempting to reconcile the contemporary soul's uncertainty with the utopian concept of a holy promise of protection (Singer, 2001, pp. 132-143).

When we look at the origins of melodrama, we come across the moral plays of the late medieval period. Oral narrative tradition, folk songs and fairy tales become the building blocks of the road to melodrama. The French revolution, industrial revolution and modernity processes are decisive in the emergence of the melodrama form (Elsaesser, 1987, p. 44). Melodrama, which emerged as a form expressing the "populist consciousness of libertarian democracy" after feudalism is the psychological level of social changes. It has a quality that reflects the anxiety it creates. The disappearance of the traditional feudal order, the disintegration of religious authority, and the rise of modern capitalism are very worrisome, shocking, heavy experiences for people (Singer, 2001, pp. 132-143).

When the myth of Christendom is broken, the hierarchical and organic unity in society is also broken. In this case, the tragic vision of traditional society is also lost. Because comedy and tragedy are literary genres attached to this society. The melodrama, which emerged as a new vision in the period of great questioning and change, establishes a new moral universe. This moral universe is shaped by the needs of the post-divine world (Hayward, 2000, pp. 213-214). In the restlessness of a world that has lost its faith, people feel helpless and lonely. Thanks to melodrama, entering the field of the moral will be able to calm the chaos experienced by the individual (Singer, 2001, pp. 132-134).

Strong emotionalism, moral polarization, and schematization are indulged in; extreme events, behaviors, and states of being; overt villainy; persecution of the virtuous; the ultimate recompense of virtue; excessive and exaggerated expressions; sinister plotting; suspense; and astounding peripety. These few scholars who have paid close focus on melodrama have pointed out that it serves a psychological purpose by enabling us to enjoy self-pity and the sense of completeness that comes from identifying with "monopathic" emotion, to use Robert Heilman's term. The significance of melodrama as a concept in opposition to realism, its portrayal of the distinctly dramatic, and its outpouring of emotion in the pure histrionic form of dreams have all been discussed by Eric Bentley in particular. Since melodrama reflects the fundamental energy of drama, Bentley places it first among the four dynamic kinds he discusses: farce, tragedy, comedy, and melodrama. We may claim that dramatization is necessary for acting out. Since no other word quite

speaks to a kind of intense emotionalism and severe ethical struggle that is neither tragic nor comedic in its people, structure, goal, and impact, the term seems helpful, if not required (Bently, 1957).

In her article, Tulay Celik (2021, 2-5) refers Brooks' characteristics of melodrama as follows: strong emotionality, moral polarization and schematization; Being, excess in situations and actions, obvious evil, mysterious events, doubt, inflated and exaggerated expression, tormenting the good, extraordinary transformation of luck, rewarding virtue. According to Çelik, Rodowick's ideological approach should be added to these two approaches in order to make visible the universe of meaning formed by common features. The signification structure of melodrama reproduces itself by creating new forms with the diversity of narrative forms. The realization of the solution through moral destiny in films based on black-and-white values and identification with patriarchal authority reveals that we should consider melodrama as an aesthetic field of ideology.

In his book "The Melodramatic Imagination," Peter Brooks (1995) described a number of melodramatic categories and subgenres. He has classified melodrama into five major groups:

1. Domestic melodrama: That describes tales about family and domestic life, frequently emphasizing tensions between parents and children or husbands and wives. These stories frequently deal with moral, virtue, and social norms difficulties.
2. Gothic melodrama: Describes the supernatural power or horror themes including haunted mansions, ghosts, and curses. These stories frequently deal with themes of insanity, obsession, and the otherworldly.
3. Historical melodrama: Defines past and frequently feature historical events or personalities. These stories frequently deal with issues of power, authority, and social transformation.
4. Political melodrama: This category deals with political issues such as revolution, class conflict, or war are examples of political melodrama. These narratives frequently address concerns of social justice and political injustice.
5. Romantic melodrama: One of the popular categories that is all about love and romantic relationships. These stories frequently contain star-crossed lovers or tragic love triangles, and they deal with themes of passion, longing, and betrayal.

Melodramas recreate transcendence in the struggle between good and evil. It is seen that opposing forces are embodied in the characters. Virtue, which is generally reflected by the innocence of a young female or child hero, is always under threat. The threat usually comes from a bad character who betrays the moral order. Thus, the devil is personified, reduced to a few physical features and made intelligible. The motivation of the character representing the devil it does not need to be understood. What is sought here is the feeling of relief that will come with the impression that "a higher cosmic moral force looks at the world and rules it" (Singer, 2001 pp. 34). Another important point is the secular identity of modernization. Secularism is individual whereas secularism is political.

1.5.3. Representational Patterns of Indian Films

The term "representational patterns" refers to the recurring themes, motifs, and visual trends that are utilized in a specific medium or form of artistic expression. However, in the context of Indian cinema the term refers to the typical ways that Indian cinema depicts its characters, stories, and themes through visual language, narrative structure, and cultural allusions. These patterns, which are frequently influenced by audience expectations, societal norms, and technological advancements, reflect the cultural and social contexts in which the films are created and watched. Understanding the representational motifs in Indian cinema can shed light on the aesthetic and cultural principles that guide the genre as well as how it interacts with audiences around the world and current issues. Indian films are a diverse and constantly evolving medium, with many different representational patterns depending on the time period, genre, and regional context. Some common representational pattern in movies, including Indian cinema, is melodrama. Melodrama is a form of narrative that places an emphasis on heightened emotions, intense conflicts, and moral clarity. Characters that are clearly heroes or villains are frequently featured, and they frequently engage in dramatic confrontations that cause audiences to feel very strongly. Melodrama is frequently used in Indian film to examine morality, family, and romantic themes. Characters are frequently depicted in black-and-white terms, with heroes and heroines being noble, virtuous, and selfless, and villains being wicked, self-centered, and cunning. These characterizations are frequently used to draw attention to the moral issues raised by the narrative and to engage the audience on an emotional level (Dissanayake & Gokulsing, 2004, p. 89).

Regional and cultural references: Indian movies frequently make use of local and cultural references. They can help to establish a sense of time and place, placing the narrative within a particular cultural setting. For instance, characters in a movie set in the state of Maharashtra might speak Marathi and wear traditional Maharashtrian attire, whereas in a movie set in the state of Tamil Nadu, characters might speak Tamil and take part in cultural celebrations like Pongal or Diwali. Exploring issues of identity and representation can also make use of regional and cultural references. Hindi-language films have historically dominated the Indian film industry, but in recent years, regional cinema that captures the diverse linguistic and cultural traditions of the nation has gained popularity (Banerjee, 2017, p. 108).

Social Commentary: In Indian cinema, social commentary is a prominent representational motif, which entails using movies to analyze and critique social and political issues. This can come in a variety of forms, from overt messages and assertions to subtly woven critiques into the story. This pattern has been used in Indian cinema to address a variety of issues, such as caste discrimination, poverty, corruption, gender inequality, and communal violence. Films have been used to challenge prevailing social norms and values as well as to bring attention to the struggles and injustices experienced by marginalized communities (Kumar, 2014, pp. 3-7).

Hero worship: Hero worship, which involves the portrayal of a central character—often the hero or protagonist—as an idealized figure who embodies certain values and characteristics that are admired and celebrated by the audience, is a prevalent representational pattern in Indian cinema. The hero is frequently portrayed in Indian cinema as a larger-than-life character who is courageous, strong, and morally upright. He or she is typically viewed as a champion of justice who battles against evil forces to defend the weak and the vulnerable. A crucial component of Indian cinema has been the portrayal of the hero as a savior figure, which has helped make some actors famous for playing these parts (Dissanayake & Gokulsing, 2004, p. 95).

1.5.4. The Role of Indian Music and Dance in a Modern World

The 1950s saw a rise in the popularity of Indian music as some of Bollywood's top musicians, including Mohammed Rafi, Kishore Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar, and Naushad, achieved fame. The period embraced music and established the groundwork for its

essential position in Indian film, from the great composer S.D. Burman's partnerships with poet and lyricist Sahir Ludhianvi for *Pyaasa* (1957) to the wildly successful soundtrack for *Awaara* (1951) by the musical team Shankar-Jaikishan. Since the invention of sound in 1931, music has been a significant part of Indian film. The importance of music stems from long-standing performing customs that shaped film. Music, singing, and dance are all integral parts of Parsi theatre, folk theatre, and classical Sanskrit play, and each is necessary for the whole performance. The use of music in the form of character songs in almost every film is perhaps the most distinctive and defining aspect of Indian popular cinema. The pervasiveness of music in Indian towns and cities is a sight to see. Movie tunes may be heard over the loudspeakers in taxis and autorickshaws, on the cassettes at tea kiosks, and on religious festivals, wedding processions, and election rallies. From hit parades featuring the newest songs to "classic" shows introducing a new generation of fans to music from earlier periods, soundtracks make up a significant portion of radio programming (Vijayakar, 2013).

Songs are often used to smooth the passage of time and trigger memories in addition to expressing strong emotions and physical closeness. For example, a song may transport a character back in time or transform youngsters into grownups. When utilized to introduce the main actors in a film, music also helps with characterization. Characters in songs may also use indirect speech to convey ideas and wants that are inappropriate for direct communication. For instance, during a social event, a guy may sing about his betrayal in front of his spouse and lover without raising any red flags. It used to be standard procedure for the songwriter to create the song's lyrics, conveying the feelings and moods that the screenplay called for. A melody that suits the song's atmosphere and scale will then be created by the music director, who will also adapt the words to the music. Nowadays, the lyricist must find the right words to describe the circumstance and match them with the planned melodic structure that the music director has established. The fundamental melody is often constructed before the lyrics are written (Rehman, 2016).

According to Hattangadi (2016) Popular Indian films are much lengthier than their Western equivalents, mostly due to songs. Hindi films last between two and a half and three hours, with at least forty minutes of screen time devoted to musical interludes. Every film has a break that divides it in two halves. A film's first half usually has more songs than its second half and introduces the characters and their setting. The majority of songs

include three or four stanzas, with melodic gaps in between stanzas and choruses in six- or eight-beat loops. A hundred-piece orchestras or the employment of many instruments are examples of different types of instrumentation. Songs typically last between three and twelve minutes, while lengthier songs are often seen in elaborate performances or in movies. Since almost all well-known Indian films include songs, the genre of a film determines how the music is used and styled in it rather than the music's existence alone. Western conceptions of genres like "musical," "comedy," "drama," "action," and "love story" are challenged in the majority of Indian films.

According to Gopal & Moorti (2008) Old Hindi melodies are so passionate and expressive that they uplift the spirits and weary senses, leaving listeners in a state of ecstasy. Others of the melodies are humorous, others are heartfelt, and some are heartfelt. You may find a wonderful old song for every mood. The amazing thing about ancient songs is the diversity of music they provide, and each one has a unique, enchanted effect on listeners. Known as the "golden age," it was a period when style and understatement were paramount, and legendary music directors like S.D. Burman, Salil Chowdhary, Shankar-Jaikishan, Laxmikant-Pyarelal, Madan Mohan, O.P. Nayyar, Chitragupt, and R. D. Burman wrote enchanted songs. Saigal, Mohammad Rafi, Geeta Dutt, Shamshad Begum, Suraiya, Kishore Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Suman Kalyanpur, Manna Dey, Talat Mehmood, and several more singers were among the prominent figures. Music from the period was regarded as timeless. Because the music of that period had the ability to transport you back to a time when purity predominated over vulgarity and love and emotions were deeply ingrained in song lyrics. A well-known Hindi film's promotion would be impossible without its songs. Popular Hindi films without music are quite rare. The majority of those in the business believe that a film that lacks music is doomed at the box office since it is not popular in the Mumbai film industry and may even be considered an "art movie." For everybody involved in the prevailing system of financing, distribution, and exhibition, songs are a crucial component of films.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

To explore post-colonial discourse in films, the study takes a qualitative approach, specifically using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Thematic Analysis. Purposive sampling will be utilized to pick pertinent data, which will then be evaluated methodically. As units of analysis for post-colonial discourse, the analysis will focus on numerous cinematographic components such as acting, dialogues, mise-en-scene, composition, costuming, and music. Furthermore, the study intends to investigate the quantity and manner in which melodramatic elements are used in these films. The ultimate goal is to learn how melodramatic components help to the maintenance of social and political domination.

Following Wodak and Meyer's approach, the study employs a multi-level analysis. Where CDA serves as a cornerstone of this research, enabling an in-depth exploration of how films function as discursive texts that reflect and shape societal ideologies. While Thematic Analysis complements CDA by systematically identifying recurring motifs and patterns within the selected film (Wodak, 2014, pp. 302-316). The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the interplay between language, discourse and social structures. As Bateman notes, CDA has extended beyond verbal and textual form to include visual interaction and communication, encompassing mediums like film. This expansion emphasizes the ideological role of films and the importance of critical visual analysis. He highlights the developmental phase of the interaction between CDA and critical visual studies, underscoring thematic structuring as a critical source of information for CDA. For example, Ryna and Kellner's work, cited by Bateman, utilizes thematic structuring to reveal socio-historical and ideological contexts through narrative and presentation styles (Bateman, 1997, pp. 613-619).

While Ryan and Kellner argue that representational conventions in films serve ideological functions at both the subject and form levels. Representational elements impose perspectives and positions on audiences. Thematic conventions such as melodramas accustom viewers to accept specific social orders while ignoring their inherent irrationalities and injustices. Additionally, films adapt their discourses and representational strategies according to varying social conditions. They also emphasize the complexity of analyzing films and the necessity of focused efforts to uncover their ideological contexts. Building on this, the current study adopts an in-depth CDA approach

to examine how the dominant discourse of modernization is constructed through narrative and cinematographic elements in films (Ryan and Kellener, 1997, pp.18-19).

Fairclough describes CDA as an interdisciplinary tool that examines relationships between discourses and its objects, elements and moments within broader social processes. One of CDA's main objectives is to explore how power relations and inequalities contribute to social wrongs, focusing particularly on the discursive aspects of these relations. He highlights that discourse provides meaning and signification to the complex relationships constituting social life (Fairclough, 2013, p.3). Following Gramsci, CDA investigates the role of ideology in representation, illustrating how texts can either sustain or challenge power dynamics (p.27). Such framework is instrumental in revealing hidden dominant discourses and intertextual meaning. In the context of film studies, CDA proves particularly valuable. He also underscores the significance of CDA in examining film discourse, noting its ability to analyze communication strategies and uncover latent power inequalities (Pradeep, 2016, pp. 58-59).

According to Bateman (1997:613-619), CDA has begun to include aspects of visual interaction and communication, including film, in addition to verbal and textual forms of expression. The ideological construction role of films is an important field of study for critical approaches. This field reveals the importance of critical visual analysis. Bateman mentions that CDA and the field of critical visual studies have not yet interacted much and emphasizes that this field is still in its development phase (Bateman, 1997, pp. 613-619).

The examination of representation is a further pattern in CDA. In order to better understand social concerns, CDA looks at how language is used to depict different racial and ethnic groups. It can examine, for instance, how media portrayals of various social groups contribute to stereotypes or promote unfavorable sentiments. The analysis looks at how language is used to spread ideologies and how these ideologies influence how we see social issues. For instance, it can look at how political speech is used to support particular policies or how language is used to excuse social injustices.

The analysis of identity is another pattern in critical discourse analysis. Which investigates how language is employed to create and maintain identities, as well as how these identities affect societal power dynamics. It might examine how language is used to create gender identities or racial identities in media discourse, for instance. Critical

discourse analysis is a great method for figuring out how language influences how we see social issues and power dynamics. We can learn how language is used to create and maintain power relations and how these power interactions contribute to social inequality by looking at patterns in language and discourse (Wodak, 2014).

2.1. Research Method

This study will utilize a qualitative research design, and I shall begin defining the use of critical discourse analysis developed by linguist Norman Fairclough. I shall then analyze the selected movies using discourse to discuss the melodramatic elements in the films which proves my claim of modernization in Indian cinema during the golden age. The films will be selected based on their popularity, cultural relevance, and significance to Indian cinema. The study will use purposive sampling, with a systematic analysis of post-colonial discourse of films to evaluate post-colonial discourse through cinematographic elements (acting, dialogues, staging, composition, costume, music) which are units of analysis. While making this evaluation, the study interprets the data by revealing to what extent and how melodramatic elements are used, and how melodramatic elements, Elimination of religious elements, (superficial religious references, Expression of religious values with modern values) the exchange of cultural values (superficial implications of change, Emphasis on lost values) are employed in films to perpetuate social and political dominance in the film.

According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), the critical discourse analysis, is primarily concerned with discovering and studying the connections between discourse and power in society. By analyzing the narrative of melodramatic films, one can identify the underlying messages and ideologies being conveyed. For example, one might analyze the portrayal of gender roles or the representation of social issues such as poverty, caste, or religion. In addition, Discursive analysis is the pattern of discourse analysis focuses on the cinematographic features of melodrama with the use of language, including vocabulary, syntax, and rhetorical devices, in a specific text or genre. One can discover how language is used to communicate meaning and influence audience perceptions by examining the discursive techniques used in melodramatic movies. Consider how metaphors, symbolism, or rhetorical questions are used in melodramatic movies, or how language is employed to create and maintain social hierarchies and identities.

Research questions

1. Why and how did the modernization process affect Indian cinema?
2. How did Indian popular cinema promote modernization?
 - a. What was the role of melodramatic elements in this change?
 - b. What was the role of music and dance?
3. How has the presentation of traditional values changed?

2.2. Sampling of the Research

The research universe comprises films produced during the "Golden Age" of Indian Cinema. Given the qualitative nature of this study, which demands a profound understanding and connection with the subject matter, the choice of sampling method fell on purposive sampling. This approach allows the researcher to select situations inherently linked to the study's focus. With this perspective in mind, the research sample encompasses four films produced between 1940 and 1950, widely acknowledged as blockbuster hits and the most popular films of the era. Given that one of the primary objectives of the culture industry, including cinema, is to reach a vast audience, the selection of the most popular content becomes imperative for research.

During the 1940s and 1960s, India experienced significant transformations in various domains, including politics, economy, society, and culture. Popular Indian films from this era often served as a mirror to the shifting sociocultural and political landscape of the nation. They artfully depicted the concerns, conflicts, and aspirations of Indian society during that period. These films frequently embraced themes and characters deeply rooted in Indian tradition and culture while also reflecting the influence of contemporary beliefs and ideals.

Type of sampling: Purposive

Sample universe: Popular Indian movies from 1945-1960

Samples: Shree 420 1955 (Raj Kapoor), Awara 1951 (Raj Kapoor), Mother India 1957 (Mehboob Khan), Mughal-e-Azam 1960 (K. Asif)

Analyses tool: Films (document)

Analyses of findings: Critical discourse analyses and Thematic Approach

Analyses units: Narrative and Cinematographic elements (narration, theme, characters, mise-en-scene, music, dialogues, acting, decor, filmic time and space)

Analyses codes: Melodramatic elements

Analyses patterns: Elimination of religious elements, (superficial religious references, Expression of religious values with modern values) superficial references about cultural change (superficial implications of change, Emphasis on lost values).

2.3. Data Collection

Popular Indian films from the golden period of 1945–1956 are included in the study. These include *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960), *Mother India* (1957), *Awara* (1951), and *Shree 420* (1955). One might learn more about how modernization was seen and experienced in India at the time by examining these films. The movies provide light on how Indian filmmakers balanced tradition and modernity, as well as the function of film as a vehicle for cultural expression. Additionally, the films belong to the melodrama genre, which was once the most popular in Hindi cinema. Melodrama is generally defined as the indulgence in strong emotionalism, moral polarization, and schematization; it portrays extreme situations and actions, overt villainy, the persecution of the good and the ultimate reward of virtue, inflated or extravagant expression, and abrupt changes in fortune in order to affirm that the world is governed by a moral order. This genre has a long-lasting effect on popular culture and the Indian cinema industry. Popular Hindi films are known for being escape-oriented, but ironically, they have also been sententious, always giving the audience moral lessons. These films have impacted later generations of Indian filmmakers, and many of their topics and ideas are still relevant today. The study's method of gathering data was to analyze the films' melodramatic features. The researcher may employ the visual resources she need as data gathering tools by using film analysis.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section analyses of four films i.e Shree 420, Awara, Mother India and Mughl-e-Azam has been conducted. The films were analyzed under two headings. Firstly, the story of the film was analyzed and then the patterns of analysis related to the representation of traditional values were examined.

3.1. Analyses of *Shree 420*

Summary of Plot:

The main character of the 1955 Indian comedy-drama *Shree 420*, a very popular Bollywood movie, is Raju, a young guy portrayed by Raj Kapoor who moves from his hometown to Bombay (now Mumbai) in quest of a better life. Raju is a sincere, aspirational city resident who works hard to succeed. Raju then meets Vidya, portrayed by Nargis, who teaches underprivileged kids at a charity school. Following a series of events, Vidya becomes fond of Raju. However, he is quickly enthralled with the wealth of a careless and immoral lifestyle that is offered to him by the attractive temptress Maya (Nadira) and an unscrupulous and dishonest businessman, Seth Sonachand Dharmanand (Nemo). He quickly turns into a "420," or confidence trickster, and even cheats in card games. Despite her best efforts, Vidya is unable to convince Raju to return to his honest ways. In the meanwhile, Sonachand connives to take advantage of the poor by offering them permanent homes for a little Rs. 100. People start saving money for a house, even at the sacrifice of other essentials, which is why the plan works. Vidya's distaste for Raj only intensifies. Raj gains wealth, but he soon realizes that it came at a high cost. Raj resolves to right the wrongs after seeing that Sonachand has no intention of fulfilling his obligations. Raj tries to escape Sonachand's residence after stealing all of the bond documents from people's houses, but Sonachand and his associates catch him. Sonachand shoots Raj during the subsequent altercation, rendering him unconscious. People run over to find Raj almost dead after hearing the gunshot. Sonachand claimed to have shot Raj because he was trying to flee after stealing money from his safe. The "dead" Raj then resurrects and use reason to demonstrate Sonachand's guilt. Vidya gladly pardons Raj, and Sonachand and his cronies are captured. "Yeh 420 Nahin, Shree 420 Hain" is what Raj says at the conclusion of the movie. ("These are not just con men, but respectable con men").

Analyses Patterns:

1. Elimination of Religious Elements

The decline of religion, according to Brooks, has had a profound impact on the usage of melodrama in Western cinema. He argues that melodrama has historically been built on a number of moral and ethical values that were frequently linked to religious belief, such as the importance of family, responsibility, and sacrifice. Melodramatic themes such as substituting religious values with modern values, honesty, love, and exaggerated terms that truly influence the audience will be examined in "Shree 420" analysis.

1a. Superficial Religious References

Instead of religious themes, the film concentrates on social and economic issues, allowing it to provide a more complete view of India's post-independence circumstances. Shree 420 may be argued to erase religious components by downplaying the importance of religion in the lives of its characters. The film's narrative also ignores traditional religious rites and ceremonies. There are no overt references to any religious ideas or behaviors. The only time religion is shown in the film is in a brief scene in which a group of individuals are seen leading the most popular Hindi/Indian holiday "Diwali" through the streets. This sequence has no meaningful impact on the overall plot.

1b. Expressions of Religious Values with Modern Values

One of the ways the film addresses this confluence is through the character of Vidya, who represents traditional Indian ideals of fidelity and loyalty while also having a progressive outlook on education and social equality. Vidya remains committed to her conventional duty as a daughter and teacher at her father's charitable school, despite the fact that she requires funds to treat her father's illness. She sees education as a means of empowering herself and others. While in another scene, where Raju questions himself in front of the mirror, sees his old self, when he arrived in Mumbai as a man with tattered shoes and empty pockets. He is now dressed in an expensive English suit, but empty and wrecked inside. The film highlights the conflict between traditional values and the pressures of modernization and materialism by emphasizing the importance of honesty and integrity, the film promotes the idea that these values are required for a happy and meaningful life and should not be sacrificed for financial gain. The main issue here is that it does this by acting on binary oppositions.

1b1. Heartlessness

The term heartless coming under "Hyperbole/Exaggeration" refers to the excessive and exaggerated language, according to Brooks' elements of melodrama. The above word highlights that big cities are so preoccupied with earning a living and amassing power that they have lost their compassion for the poor. In the start of the movie when Raj arrives lost at the huge metropolis of Bombay, and the beggar advises him that the city does not belong to a person with pure heart and honesty because it is a heartless place.

When Maya and Raj return from the club, Raj asks for his part of the money he won using his card tactics. Maya's position is portrayed through exaggerated facial expressions as she screams at him for reminding him of his worth as a laundry boy. According to the research, her change in behavior surprised Raj because all he wanted after all he accomplished for her was an equal share and fair treatment. The scene exemplifies the uncaring mentality of individuals who live in urban areas and do not care about the poor.



Image 1: Maya Gives a Harsh Look to Raj When He Asks His Share While on the Right Raj's Emotional Face Expressions as He Learns that He has been Conned by Maya

Source: Shree 420 (1955). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V88h_NvPIKU (Accessed date: 25/01/2024)

1b2. Love

According to Brooks, melodrama frequently draws from the notion of an idealized, unconditional love between two characters, which is portrayed as a kind of redemptive force that can triumph over even the most trying situations. According to Brooks, the melodrama's emphasis on unwavering love is a reflection of a larger cultural desire for a sense of meaning and purpose in life. He contends that melodrama acts as a sort of

substitute religion, giving viewers a chance to encounter a sense of transcendence and atonement through the strength of love.

In Shree 420 Raj and Vidya's relationship is portrayed as an idealized example of selfless love that is above materialism and corruption. Vidya sticks by Raj throughout the movie despite all of his flaws and errors. The portrayal of Vidya's love for Raj as unconditional and unwavering is a defining characteristic of melodramatic storytelling. Similar to this, Raj is shown to have a pure and selfless love for Vidya. He ultimately understands that his love for Vidya and his desire for a better society are more important than material possessions, despite being tempted by the allure of wealth and status. The film's climactic scene, in which Raj and Vidya are reunited after a time apart, served to emphasize this even more. The grandiose, exaggerated portrayal of the scene, along with the swell of the music and the intensity of the emotions, highlights the importance and power of their love.

In movies, love frequently plays a melodramatic role and serves a variety of purposes. First of all, love can be used in a story to intensify feelings, build tension, and introduce conflict. The romantic journey of the characters emotionally engages the audience and draws them into the love story. Love is frequently portrayed in dramatic movies as an unstoppable force that can conquer anything, even societal norms and limitations. As the audience is given a picture of love as a strong and transformative force, it may inspire hope and optimism in them. The romance between Raj and Vidya, the movie's two main characters, is a major component of the film. Despite the challenges they encounter because of societal norms and expectations, their love is shown throughout the movie to be unadulterated and sincere. Raj, who is adamant about succeeding and giving Vidya a better life, is shown to draw strength and motivation from their love. Raj and Vidya perform a romantic song and dance number in the rain in one particularly memorable scene, which heightens the emotions and increases the audience's investment in their love story.

2. Representation of Cultural Change

Indian cinema is renowned for its vibrant portrayals of Indian tradition, culture, and social issues. For instance, family, community, and tradition are frequently portrayed in Indian cinema. But in post-colonial era, Indian movies are exposed to melodramatic elements which are contrary to the cultural values and frequently highlight the significance of

urbanization and modernization. The similar case is with *Shree 420*, this film conveys a surface-level message about the theme of change, from the transformation of Raju's clothing to his beliefs. It discusses how India which is known for his humble, loving nature turns to the land of cruelty, sordidness, where people are selfish to meet their financial gains by harming others. The film continuously portrays a conflict between poor and rich with the social injustice in which Raj the leading character juggles. In addition, some of the film tracks emphasize that happy life has nothing to do with Money or power, as Poor but Happy is the most used melodramatic element of the movie.

2a. Superficial Inferences About Change

One superficial inference about change in the film is the transformation of Raju's clothing over the course of the story. In the beginning, Raju is dressed in his iconic "tramp" outfit, which serves as a signifier of his poverty and marginalization. However, as he becomes more successful and wealthier, he begins to dress in more stylish and fashionable clothing. The film continuously portrays the shifting modernized values with old Indian cultural values. From the very beginning, Raj is shown flipping her cap in order to show gratitude. Whenever he wills to thank someone, he puts-in and off his cap with an English phrase 'Thank you' instead of '*Shukriya*'. In another scene when he is hired in a laundry shop, the exchange of English phrases and dress codes are widely seen instead of Indian cultural values.



Image 2: Maya's Outfit Portraying Modernized Outfit and Lifestyle and Maya Shakes Hand with a Man, Portraying Modernized Value in Indian Cinema

Source: *Shree 420* (1955). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V88h_NvPIKU (Accessed date: 25/01/2024)

The above picture is taken from a scene when Raj is asked by Maya to dress up as a prince of town after seeing his cards techniques. She then takes him to a club and says, “today I will make you the ruler of a dream world, where you will master all” which according to analysis means the modernized world where earning money speaks and it rules. The scene shows a setup where women are smoking pipes and are wearing a western attire. Unlike Indian ethnic women are shaking hand with men and exchange English phrase in their conversation.

This change in his appearance serves as a superficial indicator of his social and economic transformation. The usage of renowned Bombay locations and buildings in the movie might be interpreted as a quick indicator of the city's modernization and development, which is another obvious superficial allusion to change in the story. Even while the protagonists themselves battle with corruption and social inequity, the movie's depictions of bustling streets and contemporary infrastructure portray a feeling of progress and transformation.

2a1. Selfishness

According to the Indian culture and traditions ‘when one fall/fails, people extend their hand to help but not laugh. While there is a scene where Raj falls on the road by a slip on a banana skin in a market and faces laughter by people around him. On which the beggar tells him with a sarcstic tone, Ye Bumbai he meri jan, yahan log girte hain to sab tamasha dekhte hain or hanste hain, hath utha ke uthane wala koi nahi “this is Bombay (present day Mumbai) my brother, here when one fails/falls everyone enjoys their failure with a laughter” another element of melodrama. According to Brooks, selfishness is a crucial component of melodrama because it produces a moral conflict that is simple for audiences to comprehend and relate to. Characters in many melodramas are portrayed as either being selfless and moral or selfish and immoral, with little room for ambiguity or nuance. This makes it simpler for the audience to emotionally connect with the story and establishes a clear moral framework for them to adhere to.



Image 3: Raju Convinces Vidya to Accept his Financial Help but Vidya Refuses and Raju Shows Bundles of Notes to Vidya

Source: Shree 420 (1955). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V88h_NvPIKU (Accessed date: 25/01/2024)

Another example of this element can be seen in the following scene of the movie where Vidya asks Raju to leave the wrong path and get back to the path of honesty as he first came to this city. She is seen begging Raju and explaining her the moral values which he has lost after a sudden change with his wealth. But Raj instead of understanding her, takes out his bundles of notes and pose it against Vidya to tell her the worth of these papers. On which Vidya asks him to make a selection between her and money. Vidya was very much sure that Raju will choose her over this path of dishonesty and cheat but to her surprise, he chose the path of wealth.

2a2. Cruelty

The discourse of cruelty in Shree 420 is evident in the various forms of exploitation, violence, and manipulation that are depicted throughout the film. By analyzing specific scenes, we can gain a deeper understanding of how cruelty is portrayed in the melodramatic genre, and how it reflects broader social and cultural attitudes towards power, corruption, and human relationships. In the movie the following scene explains this element when Raj is tricked into wearing a formal dress code to accompany Maya in a party. We can see the cruel side of human nature; Maya takes advantage of Raju's simplicity and innocence and tricks him into playing cards. The discourse of cruelty is evident in the way Maya manipulates Raj's emotions, for success and wealth. On the end her deceitful actions, hurt Raj and breaks his heart from the city but also fills him with a determination to be a powerful and successful man to conquer Mumbai.

In the next example, when Raju is conned by Seth Sonachand as he offered him to work for him. Raju who is desperate to earn a fortune accepts his offer without knowing the nature of the job. Sonachand on the other hand establishes a real estate agency and a scheme “House in 100 Indian Rupees” to attract poor. Sonachand puts Raju’s name in the advertisement as he knew Raju’s skills of convincing the public. Raju who is totally unknown to these stops by his old poor friends where everyone welcomes him and applauds him for his work for poor and needy who wish to have their house and shows him the advertisement. Raju who gets shocked and angry after knowing this all runs to Sonachand with anger and asks him to be accountable for what he did. While Sonachand who is drunk asks him to stop worrying about these poor people and to think about his own means and needs. He also emphasizes him to forget about Vidya and develop his relations with Maya saying Maya hi sab kuch de sakti he is dunya main Vidya nahi, is liye tum us chool m rehne wali aurat ko choro or Maya ki maya mein ao, here he casts Maya with a double meaning word. Maya in Hindi means (universal power) he asks Raju to accept Maya as a woman and Maya as power, both of these enriches a person’s life. He also warns Raju that the money he has saved on the basis of the scheme can change his life forever. So it’s better not to think about those street-living creatures.

2a3. Sordidness

In Shree 420, there are a number of sordid aspects, especially the characters of the movie who portray a corrupt and unequal society. The first sordid character of the movie is Seth Sonachand, a dishonest businessman who is willing to cheat and bribe people in order to get what he wants. While the underprivileged and disadvantaged suffer, as he manipulates the system and holds onto his power. Sonachand is portrayed throughout the entire film as a villain who exploits Raju for his own advantage, from the opening credits to the dramatic conclusion. An illustration can be given by citing a scene in which Raju, who is tired of trekking to Mumbai, fakes his sickness and collapses on the road in order to get a lift when he sees Sonachand's car. When Raju discloses his real identity and admits that he only needed a ride to the city, Sonachand loses his belief that helping him as an ordinary road side man, will make him famous for his generosity to an unknown. And soon Raju gets thrown out of his car.

The second character is of Maya, a woman who is selfish attitude and quest for power give this movie a shady undertone. Maya is a figure that lacks respect for her traditions

and morals and is associated with the modern outfit and lifestyle. The character of Maya plays her role as a vamp who only knows how to cheat and harm others for her own gain. To use the scenario where Maya calls Vidya a stray, who is useless to people in her society, as an illustration of the sordidness element, this may be an excellent example. Vidya, who Raju had brought to the party, was deeply embarrassed since Maya kept drawing Raju's attention away from her and chastising him for picking Vidya. Which causes Vidya's heart to break, and she leaves the party with a typical dramatic expression as if she questions Raju for what he has become.

2a4. Being Poor but Happy

In the film, the trope of being poor but happy is a common element of melodrama that is used to contrast the simple, honest life of the poor with the corrupt and materialistic world of the rich. This discourse of poverty and happiness is evident in several scenes throughout the film. For example, the scene of Raju's arrival in Mumbai. In this scene, we see Raj's initial fascination with the city, as he marvels at the bright lights and bustling crowds. However, his initial optimism is quickly dashed when he realizes that he has been conned out of his money, and he is forced to live on the streets. Despite this setback, Raj remains hopeful and determined, singing the song "Chhote se ghar mein gareeb ka beta, Main bhi hoon maa ke naseeb ka bet, Ranj-o-gham bachpan ke saathi, Aandhiyon mein jali jeevan baati, Bhookh ne hai bade pyar se paala" to express his belief that material possessions are not necessary for happiness.



Image 4: Raj's Roadside Friends Dancing, Enjoying Poverty While Maya is Seen Grooving on Modern Beats with Modern Outfit and Dance

Source: Shree 420 (1955). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V88h_NvPIKU (Accessed date: 25/01/2024)

In the following scene two different scenarios are shown with a song. In picture A, Raj's poor friends who own him as a family member, live on streets are seen having an entertaining night to celebrate their poverty with smile and happiness. They sing "Zidagaani ke safar me tu akelaa hi nahi hai Ham bhi tere hamasafar hai" you are not alone in this journey of life; we your friends will be with you always. While in picture B, Maya is seen dancing in an elite party in the club where Raju is invited by Seth Sonachand to play cards for him. "Naino se nainaa jo milaa ke dekhe, Mausam ke saath muskuraa ke dekhe, Duniyaa usiki hai jo aage dekhe" The world be bow before you if you move forward and leave behind all the odds that stop you from being among the successful, sings Maya contrary to what the Raju's poor friends sang. While Raju who chose the path to be among these wealthy lords is seen distorted by the hustle bustle and the fake surroundings of the place, escapes from there and returns to his poor friends.

2a5. Social Injustice

The main character, is portrayed in the movie Raj is up against a corrupt system. For the oppressed and poor who are fighting for survival in a city where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, Raj is a symbol of hope. Melodrama's major components are his fight for success and his resolve to expose the corrupt politicians. The way Bombay is portrayed in Shree 420 is among its most important elements. The city is shown in the movie as both a place of opportunity and desolation, where the wealthy and strong take advantage of the weak and disenfranchised. The movie's opening scene depicts a train arriving in Mumbai with hundreds of passengers getting off and walking into the city, representing the inflow of people from all over India who move there in search of a better life.

2b. Emphasis on Lost Values

Another melodramatic component that focuses on traditional, cultural, and moral values that are deemed to be lost or in danger in contemporary society is the emphasis on lost values. The movies are meant to serve as a reminder to viewers of the significance of these values, which are frequently portrayed as being necessary for a happy life and a healthy society. This pattern in the movie explores the conflict between the enduring values of the past and the evolving values of the present. In one scene, where Raj emphasizes the accumulation of power and claims that sincerity and truth are no longer valued in this society, says, "Ye samaj gareebon ki nahi sirif pese walon ki suntan he, jab

tak tumhare hathon main rupaya nai, tumhari yahan koi izzat nahin,” “This world only listens to rich not poor, you will never be respected if you’re empty pocket,” here he implies that Money is the only thing that enables you to make a difference because it serves as the global standard of exchange.

2b1. Traditional Values Claimed to be Preserved

The song is one of the blockbuster hits "Mera Joota Hai Japani Ye Patloon Inglistani Sir Pe Lal Topi Rusi Phir Bhi Dil He Hindustani" an extremely sentimentally nationalist choice. The song translates to, I am wearing Japanese Shoes, English pants, Russian hat but my heart is pure Indian. The song has cultural influence of the West on Indian society and is a popular tune. In addition to being enjoyable, the songs help to portray the characters' feelings and the story's themes. While another superhit song of this movie is "Ramayya Vasta Vayya," one of its most famous songs, "generates an imagined universe of the village as a counterspace to the harshness of the city."

2b1a. Honesty

The moralistic undertone of the movie is another dramatic trait. The movie tells the spectator that integrity and honesty will ultimately be rewarded, whereas corruption and dishonesty will ultimately be punished. As Brooks has explained this pattern in moral polarization element of melodrama. Shree 420 is a prime example of Indian melodrama, which uses heightened characterizations, uplifting music, and moralizing themes to convey a sense of reality that is more intense than usual. The movie continues to be a melodrama icon and a potent statement on how the average person choose a path of corruption and injustice. In a scene, Vidya discovers that Raj is involved in gambling and that he has strayed from his honest path to defraud and swindle people. Whereas Raj, who is seen drunk in that moment, defends himself by expressing his ambition to be the richest and most powerful person in Mumbai, which can only be achieved if he knows how to deceive others in order to acquire money, and claims that there is no harm in it. On the other hand, Vidya's face expression indicates that she would not accept such a man as her spouse and communicates herself to Raj to leave her or his path of dishonesty. But Raj, with a dramatic face that depicts the sorrow he felt when he was broke, informs Vidya that there is no power other than money. If your pockets are full, you are cherished and respected; otherwise, no one wants to see you, even if you die.

In another scene, Raj is seen returning to the shop where he earlier sold his honesty medal to make some money till he gets work. This time, Raj is seen dressed in an urban/English style, symbolizing his metamorphosis after becoming wealthy. When the shop owner happily welcomes Raj since he is now a wealthy man, the scene depicts the terrible reality of changing human behavior. Raj, who has asked the owner to return his 'Medal of Honesty' for any sum wanted, runs into Vidya, who is there to sell her books to help pay for her father's illness. On the contrary, Raj offers Vidya assistance, but she once again refuses to accept his money gained through illegal labor. She also expresses herself, "I will die, but I will never touch the money, you earned by causing harm to other beings."

2b1b. Innocence

Through Vidya, the female protagonist's journey through her character arc, innocence is presented as a melodramatic pattern. Vidya is portrayed as a good and innocent young woman who is committed to aiding the underprivileged and poor throughout the entire movie. She is seen overseeing a nonprofit school for the underprivileged. Despite her poverty, Vidya is steadfast in her commitment to her principles and won't let her innocence be compromised. Similar to Raj, who is seen looking for opportunities to make a living and become successful, his innocent portrayal in the movie captures everyone's attention and makes the audience feel emotional.

2b1c. Village Life Nostalgia

A common theme in Indian cinema, nostalgia for traditional village life is reflected in the movie. The city is portrayed in the movie as a place of moral decay and corruption, where people care more about materialism and social standing than they do about community ties and traditional values. The village, on the other hand, is portrayed in the movie as a place of simplicity and moral purity where people are rooted in their customs and interconnected with one another. The character of Vidya, who is from a village and embodies traditional Indian womanhood's virtues like devotion to family and loyalty to her husband, serves as an example of this. The village is portrayed in the movie as a picturesque setting with lush green fields. Additionally, it shows how joyfully and enthusiastically traditional holidays and celebrations like Holi and Diwali are observed. The musical numbers in the movie further highlight the contrast between village and city life by frequently incorporating folk and rustic music and dance. These musical motifs

aim to stir up memories of a more innocent period when traditional culture was more prevalent and valued.

2b2. Traditional Values vs. Money

In the scene where Vidya is pawning her bangles to get some money for her father's treatment. The scene shows exaggerated portrayal of facial expressions that comes under Brooks' melodrama's sub-category of Pathos (referring to excessive and exaggerated forms of emotions). At the same time Raj arrives at a shop to sell his 'medal of honesty' to get some money for survival in the city. When he enters the shop the shopkeeper asks him, whether he wants to buy or sell something? On that, I have come here to sell my honesty, he replies. The movie illustrates through this melodramatic pattern the idea that true success and happiness can only be attained through honest, hard work and that compromising one's values for the sake of quick money or status can have disastrous effects on both an individual's life and the society as a whole. The movie highlights the significance of upholding one's principles despite temptation and hardship by contrasting traditional values with the corrupt world of easy money.

3.2. Analyses of Awara

Summary of Plot:

The film is a classic Bollywood melodrama in which a baby youngster named Raj (Raj Kapoor) is born in India's slums after his biological father (Prithviraj Kapoor) abandons his mother (Leela) due to suspicion of having an illicit relationship with another man. The two of them live in poverty after Leela gives birth to Raj on the streets. But in order to help his poor mother, Jagga convinces Raj to steal. Raj becomes a skilled criminal and joins Jagga's gang, but Leela thinks he is a businessman. Later on, Raj had a change of heart after meeting Rita (Nargis), his childhood friend and the love of his life. Rita, a ward of the judge who is skeptical when he finds out that Raj is unaware of who his father is, was reared in the upper socioeconomic strata and is now pursuing a legal education. Raj begins working at a factory because he fears Rita would reject him for his crime, but he gets fired when the management learns of his thievery. Unaware that the guy on the street was the judge, Raj offers Rita a necklace he stole from him without a case. She discovers Raj is a thief when the judge delivers her a case without a necklace. When Rita goes to see Raj's mother, she finds out about his whole life. In the meantime, Jagga and the group

try to steal a bank, but it doesn't work out, so they have to run from the police. When Jagga tries to hide at Raj's house, Leela spots him and confronts him. In self-defense, Raj kills Jagga as he fights him off. Before Raghunath, Raj is tried for Jagga's death. Leela sees Raghunath when she gets to the courtroom to testify as an eyewitness and follows him until she is struck by a vehicle. In the hospital, Rita gets the testimony from Leela, and Raj is then allowed to see her. Telling Raj that the judge is his father, Leela implores him to pardon him. However, Raj is even more furious with the judge for hurting him and his mother. He breaks out of prison and tries to kill the judge in retribution, but Rita stops him. Rita discusses the father-son relationship when defending Raj in his assault trial. Judge Raghunath visits Raj as he is awaiting his trial; at last, he acknowledges Raj as his son and asks for forgiveness. In the end, Raj is saved from death but given a three-year jail sentence for his offence. After being freed for Rita, who says she would wait for him, he resolves to heal himself.

Analyses Patterns:

1. Elimination of Religious Elements

According to Brooks, the decline of religion has had a significant impact on the use of melodrama in Western cinema. He argues that melodrama has historically been based on moral and ethical principles that were typically associated with religious conviction, such as the importance of family, responsibility, and sacrifice. However, these are presented in secular themes. In "Awara" study, melodramatic themes such as replacing religious beliefs with modern values, honesty, fate, and exaggerated terms that actually influence the audience will be studied.

1a. Superficial Religious References

Instead of religious themes, the film concentrates on social injustice, fate, guilt, and crime. The universe of the film provides a complete view of India's post-independence circumstances. Awara may be argued to erase religious components by downplaying the importance of religion in the lives of its characters but the film's narrative also ignores traditional religious rites and ceremonies. There are no overt references to any religious ideas or behaviors.

1b. Expression of Religious Values with Modern Values

"Awara" addresses and juxtaposes traditional religious beliefs and practices with the changing values and dynamics of modern society. The film presents a postcolonial,

modernist vision of morality and justice, where an individual's fate is shaped by social conditions and personal choices rather than religious determinism. The film shifts the concept from divine will to human-made systems, portraying Raj's struggles as consequences of class oppression rather than religious destiny. His redemption is not achieved through prayer or repentance but through self-realization and moral awakening, guided by Rita, who represents ethical living and rationality. Love and morality, rather than religious faith become the driving forces behind Raj's transformation, as Rita believes in his goodness based on humanistic ideals rather than spiritual virtues. The film also prioritizes class consciousness over religious or caste identity, critiquing social inequality as the root of crime rather than moral corruption. Furthermore, the courtroom serves as the ultimate moral authority instead of a religious institution, emphasizing rationality and legal justice over spiritual intervention.



Image 5: Rita Celebrates Her Birthday with Her Friends

Source: Awara (1951). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V88h_NvPIKU (Accessed date: 25/01/2024)

The film examines the conflict between the tradition and modernization. On the one hand, Raj is divided between two worlds as he navigates his own hardships and societal challenges, attempting to balance religious and moral precepts. While Rita, on the other hand, is a liberal, progressive, and independent woman who questions traditional societal norms and seek personal freedom and self-expression. When Rita invites Raj to her birthday party in the following scene. The scenario depicts how modernization has overtaken Indian society's cultural and religious values. After colonization, the concept of a birthday party was introduced to India. The scene depicts the tradition of elegantly

wrapped gifts an etiquette transferred to Indians by colonists and extensively practiced in current times, as well as Rita's manner of saying "Thank you" to everyone.

1b1. Heartlessness

The representation of the uncaring city is a melodramatic aspect that highlights the contrast between the harsh realities of metropolitan life and the protagonists' emotional sensitivity. The heartless city depicts a figurative area devoid of empathy, sympathy, and moral ideals, and it acts as a backdrop for the heroes' challenges. The characters' emotional isolation heightens the audience's sympathy for them and heightens the emotional impact of their hardships. The true sense of this melodramatic element can be seen in a scenario when little Raj rushes to find a loaf of bread for his sick mother. He tries hard to find a bread but ultimately resorts to steal from a road side vendor. He beseeches the man to let him go with the piece of bread for the sake of his ill mother but the vendor calls the cops on him and gets him arrested instead. This scenario captivates the audience with an emotional trauma of big cities as heartless.

1b2. Love

Love is indeed a prominent melodramatic element in the film "Awara." The movie portrays the concept of unconditional love through the central romantic relationship between Raj and Rita. In the film, Raj and Rita come from different social backgrounds. While Raj is depicted as a poor and marginalized individual, Rita belongs to a more privileged and affluent family. Despite their contrasting circumstances, their love for each other transcends societal boundaries and defies the obstacles they face. Raj's love for Rita remains constant throughout the film, even when they are separated and faced with adversities. The melodramatic portrayal of love in "Awara" heightens the emotional intensity of the story. It evokes empathy and sympathy from the audience, as they witness the enduring bond between Raj and Rita despite the challenges they face. This element adds a layer of emotional depth to the narrative, drawing viewers into the characters' plight and eliciting a strong emotional response.

This scene can be good illustration of this melodramatic element, when Raj refuses Jagga to accompany him in his world of crime as he aims to change for his love of life. While Jagga who bashes Raj on his decision and warns him that, "Jab ek baar koi jurum ki dunya main ajae to wo wapis nahin ja sakta aur wo bhi tum jesa Awara" he cannot leave this

world because he is born for it. But Raj is determined to be a noble man for the sake of his true love with Rita.

In the following scene, when Raj is arrested on the charges of Jaggunath's murder case and is brought to the court helpless. He is surprised to see Rita who is his defense lawyer in his judicial proceedings and Raj refuses her help or favor. Despite his lies and his criminal record Rita stays firm in his love and reminds him of she once promised him that if ever he is called in court, "he will find Rita to in his defense."

2. Representation of Cultural Change

Awaara is a dismal picture, and not just because of its depiction of filthy urban slums, bleak jail cells, or restrictive views of women. The darkly surreal sets and pictures in the film also reflect scenes of money and power, as well as profound, primarily negative emotions. Nonetheless, the film concludes happily, and it typically portrays a positive picture of human nature, suggesting the possibility of individual change and redemption: in Awaara, both love and justice triumph.

2a. Superficial Inferences About Change

One superficial inference about change in the film is the transformation of Raj's clothing over the course of the story. In the beginning, Raj is dressed in his iconic "tramp" outfit, which serves as a signifier of his poverty and marginalization. However, as he starts to work for Jaggu and earns his share from robbery and other crimes, he begins to dress in more stylish and fashionable clothing. The film continuously portrays the shifting modernized values with old Indian cultural values. Raj who is a criminal always dresses well. In fact, in one the scenes when Rita asks Raj about his profession, Raj directly tell her that he is a "Thief." While Rita takes it as a joke and asks him if he is thief then how come he is well dressed and resembles a gentleman. On which Raj responds: "Yahan jo bhi galat kam karta he, choori karta he daka data he wo sabhi ache ache kapre pehne hote hain, kunk ise un pe shak nahi parta." He says, all the criminals in our society are well dressed. But a lay man who works hard to earn his survival looks like a thief who he isn't. It's all a game of appearance and nothing else, Raj emphasizes.

2a2. Cruelty

Cruelty is a powerful melodramatic aspect that dominates the plot of the film, amplifying the emotional upheaval and increasing the audience's participation with the story. The film digs into many sorts of brutality imposed on the individuals by fate, society, and even

their loved ones, leaving an indelible mark on their lives and heightening the sense of tragedy and injustice. One of the most severe examples of cruelty is Raj's biological father's desertion of his mother, Leela, due to allegations of infidelity. This treachery plunges Leela and Raj into poverty and desperation, laying the groundwork for their ongoing difficulties.



Image 6: The Exaggerated Looks of Jagunath, Raj's Father and Mother

Source: Awara (1951). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V88h_NvPIKU (Accessed date: 25/01/2024)

The film also powerfully depicts the cruelty of societal judgment and discrimination. Raj's involvement in illicit activities, combined with his underprivileged upbringing, resulted in him being vilified and outcast by society. The dismissive views and mistrust that Raj experiences reflect this systemic harshness, making him an outsider and cementing social class divisions. The video examines the anguish and loneliness caused by this cruelty, showing the power dynamics and inequities that exist in society. The film's climax reaches a new low in cruelty when Raj, driven by his rage and pain, seeks to assassinate the Judge. Though motivated by a strong sense of betrayal and pain, this act of violence symbolizes the extremes of cruelty and vengeance. The film depicts the ramifications of such actions, as Raj is eventually stopped by Rita, who intervenes to avert additional tragedy. This culminating event emphasizes the devastating consequences of cruelty as well as the transformative power of love and forgiveness.

2a3. Fate

As a theatrical aspect, fate weaves its intricate threads through the lives of the individuals, molding their futures. Raj's birth in the slums and his mother's difficulties depict the hand of fate in their destitute circumstances from the start. Fate seemed to have dealt them a

bad hand, forcing them into a life of poverty and struggle, fostering a sense of despair and hopelessness. As Raj grows older, his affiliation with Jagga and plunge into a life of crime emphasizes the role of fate even more. It's as if fate has predestined his future, propelling him into a world of darkness and unlawful activity. Despite Raj's desires to save his mother, fate seemed to have twisted his decisions, forcing him down a dangerous and immoral path. This sense of inevitability contributes to the dramatization by raising the emotional stakes and generating a tragic atmosphere.

However, fate intervenes when Raj encounters Rita, a childhood friend and the love of his life. Their reunion appears to be a fortuitous meeting, providing a ray of hope and redemption amid the chaos. However, fate continues to play tricks on them as Raj's past comes up with him. The necklace incident, in which Raj unwittingly steals from Rita's guardian, the Judge, exemplifies fate's merciless hand. The discovery that the Judge is Raj's father heightens the melodrama, as secrets are revealed and relationships become enmeshed in a complicated web. The film's climax depicts the ultimate battle between Raj's rage at his father and his love for Rita. Fate confronts Raj with his thirst for vengeance, compelling him to attempt the Judge's assassination. In a dramatic turn of events, Rita steps in to save her boyfriend from the permanent consequences of his deeds. As Raj is forced to confront the repercussions of his choices and reconcile with his own fate, this key moment reveals the transformational power of love and the possibility of redemption.

In the end, fate gives Raj a second opportunity, albeit through imprisonment. The story's resolution emphasizes the theatrical subject of pain and sacrifice, as Raj resolves to correct his ways and rebuild his life for Rita's sake. Fate serves as an overarching factor in this classic Bollywood melodrama, heightening the emotional intensity, creating moments of sorrow and hope, and eventually shaping the characters' lives.

The plot of the film is filled with tragic fate setbacks that serve as key moments in the lives of the protagonists, moving the narrative ahead and heightening the story's melodramatic aspect. These setbacks inflict emotional and psychological wounds on the characters, testing their endurance and ability to overcome hardship. Raj's biological father abandons his mother, Leela, due to allegations of infidelity, which is one of the first devastating setbacks. This departure has a long-term influence on Raj's life, pushing him and his mother into poverty and despair. This initial setback for Raj sets the tone for

a sequence of setbacks throughout the film. Raj's relations with Jagga and his engagement in illicit activities lead to a sequence of tragic experiences as he grows older. The unsuccessful bank heist attempt, which causes Raj and the gang to flee the police, is a severe setback that threatens their lives. This vivid scene of turmoil and violence adds to the dramatization, raising the emotional stakes and underscoring fate's unpredictability. Raj suffers the most catastrophic defeat when he mistakenly kills Jagga in self-defense. This tragic event constitutes a turning point in the film, plunging Raj into despair and guilt. It shatters his self-esteem and reinforces his perception that fate has handed him a harsh hand. The weight of this sorrow is heightened when Raj is charged with Jagga's death and faces the prospect of severe imprisonment and separation from his loved ones. Another horrible event occurs when Raj's mother, Leela, pursues Raghunath, the Judge, and is brutally hit by a car. This unexpected turn of events strikes Raj and Rita hard emotionally, leaving them broken and in mourning. The disaster reinforces the dramatization and the characters' hardships by reminding them of the fragility of life and the tragic consequences of their actions.

2a4. Social Injustice

Film confronts and challenges the fundamental utility of 'capital' and 'material wealth' (the bourgeois class's instrument) when all of them fail to develop humanitarian concerns in the human mind. It raises fresh questions about Modern Capitalism, which has given rise to a corporate culture based on wealth, competitiveness, and reward. The capitalist assumption that "the one who is unable to create wealth for the nation is of no use" is called into question. As in the film, the wealth makers are too selfish and self-centered to think beyond their own domain. In fact, a vagabond Raj (who has made no contribution to wealth creation) is the one who embraces society and the nation with empathy and affection. The dualism approach constructed here prevents a realistic inference about change.

2b. Emphasis on Lost Values

The emphasis on lost values is a crucial aspect that pervades the plot of the film, emphasizing the contrast between traditional values that appear to be fading and the implications of their absence in the lives of the individuals. The film tackles the longing for and implications of lost principles throughout the narrative, bringing light on the impact of their absence on personal relationships, societal harmony, and individual

identity. Raj's slum childhood and his mother's hardships represent the disintegration of traditional values. The video depicts their impoverished lives as a result of the loss of virtues such as honesty, loyalty, and familial relationships. Their circumstances serve as a sharp warning of the consequences of forgetting or abandoning fundamental ideals. This emphasis on lost values emphasizes the importance of moral standards and the repercussions of abandoning them.

The film juxtaposes Raj's actions with the lost principles that he formerly held dear as he goes deeper into a life of crime. The desire of wealth and success becomes a tempting force, pushing him away from the conventional ideals with which he was raised. This contrast emphasizes Raj's internal anguish as he grapples with the consequences of his actions and longs for a restoration to the values that have been lost. The film also looks at the consequences of lost values in the context of society interactions. The growing socioeconomic class difference and persistent prejudice exacerbate the disintegration of traditional values. The contemptuous attitudes and mistreatment that Raj suffers as a result of his past represent society's loss of empathy, compassion, and fairness. According to the video, the absence of these principles not only maintains socioeconomic inequity, but also fosters feelings of loneliness and despair. As the protagonists seek redemption and struggle to regain what has been lost, the emphasis on lost ideals takes center stage. Raj's recognition of the consequences of his acts, as well as his determination to reform himself, represent a longing for the restoration of lost values.

2b1a. Honesty

In the film, the melodramatic aspect of "honesty" plays an important part in defining the story and character development. Raj is first involved in illicit activities and leads a double life, concealing his true identity and activities from his loved ones. When he encounters Rita, a childhood acquaintance and love interest, he recognizes the need of honesty in their relationship. Raj's change begins when he decides to leave his life of crime and work in a factory. He wants to prove his worth to Rita and hopes that his newfound honesty will help bridge the social class divide between them. His efforts, however, go for naught when he is unfairly removed from the workplace due to his background as a robber.

When Raj accidentally takes a jewelry from the Judge, who also happens to be Rita's guardian, the melodrama escalates. This event sets off a chain of revelations and

confrontations. Rita finds Raj's criminal past and confronts him, causing her to feel betrayed and heartbroken. Raj's mother, Leela, exposes his true roots and the name of his father, complicated matters even more. Raj's honesty takes on new meaning as the story progresses. He breaks out of prison with the purpose of exacting revenge on the Judge, whom he holds responsible for his and his mother's misery. Rita, on the other hand, intervenes and stops him, emphasizing the significance of forgiveness and understanding. Raj has a transforming realization in the film's last act. He values honesty not only in his relationships, but also in his self-reflection. Raj learns to let go of his hatred and bitterness when the Judge finally recognizes Raj as his son and asks for forgiveness. He accepts the consequences of his conduct, promising to change himself and return to Rita once he has served his time.

2b1b. Innocence

The theme of innocence runs throughout the plot, providing a dramatic counterpoint to the characters' harsh reality and moral difficulties. It signifies a state of purity, naivete, and unspoiled goodness, frequently set against the backdrop of a difficult and morally problematic reality. The existence or absence of innocence becomes a defining quality for the characters, shaping their actions, relationships, and the story's overall emotional impact. Raj's innocence is represented at the heart of the film through his poor background and his enduring love and devotion to his mother. Despite growing up in poverty, he retains a sense of innocence and optimism, valuing life's simple pleasures.

This innocence stands in stark contrast to the darker parts of his environment, emphasizing his underlying goodness and desire to protect and provide for those he cares about. The meeting with his childhood buddy Rita shows the naivety element even further. Rita exemplifies purity and innocence through her education, pursuit of justice as a law student, and genuine concern for Raj. Her character stands out among the moral ambiguities and sufferings that the other characters encounter. Their childhood bond's purity becomes a source of hope and a reminder of the innocence that can be restored. The loss of innocence becomes a prominent motif as the tale progresses. Raj's criminal career and involvement with Jagga's group rob him of his innocence, exposing him to the harsh realities and moral compromises of the society he lives in. The gravity of his deeds, as well as the consequences they entail, serve as a catalyst for his journey toward repentance and the restoration of his innocence.

The innocent factor is also represented by Raj's mother, Leela, who represents the constant love and purity of a mother's heart. Her unwavering devotion and sacrifices for Raj throughout his childhood represent a purity unaffected by the trials they face. Her character serves as a moral compass, a reminder of the purity and innocence that can persist even in the middle of adversity.

2b2. Traditional Values vs. Money

The conflict between traditional values and the chase of wealth and financial success is a recurring topic throughout the film's plot, adding levels of complication to the characters' decisions and relationships. The film examines the battle between these two forces, focusing on the tensions that develop when people are caught between keeping their cultural and moral legacy and succumbing to the attraction of money and social prestige. Raj's poor upbringing and his mother's difficulties exemplify traditional values in the film. Despite their poverty, they value honesty, integrity, and familial relationships over monetary wealth. Raj's mother, Leela, works tirelessly to provide for him, instilling compassion and the value of hard work in him.

Rita, on the other hand, represents the world of privilege and social prestige. Rita exemplifies the pursuit of education and career advancement, having been raised at a higher socioeconomic level and studying law. Her relationship with the Judge, as well as her exposure to a more privileged lifestyle, stand in stark contrast to Raj's upbringing. As their paths cross again, Rita is divided between her feelings for Raj and the obligations put on her by society. The tension between her traditional ideals and the temptation to conform to societal conventions lends dimension to her character and highlights the difficulties she experiences.

The Judge's jewelry incident epitomizes the symbolic portrayal of traditional values versus money. When Raj steals the necklace without realizing what it represents, it becomes a metaphor for the conflict between morality and consumerism. The necklace, which represents money and social standing, serves as a catalyst for the revelation of secrets and hidden truths. It calls into question the characters' beliefs and compels them to face the repercussions of their actions, emphasizing the conflict between traditional values and the alluring pull of money. The characters navigate the complexity of this paradox throughout the film, contending with their ambitions for financial security and societal acceptance while attempting to stay true to their heritage.

3.3. Analyses of Mother India

Summary of Plot:

The Indian epic play *Mother India* was released in 1957. Radha (Nargis), who is regarded as the "mother" of the town, is asked to open the irrigation canal that has been completed to the hamlet. She remembers being just married. Radha's mother-in-law obtains a loan from moneylender Sukhilala (Kanhaiyalal) to pay for the wedding of Radha and Shamu (Raaj Kumar). Shamu and Radha are forced to pay a third of their harvest as interest on their loan of \$500 (about US\$105 in 1957) when the village elders decide in favor of the moneylender despite disagreements over the loan conditions. As Shamu tries to make more of their rocky terrain habitable, a boulder fractures his arms. Shamu believes he is of no use to his family and leaves Radha and their three boys forever, walking to his certain death from starvation after being disgraced by Sukhilala for living off of his wife's wages and embarrassed of his weakness (lack of arms). Soon later, Radha's mother-in-law and youngest son pass away. The village's homes are destroyed and the crop is harmed by a powerful storm and the resulting flood. In return for Radha's body, Sukhilala pledges to rescue her and her boys. Radha fiercely rejects his offer, but the storm's horrors claim her child, her fourth son. Radha convinces the villagers to remain and rebuild the town, even though they have originally intended to leave.

Both of Radha's surviving children, Ramu (Rajendra Kumar) and Birju (Sunil Dutt), are now young men. Birju, who has been annoyed by Sukhilala's expectations since he was a baby, attacks the local females, especially Rupa, Sukhilala's daughter, as a way to let out his anger. Ramu, on the other hand, marries quickly and has a more balanced temperament. After being aroused, Birju's wrath becomes violent, and he assaults Sukhilala and his daughter while snatching Radha's bangles, or marriage bracelets, which Sukhila had pawned. He becomes a bandit after being expelled from the community. Sukhilala is reassured by Radha that she would not let Birju to do harm to her family. On the day of Rupa's wedding, Birju comes back with his band of bandits to get vengeance. He kidnaps Rupa and kills Sukhilala. When he attempts to escape the community on his horse, his mother, Radha, shoots him. He dies in her embrace. The image shifts back to 1957 when Radha unlocks the canal's gate, allowing its crimson water to pour into the meadows.

Analyses of Patterns:

1. Elimination of Religious Elements:

Mother India is a film that heavily combines religious elements into its plot. Rather than removing religious components, the film incorporates them within the narrative and thematic investigation. Religion, particularly Hinduism, is firmly ingrained in Indian society, and it reflects this reality. Religious rites, traditions, and beliefs are presented as fundamental components of the characters' life and the community in which they live. These religious elements have several functions in the film. Brooks argues that melodrama has historically been built on a number of moral and ethical values that were frequently linked to religious belief, such as the importance of family, responsibility, and sacrifice. However, the presentation of religious elements is presented within the restricted world of the melodramatic universe. It evolves towards secular themes. Therefore, honesty, love, and exaggerated terms that truly influence the audience will be examined in "Mother India" analysis.

1a. Superficial Religious References

There are countless instances of melodramatically depicted superficial religious connections, used as narrative devices to illustrate the individuals' religious identities and beliefs. For example, Radha, who is portrayed as the ideal of traditional Indian women and religious devotion. The scene of Radha and Shammu's wedding illustrates many religious references such as the Hindu wedding rituals religious elements are expressionistically inserted into the film from an orientalist point of view. Religious rituals are not deeply integrated into the narrative, but become a kind of ornamental element that visually enriches the film. They can be interpreted as exotic scenes that fulfil expectations about Indian cinema. In doing so, by showing the use of religion by individuals, the film tends to reinforce the moral universe of the film with secular values.



Image 7: Radha and Shamu are Seen Practicing Hindu Rituals

Source: Mother India (1957). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ss7lc5kB0BY> (Accessed date: 03/02/2024)

The above pictures show how firmly religious practices are illustrated e.g. reading the marriage vows of bride and groom, putting vermilion on the upper forehead which symbolizes a woman is married. Throughout the film, Radha's firm faith and dedication to religious traditions are shown, especially when she prays and seeks divine assistance in her hard times. Other than that, religious festivals such as Holi celebration and community gatherings at the temple are seen. The character Sukhilala however presents another religious connection. He is seen practicing religious ceremonies as a tool for personal benefit, emphasizing the superficiality and hypocrisy connected with certain people's religious rituals.

1b. Expression of Religious Values with Modern Values

The film examines the conflict between traditional religious ideals significantly rooted in Indian culture and the emerging modern norms brought about by urbanization and globalization. This conflict emphasizes the need to replace religious values with modern ones. Although the film mainly shows Radha tries to maintain her religious convictions while adapting to changing circumstances. Her deep faith is portrayed as a source of strength, influencing her actions and decisions. Radha, with her love, loyalty, goodness and innocence, enables the moral universe of the melodrama to be established. Her devotion to religion is transferred to the secular world through the qualities we have listed. But Birju, Radha's rebellious son who keeps challenging the societal norms objects traditional religious practices and the authority of the village elders, represents the struggle between conventional ideals and the need for independence of the self and

creative expression (Predator C. , 2013). There are many examples in the film when Birju has challenged the societal norms for example, when he learns that Sukhilala is looting his mother since 25 years and he starts to humiliate, and threaten him in public. He continues insulting Sukhilala despite his mother's plead. In a scene when Birju tells his mother, Maan ye Sukhilal tumhen itne arse se loot raha he, ye dunya shareefon ki nahin he yahan apne haq k lye uthna parta he that roughly translates to "Mother this world does not understand the language of innocence and love. If you keep following the customs of respect the world will ruin you and will not extend the helping hand."

1b1. Heartlessness

According to Peter Brooks, the element of "heartlessness" in melodrama often engage in malicious acts, show a disregard for moral values, and prioritize their own interests above all else. The film delves into the harsh reality and cruel nature of certain persons and society structures, stressing the protagonist, Radha's, emotional and moral challenges, as well as the impact of uncaring actions on individuals and their communities. One of the earliest patriarchal norms and expectations that contribute to the film's heartlessness is when Shamu insists Radha not to work as a newlywed bride and instead concentrate on her role as a loving and caring wife. Radha, however, takes on all the household chores and responsibilities to become an ideal daughter-in-law. At the beginning of the movie it is seen that Radha on her first day of wedding massages her husband's feet until he completely sleeps which is heart wrenching patriarchal customs. Later she is seen taking mop from her mother-in-law and asks her to rest and she will do the rest of the work as if it is a sin if her mother-in-law works or helps her in chores.

The heartlessness deepens when the family finds ensnared in the clutches of Sukhilala's devious lending stipulations. The village elders, influenced by the heartless financial system, rule in favor of the moneylender, forcing Shamu and Radha to pay a significant portion of their crop as interest on the loan. This ruling causes the family to go hungry and suffer, highlighting the heartless exploitation of vulnerable people by those in positions of power (Predator C. , 2013). Shamu's desertion of Radha and their three sons owing to his own humiliation and powerlessness symbolizes a cruel deed fueled by societal standards and a lack of empathy. Radha is left to fend for herself, facing additional tragedy, including the death of her mother-in-law and the loss of her belongings. The heartlessness reaches its height when Sukhilala seizes Radha's final cow

and presents her a marriage proposal, indicating that her body can be sacrificed for a better life. Radha's reluctance to sacrifice her ideals and dignity, despite starvation and desperation, demonstrates her perseverance and moral courage.

1b2. Love

Romanticism frequently highlights and deepens the emotional effect of the tale in the context of melodrama. It highlights the magnificence of love, the power of emotions, and the tensions that arise from romantic relationships. Melodrama's portrayal of love components tends to elicit intense emotional responses from the audience, engaging them in the characters' problems and wants (Brooks, 1995). The film depicts Radha and Shamu's loving connection, portraying their youthful innocence, passion, and devotion.



Image 8: Shammu and Radha on Their Wedding Night

Source: Mother India (1957). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ss7lc5kB0BY> (Accessed date: 03/02/2024)

Their love is shown as pure and untouched by outside influences, and it becomes a symbol of hope and optimism in the face of the obstacles they endure. Poetic lines, heartfelt tunes, and visually engaging passages heighten the film's romantic themes, producing a sense of enchantment and emotional intensity.

2. Representation of Cultural Change

The film examines the connection and collision of traditional Indian cultural values with modernity and Westernization. The conflict of cultural ideals is shown throughout the film by various people and their actions. Characters, as the embodiment of traditional Indian ideals, represent the traditional and deeply ingrained rituals and beliefs. From exhibiting the dedication to family values, society, and the preservation of Indian culture, to the changing roles of younger generation's exposure to Western ideas and willingness to confront and diverge from traditional beliefs. The film also depicts the exchange of

cultural values through depicting societal changes caused by technology progress and Western influences. Modernity is represented by the construction of the irrigation canal and new farming practices. This interchange provides the community both prosperity and challenges, resulting in disputes and issues. The film also emphasizes the conflict between traditional values and economic advancement. Moneylenders and landlords exploiting the poor demonstrates the decline of traditional values and the growing influence of materialistic demands. The characters' decisions and actions are frequently influenced by economic reasons, resulting in moral quandaries and conflicts of interest.

2a. Superficial Inferences About Change

Radha, who is now an ancient grandmother figure, is seen in *Mother India*'s opening close-up holding a handful of fertile mud on the pitch, which is contrasted with her dry neck. A series of images showing frantic mechanized building and agricultural operations in the neighborhood connected to electricity, automobiles, bridges, canals, and roads follows this strikingly realistic contrast. The building of an irrigation canal in the village represents progress and the start of a new era, not only for Radha, the protagonist, but also for the entire country. *Mother India* is a prime example of Mehboob Khan's poetic realism, showing India's journey from an exploitation system of feudalism to an era of independence and freedom (Somaaya, 2012). In this process, the following themes are used to reveal the necessity of modernization in the subtext of the film.

2a1. Selfishness

This melodramatic element is embodied by the character Sukhilala who preys on the peasants' precarious situation for his own financial gain, taking advantage of their weaknesses with no concern for their welfare. The second character is Shammu who when lost his arms abandons Radha and family because of social pressure which taunts him for living on his wife's earning. Shammu is seen helpless and decides to leave his family knowing that they have no bread winner, but he only thinks of himself and turns his back on them. In addition, the third character who falls under this category is Radha's son Birju who acts selfishly, and disregarding the effects of his actions on his family and the community. The damaging effects of selfishness on interpersonal relationships and the larger community are highlighted in the movie. Radha and her children are in a terrible predicament as a result of Shamu's abandonment, trying to subsist and fearing social

rejection. Characters like Sukhilala and Birju cause violence by their acts, worsening the villagers' already perilous situation.

2a2. Cruelty

The melodramatic aspect of "cruelty" in film narrative is evident in the chain of bad occurrences that befall Radha, and her family. This factor contributes to the emotional intensity and dramatic tension in the story. The depiction of many sorts of cruelty heightens the drama and accentuates the primary characters' hardships and sacrifices. Early in the film, Radha realizes that her wedding expenditures were borrowed from the moneylender Sukhilala, resulting in a debt that her husband, Shamu, refuses to recognize. This brutal deed establishes the repressive dynamics in Radha and Shamu's relationship, in which Radha is exposed to financial hardships and denied power over her own life. The cruelty grows as the story develops, and Radha and Shamu endure desperate conditions as a result of the loan's stringent terms. The pressure of paying interest on three-quarters of their produce leads them into a cycle of poverty and famine. This representation emphasizes the painful consequences of economic subjugation as well as Sukhilala's ruthlessness in using the defenseless to further his own wealth.

In addition, the scene further highlights the cruelty when Shamu abandons Radha and their three kids because he is burdened with humiliation and his failure to provide for his family. This act of desertion not only displays his desperation, but also the brutality of societal expectations and the constraints placed on men to fulfill traditional duties. The film continues to present the deep cruel scenes as after Shamu's abandonment worsens Radha's pain when she loses her youngest son in a storm that ruins their town and harvest. This wrenching occurrence underscores nature's brutality and the destructive impact it has on Radha's already precarious existence. Furthermore, the film examines patriarchy's brutality through the actions and expectations placed on women. Radha is portrayed as a strong and selfless mother who overcomes great adversity while keeping society standards of purity and dignity. The limits imposed on her as a woman, combined with Sukhilala's severe treatment, illustrate the cruelty inherent in a patriarchal culture.

2a3. Sordidness

The notion of "sordidness" is weaved throughout the storyline of the epic drama bringing a dimension of gloom and moral degradation to the story. This theatrical element exposes the spectator to the dark side of human nature, social corruption, and the consequences of

unethical actions by individuals. The figure of Sukhilala is one of the film's most prominent examples of sordidness. Sukhilala personifies greed, exploitation, and a lack of moral integrity takes advantage of Radha's family's financial vulnerabilities and drives them into a cycle of poverty and desperation through complicated loan terms. His acts contribute to Radha and her family's anguish and degradation, making him a symbol of filth in the story.



Image 9: Radha Massages Shammu's Legs on Her Wedding Night



Image 10: Radha Feeds the Family and Remains Hungry

Source: Mother India (1957). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ss7lc5kB0BY> (Accessed date: 03/02/2024)

The film also delves into the heinous essence of patriarchy and female oppression. Radha, the embodiment of motherhood and resilience, suffers enormous difficulties as a result of the acts and demands of the men around her. Radha is confronted with the ugly realities of a patriarchal society that limits women's agency and forces them to degradation, from her husband's refusal to accept their debt and subsequent abandonment to Sukhilala's predatory approaches.

Furthermore, the film depicts immorality through the activities of Radha's son, Birju who becomes a bandit because of his animosity of Sukhilala and the abuses his family has suffered. His violent activities, such as the death of Sukhilala and the kidnapping of Rupa, Sukhilala's daughter, show the fatal effects of sordidness and the cycle of retribution that it perpetuates. Furthermore, the film emphasizes the heinousness of systemic corruption (Barman, 2022). The village council's decision in favor of Sukhilala and the exploitation of the poor residents demonstrate the community's moral degradation. The challenges of the peasants, as well as the systematic oppression they confront, represent the horrible reality of a society that puts power and personal wealth over the well-being of its citizens.

2a4. Being Poor but Happy

In the film the melodrama aspect of "being poor but happy" serves as a compelling narrative device that contrasts material poverty with emotional richness and resilience. This theme is a manifestation of the two polarized nature of melodrama. It depicts the protagonists' ability to find pleasure and joy despite adversity, defying societal ideas of riches and success. The principal character, Radha, symbolizes the notion of being poor yet happy throughout the film. Despite her family's ongoing battle to make ends meet, she keeps a positive attitude and finds joy in life's small pleasures. Radha's undying love for her children, as well as her commitment to protect and provide for them, demonstrate her resilience and the strength she draws from her impoverished yet emotionally rewarding life.

In a couple of scenes, the film highlights the role of motherhood along with 'poor but happy' notion e.g. Radha who can barely feed all the family members still thanks God for what they have. Often, she is left with a few morsels in her plate yet she smiles and never complains. The film highlights the perseverance and positive outlook of Radha living in difficult circumstances, emphasizing the significance of human connection and the ability to find happiness in the midst of adversity. This theme is a manifestation of the two polarized nature of melodrama. Through contrasts, the unrealistic universe of melodrama takes the audience in a fairytale.

2a5. Social Injustice

The melodrama aspect of "social injustice" acts as a powerful tool to highlight the persisting inequalities and systematic injustices faced by marginalized individuals in society. It focuses on the lead character, Radha, and her hardships, sacrifices, and tenacity as she navigates a world marked by social and economic inequality. The film depicts a dramatic contrast between Sukhilala, the wealthy landowner, and the underprivileged people, particularly Radha and her family. Sukhilala, as the exploitative upper class, represents the established social hierarchy and power relations that perpetuate injustice. His actions, such as charging exorbitant interest rates on loans, seizing property, and treating the poor with contempt, highlight the system's underlying inequity and inequality. The subtext of the film should not be overlooked here. Sukhilala represents corruption. The film puts corruption and traditional structure on one side and a modern India on the other. Radha also represents the values of India that are left behind in a modernising era.

However, the film's melodramatic narrative emphasises corruption and concludes that traditional values need to change.

2b. Emphasis on Lost Values

This pattern in the movie explores the conflict between the enduring values of the past and the evolving values of the present. In a scene, where Radha after losing her son decides to sacrifice herself to Sukhilala and will seek a safe future for her children claims that sincerity and truth are no longer valued in this society, says, “Main agai lala lelo meri man mariyada or mere bachon ko ek achi zindagi de do,” “I have come to you, take my respect and integrity and give me my children’s happiness,” here she implies that she is ready to fulfil his lust for her as faith and loyalty is not able to feed her kids and neither can secure them from evils of society. Hence, she is trading her respect for the only power, money.

2b1a. Honesty

The film claims to demonstrate the power of truth, honesty and moral integrity in the face of difficulties. It depicts the adversities and victories of those who preserve moral standards like honesty and righteousness in the face of adverse situations. Radha, the main character, personifies the melodramatic quality of honesty. She upholds truth and moral principles unwaveringly throughout the movie. In spite of the difficulties she encounters, Radha never compromises her morality or turns to deception. Sukhilala tries to approach her, but she declines, rejecting creature comforts and remaining steadfast in her beliefs. Her steadfast honesty serves as a beacon for both herself and everyone around her. The villagers are motivated by Radha's integrity, which stands in contrast to the greed and dishonesty that are pervasive in society. In a world tainted by lies and exploitation, her unwillingness to succumb to the temptations of wealth and power is presented as a beacon of hope. The persona of Radha is a significant element shaping the moral universe of the melodrama.

2b1b. Innocence

The film's "Innocence" explores people's purity, fragility, and intrinsic goodness, notably the portrayal of innocence in the face of hard realities and moral difficulties. It depicts the contrast between individuals' inherent innocence and society's corrupting forces. Radha, the key heroine, personifies the melodramatic quality of innocence (Dwyer, 2006). Radha is portrayed as a youthful, naive woman with a childlike purity of heart from the beginning

of the film. Her purity is represented in her unfailing faith in the kindness of people, as well as her desire to trust and love unreservedly. Radha's purity is shown by her connections with nature and connection to the land, which highlight her inherent kindness and the peace she seeks in her relationships. Throughout the film, Radha's innocence is tested and questioned as she endures a succession of difficulties and betrayals. Her innocence is threatened by the loss of her husband, the load of financial difficulties, and the demands of cultural expectations. Despite these difficulties, Radha maintains her pure spirit, unaffected by the cynicism and cruelty that surrounds her. Mother India's portrayal of purity extends beyond Radha to other characters, notably the younger generation. Birju, Radha's son, begins as a carefree and innocent child. However, as he grows older and experiences society's injustices and exploitation, his innocence progressively erodes, giving rise to hatred and a desire for vengeance. Innocence and the loss of innocence are fundamental elements of the moral universe of melodrama.

2b1c. Nostalgia for Village Life

Mother India elicits profound nostalgia for rural life, depicting it as lovely and harmonious. The film depicts rural India in an idealized manner, highlighting the values and simplicity connected with local communities. This nostalgia is a key melodramatic aspect, generating pathos and a yearning for a bygone period (Hegishte, 2018). The village is portrayed in the film as a close-knit community where everyone knows and supports one another. The villagers are portrayed participating in group activities like as festivals, celebrations, and farming, which build a sense of community and solidarity. The simplicity of village life is contrasted with the problems and complexities of modern living, producing a juxtaposition that heightens nostalgia for a simpler time. Radha is portrayed as a representation of the village spirit, representing the characteristics of hard work, selflessness, and resilience. Her commitment to the land, as well as her unshakeable devotion to her family and community, embody the romantic idealization of village life. The film's cinematography and locations add to the nostalgic depiction of the community. The lush green fields, scenic vistas, and quaint village cottages exude peace and calm. These visual features reflect the audience's aspirations by presenting a simpler and more real way of life, in contrast to the city scenes and industrialization in the film. It creates a satisfying universe for the audience.

2b2. Traditional Values vs Money

The clash between traditional values and the pursuit of wealth and materialism is a fundamental topic that drives the theatrical plot of *Mother India*. The film examines the conflict between traditional values such as altruism, honesty, and sacrifice and the desire for financial success and social standing. On the one hand, Radha, the heroine who exemplifies selflessness and moral integrity, represents traditional ideals. Radha is portrayed as a virtuous and dedicated wife and mother who places her family's and community's well-being above personal wealth. She follows traditional gender roles, carrying out her responsibilities as a wife, mother, and caregiver. Radha's acts are motivated by a deep sense of moral obligation and a desire to preserve traditional values. Characters such as Sukhilala and certain villagers who emphasize their individual financial gain over collective wellbeing, on the other hand, exemplify the pursuit of wealth and material achievement. Sukhilala is portrayed as a greedy, manipulative personality who exploits others for personal gain, as well as a symbol of money's corrupting effect and the disintegration of traditional values. The film's depiction of social differences emphasizes the tension between traditional values and the chase of money. The peasants, who uphold traditional values, face poverty and hardships as a result of predatory moneylending activities. The chase of money and social prestige frequently results in moral compromises and personal sacrifices, as characters are compelled to make difficult decisions in order to protect their financial well-being (Mullatti, 1995). By placing money and traditional values at binary, oppositions and showing the characters in conflict and decadence in the process, he emphasizes the need for the regulating elements of the modern system.

3.4. Analyses of Mughal-e-Azam

Summary of Plot:

Mughal-e-Azam (The Great Mughal) is an epic historical drama set in ancient India. The film revolves around the passionate love story between Prince Salim, a rebellious young prince destined to become Emperor Jahangir, and Anarkali, a captivating court dancer. The movie takes us on a captivating journey through the opulent Mughal era. Emperor Akbar, desperate for a male heir, embarks on a spiritual pilgrimage to pray for the blessing of a son from his beloved wife, Jodhabai a Hindu woman. The gods smile upon him, and

the news of his son's birth fills the palace with joy. In gratitude, the emperor promises a humble maid, who brought him the news, that her deepest desire shall be fulfilled. Little does he know that this promise will shape the destiny of his kingdom. As the years pass, Prince Salim grows into a headstrong and indulgent young man, who only used to enjoy alcohol with dances performed by courtesans. Cared for by his doting father but lacking in discipline, Akbar, concerned about his son's character, sends him away to learn the ways of courage and responsibility on the battlefield. Salim's mother who keeps missing her son is portrayed as a desperate mother who keeps looking for his son's arrival and after a decade and had his son returns as a valiant and respected soldier, only to be captivated by the enchanting court dancer Nadira, who was later named as Anarkali, the pomegranate blossom by Akbar. Salim and Nadira who fell in love with each other at first sight, their love blossoms amidst the grandeur of the court, but their secret romance does not go unnoticed. Bahar, a jealous dancer longing to become queen, discovers the truth and seeks to win Salim's affection for herself. Failing to capture his heart, Bahar exposes Salim and Anarkali's forbidden relationship to Akbar, leading to a heartbreaking revelation.

Salim, determined to marry Anarkali and defy his father's wishes, faces fierce opposition. Akbar, torn between his duty as emperor and his love for his son, chooses to imprison Anarkali to quell the scandal. But even in captivity, Anarkali remains fiercely loyal to Salim, refusing to renounce their love as demanded by Akbar. Driven by love and rebellion, Salim gathers a formidable army to confront his father and rescues Anarkali. However, their confrontation ends in defeat, and Salim is condemned to death by his own father. In a twisted turn of events, Akbar offers to spare Salim's life if Anarkali, now in hiding, is sacrificed in his place. Recognizing the depth of Anarkali's devotion, she willingly surrenders herself to save her beloved prince. Sentenced to a harrowing death by being entombed alive, Anarkali makes a final request to spend her last few hours with Salim, disguised as his wife. Her plea is granted, allowing her to drug Salim so he cannot interfere with her fateful entombment. As Anarkali faces her impending doom, Akbar's conscience is stirred by the realization that he owes a debt to Anarkali's mother, who had once brought him news of Salim's birth. The mother pleads for her daughter's life, and Akbar's heart softens. Though torn between his duty and his desire to set Anarkali free, the emperor orchestrates her secret escape into exile with her mother. However, Akbar

makes a solemn demand: Anarkali and her mother must live in anonymity, forever concealed from Salim. This bittersweet act of mercy protects Anarkali from a grisly fate but ensures that Salim will never discover the truth—that his beloved Anarkali lives on, albeit in the shadows of their shared past. *Imperial Splendor* weaves a tale of love, sacrifice, and duty within the opulent backdrop of Mughal India. It explores the timeless themes of loyalty, heartbreak, and the complexities of love that transcend societal boundaries and challenge the very fabric of an empire.

Analyses Patterns:

1. Elimination of religious elements

This plot offers plenty of opportunity to display impressive architecture, dialogue that verges on highly refined poetry, extreme melodrama, and philosophical musings on love, power, and destiny, as well as breathtaking song and dance in the golden age of Indian cinema. According to Brooks, the arrival of modernization in India, has had a profound impact on the usage of melodrama in the Indian films which is a popular element of Western cinema. He argues that melodrama has historically been built on a number of moral and ethical values that were frequently linked to religious belief, such as the importance of family, responsibility, and sacrifice. Melodramatic themes such as substituting religious values with modern values, honesty, forbidden love, and exaggerated emotions that truly influence the audience will be examined in "Mughal-e-Azam" analysis.

1a. Superficial religious references

The element of superficial religious allusions in "Mughal-e-Azam" are used to heighten the story's dramatic components. One prime example of this is Emperor Akbar's spiritual journey to ask God for a male heir. Akbar's religious fervor is highlighted by the portrayal of his pilgrimage as a way to please the gods and ask for the favors. This picture, though, can be viewed as flimsy because it is mostly motivated by his desire for a male heir rather than a sincere spiritual bond.



Image 11: Emperor Akbar is on Spiritual Journey for a Male Heir and Priests Perform Collective Prayer for Emperor Akbar

Source: Mughal-e-Azam (1960). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGL6zt5fs0c> (Accessed date: 10/02/2024)

In addition, the character of Jodhabai, Akbar's wife, who is portrayed as a Hindu woman, is another overt religious allusion. Her inclusion in the narrative adds a layer of religious diversity and acts as a metaphor for the cultural blending of the Mughals and the Hindus. Throughout the movie, the plot is showcasing multiple events of interfaith belief, such as celebration of “Lord Krishna’s Birthday.” Religious elements nourish the film's exotic setting. It fulfils audience expectations of India.



Image 12: The Sculpture of Lord Kirshina Worshiped at Akbar's Palace by Jodhabai, Practicing Hindu Rituals

Source: Mughal-e-Azam (1960). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGL6zt5fs0c> (Accessed date: 10/02/2024)

During the scene Nadira, a Muslim courtesan performs a dance of Radha and praises Lord Krishna, enjoyed by Akbar, Jodhabai and Salim. The scene is also portraying the Hindu rituals of worshiping their Lord and a faithful contribution of Akbar (being a Muslim Emperor) is noteworthy. In another scene, when Akbar prepares to go on a war with his

son and refuses to receive the sword by a maid but his wife, also shows a beautiful blend of love and religions, to wish him luck for the success in the war. She is seen following her Hindu rituals by applying *Tilak* (a Hindu sectarian mark) on his forehead, and handing over his sword.

1b. Expressions of religious values with modern values

Perhaps Mughal-e-Azam's portrayal of an India where Hindus and Muslims live side by side in amity needs to be discussed, as evidenced by the endearing variety of individuals that make up its world. When heading to war, the Muslim emperor Akbar obtains rituals and blessings from both a Muslim and a Hindu priest. He is wed to Jodha Bai, a Hindu princess, whose devotion to Krishna is prominently praised throughout the movie. Her clean, uncomplicated Hindi is a welcome departure from the rest of the discourse, which is spoken in extremely sophisticated Urdu. On the other hand, the character of Salim, whose rebellious spirit and pursuit of love show his battle with the limitations imposed by his position, represents another instance of the junction between religious beliefs and contemporary aspirations. Salim's decision to put his love for Anarkali ahead of his responsibilities as a prince shows a conflict between individual goals and conventional religious standards. And when Akbar arranges Anarkali's covert flight into exile, he shows forgiveness and compassion despite his initial condemnation of Salim and Anarkali's romance. The strict religious standards and punishments of the time were contested by this act of mercy, which might be understood as an incarnation of contemporary principles of empathy and forgiveness. In addition, the idea of mercy and compassion are frequently seen as fundamental theological principles.

1b1. Heartlessness

Akbar's actions and choices serve as the primary means by which the movie's heartlessness is portrayed. Lack of empathy, compassion, or regard for the feelings and well-being of others is referred to as heartlessness, and it is frequently motivated by personal or political reasons. In the film, Akbar first demonstrates heartlessness by refusing to embrace Salim and Anarkali's romance despite their sincere love for one another. He puts the happiness of his son Salim behind his own hopes and the stability of the empire. Akbar chose to confine Anarkali and keep her apart from Salim, demonstrating his heartlessness. Furthermore, Akbar's offer to spare Salim's life in exchange for Anarkali's sacrifice is a harsh and inhuman deed. He manipulates the

situation, using Anarkali's life as a negotiating tool while ignoring her feelings and the intensity of her commitment to Salim. This conduct demonstrates Akbar's heartlessness and willingness to sacrifice individuals for his own purposes. Furthermore, Bahar, a jealous court dancer, demonstrates heartlessness by her behaviors motivated by jealousy and a desire for power. When Bahar finds Salim and Anarkali's connection and proceeds to reveal it to Akbar, knowing the implications, her malevolent aim is clear. Her acts demonstrate her uncaring nature by being devoid of empathy and care for Salim and Anarkali's feelings.

1b2. Love

The soundtrack of the movie is one of its most enduring features. *Pyaar kiya to darna kya*, is described as unfolding as a "mind-blowing epiphany" by the scholar Philip Lutgendorf, and it is as accurate a description as one could have for this song and its performance.



Image 13: Anarkali Performs on the Most Popular Song, "Pyaar Kia to Darna Kia" and Revolts against Akbar

Source: Mughal-e-Azam (1960). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGL6zt5fs0c>

(Accessed date: 10/02/2024)

Anarkali bravely declares her love for Saleem, telling the emperor that there is no fear of mere men for one who fears God ('parda nahi jab koi khuda se, bando se parda karna kya.') in the voice of Lata Mangeshkar at her very finest. As the song comes to a close, Anarkali is taken to prison by the emperor's guard after Akbar orders her arrest. But as Anarkali goes by Akbar, the court dancer bows to the emperor and makes the traditional salaam sign, raising her hand to her forehead three times. *Pyaar kiya to darna kya*, the song's opening lines, echo in the distance. Anyone who has seen this scene realizes that Anarkali is the one whose character radiates immense dignity and self-respect in this

situation, despite the fact that the gesture is one of deference to the emperor (Predator, 2013).

The nearly five-minute-long time in which Saleem loves Anarkali while a classical raga plays in the background with the words 'prem jogan ban ki...' is perhaps the best example of this. There is no spoken for the whole five-minute scene. We see Anarkali and Salim in one of the palace's gorgeous rooms, as Salim caresses Anarkali's face with a giant feather and then the two embrace, while Anarkali's opponent observes from a distance.



Image 14: Artist is Seen Singing "Rag" the Classical Music of the Time While Salim and Anarkali are Seen in Romantic Scenes

Source: Mughal-e-Azam (1960). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGL6zt5fs0c> (Accessed date: 10/02/2024)

Without a single word uttered, the exquisite classical raga in the background and the soft romance in the foreground combine smoothly, creating a fine blend of high art and subtle sexuality.

In the film, "Forbidden Love" is a fundamental concept that drives the plot and produces tension and conflict between the characters. A forbidden love is a romantic relationship that is socially, culturally, or morally inappropriate owing to circumstances such as class, religion, or society expectations. Salim and Anarkali's love is banned on numerous levels in the film. For starters, their connection is vilified because of their significant social class differences (Stadtler, 2013). Salim is a prince and the heir to the Mughal Empire, whilst Anarkali is a court dancer, a lesser social status position. This huge disparity in their positions creates an impassable barrier in society. The presence of forbidden love heightens the emotional stakes and fosters feelings of longing, sacrifice, and disobedience. Salim and Anarkali's love blooms amid the splendor of the court, but they

must keep their connection hidden owing to the societal penalties if their love is revealed. This secret adds a sense of danger and thrill to their romance, enhancing the drama and instilling a constant fear of being discovered.

2. Representation of Cultural Change

The film explores the representation of cultural change by depicting the tension between tradition and modernity within the Mughal royal court. The film contrasts the rigid, hierarchical values of the empire with the transformative power of love, individuality, and personal freedom. Emperor Akbar embodies traditional authority, upholding dynastic honor, duty, and social hierarchy, while Prince Salim represents a more personal and emotional approach to life, defying established norms for the sake of love. Anarkali, a courtesan, symbolizes the challenge to the rigid class and caste structures, as her love for Salim threatens the deeply ingrained feudal order. The film also reflects on the influences of external cultural shifts, as Mughal grandeur rooted in Persian, Indian, and Central Asian traditions, faces internal conflicts over modernization, personal will and evolving social structures.

2a. Superficial Inferences About Change

There are occasions in the film when superficial conclusions about change indicate a surface-level depiction of transition or evolution, without diving deeply into the complexity and repercussions of societal change. The film implies that Salim's time on the battlefield molds him into a disciplined and courageous guy. This metamorphosis, however, is presented without a thorough examination of his psychological difficulties, progress, or lessons learnt during his absence. External experiences, rather than internal introspection or personal development, are mostly responsible for Salim's character change.

2a1. Selfishness

In the film, selfishness manifests itself in the acts and motivations of numerous individuals, creating the tensions and heightening the emotional stakes of the story. Akbar's decisions and actions are selfish, but they are driven by a feeling of duty and the maintenance of the empire. Akbar's inability to recognize Salim and Anarkali's love derives from his selfish wish to maintain stability and the Mughal dynasty's reputation. He emphasizes his vision of a united and successful empire over his son's pleasure and wishes. Akbar's selfishness in imprisoning Anarkali and arranging for her sacrifice in

place of Salim demonstrates his willingness to sacrifice people for his own gain. Even secondary characters in the film are greedy. Bahar, the envious dancer, acts selfishly and enviously in an attempt to earn Salim's admiration for herself. She betrays Salim and Anarkali's hidden romance for personal gain, oblivious to the ramifications of her actions on their lives.

2a2. Cruelty

Cruelty is depicted through the deeds of Emperor Akbar and Bahar, two characters who inflict pain and misery on others in order to achieve their goals. Emperor Akbar's brutality is on display as he imprisons Anarkali to cover up the scandal of their illegal romance. Despite his love for his son, Akbar chooses to separate the lovers and punish Anarkali, compelling her to give up her feelings for Salim. The cruelty is amplified when Akbar entombs Anarkali alive in order to separate the lovers and safeguard his empire. This harsh conduct is motivated by Akbar's responsibility as emperor as well as his desire to retain his rule and respect societal norms.



Image 15: Anarkali is Seen Buried Alive Between the Walls After Akbar's Order to Save His Heir

Source: Mughal-e-Azam (1960). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGL6zt5fs0c> (Accessed date: 10/02/2024)

On the other hand, Bahar's vengeance comes from finding and exploiting Salim and Anarkali's covert affair. In her drive to become queen and win Salim's adoration, Anarkali betrays Anarkali's confidence by revealing their love to Akbar. Bahar's acts are motivated by her envy and desire for power, which drives her to inflict emotional suffering on Anarkali and Salim. The film's presentation of cruelty as a melodrama element serves to elicit powerful emotions from the spectator. It inspires pity for the characters who suffer as a result of the brutality of others, and it heightens the protagonists' struggles and

dilemmas. The contrast between love and cruelty provides complexity to the story, emphasizing the difficulties and sacrifices undertaken in pursuit of true love.

2a3. Sordidness

The character of Bahar also adds to the shadiness of the story. Her duplicity is enhanced by her deceptive acts, which are motivated by envy and a desire for power. Bahar's efforts to expose Salim and Anarkali's forbidden love and earn Salim's adoration for herself reveal the nefarious nature of her aspirations and the extent she is willing to go to achieve her objectives.

2a5. Social Injustice

Several facets of social injustice are highlighted in the film. For starters, the Mughal era's strong socioeconomic structure and class divisions foster an atmosphere of unfairness and social injustice. Because of their vastly different social situations, Prince Salim and Anarkali's relationship is deemed prohibited. Anarkali's status as a court dancer and Salim's royal ancestry present considerable impediments to their relationship, emphasizing the unjust constraints imposed by society conventions and expectations. Furthermore, Akbar's activities reflect elements of social injustice (Chakravarty, 2011, p. 173). Akbar's decision to imprison Anarkali and remove her from Salim is motivated by his wish to maintain social order and the Mughal dynasty's reputation. His actions put the empire's stability over his son's and Anarkali's personal happiness and rights. This exemplifies a type of social injustice in which power dynamics and societal norms limit human agency and enforce unequal treatment. The prominence of social injustice in "Mughal-e-Azam" emphasizes the oppressive nature of the society shown in the film and sheds emphasis on the difficulties faced by those who disobey conventional standards while social inequality determines the moral universe as an insurmountable rule.

2b. Emphasis on lost values

While the film does not explicitly address lost values, it does raise questions about the constraints and sacrifices that individuals must make in order to conform to societal norms and expectations. The film invites reflection on the potential loss of personal freedom and the suffocating effects of rigid social structures by depicting the struggle of the characters caught between their desires and their responsibilities. The film revolves around Salim and Anarkali's forbidden love (Predator, 2013). Their love challenges the established values of arranged marriages and hierarchical structures, defying societal norms and

expectations. This portrayal can be seen as shedding light on the Mughal era's loss of personal freedom and choice in matters of the heart. Anarkali's willingness to give up her life for love, on the other hand, can be interpreted as a reflection of lost values. Her act of surrendering herself to protect Salim's life and honor demonstrates the depth of her love and commitment to their relationship, highlighting a sense of selflessness and sacrifice that is perhaps uncommon in modern society. The film also delves into the tension that exists between personal desires and familial or societal expectations. Salim's conflict between his love for Anarkali and his loyalty to his father, Emperor Akbar, exemplifies the conflict between individual happiness and duty. This conflict hints at a loss of personal autonomy as well as pressure to conform to traditional values and obligations.

2b1. Traditional values claimed to be preserved

The film can be seen as preserving certain traditional values prevalent in India during the Mughal era. The film depicts the time's societal norms, customs, and hierarchical structures, reflecting traditional values and beliefs. Here are some of the film's depictions of traditional values: *Respect for authority*: The film emphasizes Emperor Akbar's respect and reverence, who is portrayed as a powerful and authoritative figure. The characters, particularly Prince Salim, demonstrate a sense of duty and obedience to the emperor, emphasizing the importance of authority figures in Mughal society. *Family honor and loyalty*: The film emphasizes the concept of family honor. The love of Prince Salim for Anarkali challenges traditional values such as arranged marriages and obedience to parental decisions. However, the film also depicts Salim's conflict between his love for Anarkali and his loyalty to his father, ultimately emphasizing the value of family loyalty and honor. *Duty and responsibility*: The film emphasizes individuals' duty and responsibility to their roles and positions in society. Prince Salim is sent away to learn the ways of bravery and responsibility on the battlefield, emphasizing the expectations placed on him as a prince and future emperor (Chekki, 1996).

2b1a. Honesty

The film doesn't put an emphasis on honesty. While there are instances of honesty demonstrated by select characters, like as Anarkali's love for Prince Salim, this is not always the case. She is steadfast in her love for him and does not back down from expressing it, even in the face of difficulty and potential consequences.

2b1b. Innocence

The innocence in "Mughal-e-Azam" evokes sympathy and understanding from the spectator. It emphasizes the innate beauty and purity of love, as well as the sad repercussions of societal standards and conflicts. Anarkali's innocence is a driving force in the film, grabbing the hearts of both the viewer and Prince Salim, and it gives complexity to the narrative's themes of love, sacrifice, and loyalty.

This innocence is best exemplified by the character of Anarkali, the court dancer who wins Prince Salim's heart. Anarkali's innocence is exemplified by her pure and true love for Salim. She falls in love with him at first sight and stays with him throughout the film. Her love is free of ulterior intentions or calculations, and she maintains her innocence in the face of tragedy. Anarkali's purity can also be observed in her undying devotion to Salim. Despite the penalties and cruelty, she refuses to abandon their love or betray Salim. She stays faithful to her impulses, firm in her view that love should not be ignored or rejected. Furthermore, Anarkali's purity contrasts with the film's other characters' intrigue and deception. While others scheme and manipulate for their personal benefit, Anarkali remains a symbol of purity and truthfulness.

Themes	Shree 420	Awara	Mother India	Mughal-e-Azam
1. Elimination of religious elements				
1a. Superficial religious references	✓	✓	✓	✓
1b. Expressions of religious values with modern values	✓	✓	✓	✓
1b1. Heartlessness	✓	✓	✓	✓
1b2. Love	✓	✓		✓
2. Representation of cultural values				
2a. Superficial inferences about change	✓	✓	✓	✓
2a1. Selfishness	✓		✓	✓
2a2. Cruelty	✓	✓	✓	✓
2a3. Fate		✓		✓
2a4. Sordidness	✓	✓	✓	✓
2a5. Being poor but happy	✓		✓	
2a6. Social injustice	✓	✓	✓	✓

2b. Emphasis on lost values	✓	✓	✓	✓
2b1. Traditional values claimed to be preserved	✓	✓	✓	✓
2b1a. Honesty	✓		✓	✓
2b1b. Innocence	✓	✓	✓	✓
2b1c. Village life nostalgia	✓		✓	
2b2. Traditional values vs. Money	✓	✓	✓	

Table 1: Themes of Films

Source: Created by the Author

3.5. Discussion

The purpose of this analysis is to explore the traditional patterns represent in the selected Indian films—namely, "Shree 420," "Awara," "Mother India," and "Mughal-e-Azam"—within the context of Indian modernization. The method employed involves an examination of the film's narrative and cinematographic elements (narration, theme, characters, *mise en scene*, music, dialogs, acting, decor, filmic time and space) to uncover underlying representation patterns of traditional values and their implications. These values, such as family bonds, community harmony, religious practices, and moral guidance, have historically been central to Indian culture. As India underwent modernization, these values were presented in a different way in Indian popular cinema narratives. The representation of traditional values in films serve as a lens to examine how traditional values intersect with changing social dynamics. The analysis explores melodramatic elements in Brooks's works, revealing latent colonial discourse. This perspective provides a distinctive angle to evaluate modernization through post-colonial discourse, enhancing insights into how Golden Age Indian Popular Cinema narratives engage with colonial legacy, offering modernization's impact on representing Indian traditional culture.

The purpose of this discussion is to critically analyze and explore the representation of traditional values and cultural dynamics within the context of Indian modernization as depicted in selected Bollywood films. The discussion is conducted after watching the said movies and analyzing them under two main melodramatic patterns, elimination of religious elements and representation of cultural change and the sub-patterns. Eventually,

this discussion aligns with the thesis argument, which is focused on understanding the effects of modernization on the representation of Indian traditional culture. By examining these films, it provides insights into how cinema serves as a medium to reflect and engage with the evolving cultural and societal landscape in the face of modernization.

1. Elimination of religious elements

The analysis of select movies within the context of the thesis, illuminates captivating insights into the intricate relationship between melodrama and the portrayal of religious elements in Indian popular cinema. As argued in the thesis, the process of modernization brings forth complex shifts in cultural representation, and the interplay of melodramatic elements with religious portrayals becomes a compelling avenue to explore these changes. In case of *Shree 420*, religion is largely absent in the film, as it focuses on social and economic issues rather than religious devotion. The only notable religious reference is a brief Diwali celebration, which has no significant impact on the plot. Instead, the film emphasizes honesty and integrity as secular moral values, contrasting them with materialism and modernization. Similar to *Shree 420*, *Awara* minimizes religious elements and instead prioritizes themes of fate, crime, and class struggle. Traditional religious rites and ceremonies are absent, and the film challenges religious determinism by portraying an individual's fate as shaped by social conditions rather than divine intervention. The courtroom serves as the moral authority, replacing religious judgement with legal justice. Unlike the previous films, *Mother India* integrates religious elements but primarily as a visual and symbolic device rather than a narrative driver. Rituals such as Hindu wedding ceremonies, Holi celebrations, and temple gatherings enrich the setting but do not dictate character actions. The protagonist, Radha, embodies traditional religious virtues, but her moral strength and sacrifices ultimately reflect secular ideals of justice and perseverance. The film juxtaposes her faith with her son Birju's rejection of religious and social traditions, highlighting the tension between tradition and modernity. In case of *Mughal-e-Azam*, the film presents a historical setting where religious elements are more explicitly woven into the narrative. Akbar's pilgrimage for a male heir, Jodhabai's Hindu devotion, and interfaith depictions, such as Lord Krishna's birthday celebration, illustrate religious co-existence. However, these elements function as ornamental and symbolic rather than central to the plot. The key conflict revolves around

Salim's defiance of royal authority for love, and Akbar's eventual act of mercy represents a shift from rigid traditionalism to modern ideals of compassion and individualism.

The representation of love as a prominent theme within these films holds significant meaning in the context of both melodrama and Peter Brooks' insights. Love, often portrayed in a melodramatic fashion with heightened emotions and moral dilemmas, serves as a representation of the belief system of the pre-modern society. Brooks' exploration of exaggerated emotions and moral conflicts aligns with how these films utilize love to highlight the clash between traditional values and the evolving modern landscape. For Brooks, melodrama often encompasses intense emotional experiences and moral contrasts, allowing the audience to engage with complex ethical questions. The portrayal of love in the films as a force that challenges societal norms and propels characters toward positive transformation is a prime example of melodrama's ability to evoke powerful emotional responses while addressing profound moral dilemmas.

This representation of love and its significance in melodrama can be linked to the post-colonial discourse. In the wake of colonial rule, many societies, including India, grappled with the tension between preserving indigenous traditions and embracing modernity. The theme of love as a transformative and redemptive force can be seen as a metaphor for the negotiation between past and present, tradition and innovation, and the desire for cultural authenticity in a changing world. Love, in this context, becomes a vehicle for exploring the complexities of identity, autonomy, and individual agency—key components of post-colonial discourse.

The profound presence of unconditional love as a melodramatic element in the examined films resonates deeply with the central argument of the thesis. In each of these cinematic narratives, love serves as a powerful device to intensify emotions, introduce conflict, and engage the audience emotionally. The romance between characters like Raj and Vidya, Anarkali and Saleem, and Raj and Rita showcase love as an unstoppable force that transcends societal norms and challenges. This representation of love reflects the broader societal desire for meaning and purpose in the face of modernization's changes. As described by Brooks, melodrama operates as a surrogate for religious experiences, and the enduring nature of love in these films provides viewers with a sense of transcendence and atonement.

As in *Mughal-e-azam*, Anarkali bravely declares her love for Saleem, telling the emperor that there is no fear of mere men for one who fears God in a song and resultantly, Anarkali is taken to prison by the emperor's guard after Akbar orders her arrest. But as Anarkali goes by Akbar, the court dancer bows to the emperor and makes the traditional salaam sign, raising her hand to her forehead three times. *Pyaar kiya to darna kya*, the song's opening lines, echo in the distance. Anyone who has seen this scene realizes that Anarkali is the one whose character radiates immense dignity and self-respect in this situation, despite the fact that the gesture is one of deference to the emperor. The representation of religious values is repositioned for the construction of a more individualistic world. Furthermore, the depiction of Vidya's unwavering love for Raj and Raj's selfless devotion to Vidya in "*Shree 420*" aligns with the thesis's exploration of how cinema portrays traditional values amidst modernization.

Peter Brooks' exploration of melodrama elements, particularly his discussions on exaggerated emotions, moral polarities, and conflict, serves as a valuable framework for dissecting the traditional patterns within the films. Brooks' emphasis on the representation of intense emotions aligns with the heightened emotional states often associated with traditional experiences. In his study of melodrama, Brooks (1976) argues that melodramatic narratives serve as a moral legibility framework, where heightened emotions become the primary mode of articulating justices, suffering, and redemption. This aligns with Indian cinematic traditions, where emotions are not just expressions of individual experiences but also vehicles for conveying cultural and social values. Additionally, his analysis of moral conflicts aids in unraveling the tension between traditional values and the changing socio-cultural landscape. In "*Mughal-e-Azam*," the traditional patterns are evident through the interfaith love story of Prince Salim and Anarkali. The forbidden love between a Muslim prince and a Hindu court dancer symbolizes a cultural synthesis, reflecting the evolving acceptance of interfaith relationships in modern Indian society. This narrative underscores the traditional tension and eventual harmony resulting from societal transformation. Similarly in case of "*Awara*" and "*Shree 420*" the movies delve into the conflict between personal desires and societal expectations, resonating with traditional themes of individual versus communal norms. The characters' struggles mirror the broader societal transition from traditional religious practices to a more individualistic approach, characteristic of the modernization

era. The contrast between traditional values and modern secular ideals, as highlighted in "Mughal-e-Azam," echoes Brooks' examination of melodramatic conflict. Emperor Akbar's embodiment of traditional duty juxtaposed with Prince Salim's pursuit of personal fulfillment mirrors the tension between established traditional norms and evolving societal paradigms.

All the films portray traditional values, represented by the characters are in conflict with the changing world. From Radha's melodramatic representation, Mughal-e-Azam's contrast between traditional and modern values to the disparity between the slums, where Raj lives and the higher social level where Rita is raised and Raju who leaves his town and journeys to Bombay in search of a better life. Each plot is creating a temporary longing for the past. The movies portray characters to make the audience accept the necessity of transitioning to the modern world. While in Mughal-e-Azam a contrast between traditional and modern values is seen too, when Emperor Akbar embodies the traditional, duty-bound ruler, while his son, Prince Salim, represents the modern, headstrong youth seeking personal fulfillment and love outside societal norms. The love story between Prince Salim, a Muslim prince, and Anarkali, a Hindu court dancer, symbolizes a cultural synthesis and reflects the evolving acceptance of interfaith relationships in modern Indian society. The film suggests that to protect everyone, a new order is required, different from the traditional rules. Modern secular rules are presented as a potential savior from chaos and injustice in the society.

2. Representation of Cultural Change

The films' exploration of interfaith relationships, urbanization, and individual autonomy aligns with postcolonial ideals. In the golden age of Indian popular cinema, the shift caused by urbanization, Western influences, technology, colonial legacy, and the pursuit of personal freedom reshaped films to mirror the evolving society. As *Shree 420* showcases the allure of urban life as Raju leaves his rural town and journeys to Bombay in search of a better life. This reflects the increasing urbanization and migration from rural areas to cities during the era of modernization. The depiction of the city as a symbol of modern aspirations challenges traditional notions of village life and agrarian livelihoods. On the other hand, *Mother India* addresses the challenges faced by Radha, a single mother, in an agrarian society that values traditional family structures. Her resilience in managing her family's struggles and making difficult decisions subverts conventional

gender roles and underscores the changing role of women in a modernizing society. The film's portrayal of a strong, independent woman navigating societal expectations reflects the impact of modernization on gender dynamics.

Similarly, *Mughal-e-Azam*'s love story between Prince Salim and Anarkali challenges the traditional norms of societal hierarchy and family honor. Prince Salim's defiance of his father, Emperor Akbar, to pursue his love for Anarkali represents a push for personal freedom and autonomy in matters of the heart. This narrative subversion reflects the changing values in a society grappling with modernization.

The analysis of the films "*Mughal-e-Azam*," "*Awara*," *Mother India* and "*Shree 420*" reveals a tapestry of patterns that intricately weave together themes of societal transformation, moral conflicts, and cultural negotiation in the face of modernization. These patterns, encompassing issues such as social inequalities, ethical dilemmas, and clashes between tradition and change, are portrayed through characters' journeys of redemption and self-discovery. The films' melodramatic elements intensify emotional engagement, while their resonance with post-colonial discourse underscores the broader implications of individual choices within a rapidly evolving society. In portraying these intricate dynamics, the films collectively provide a compelling exploration of the interplay between tradition, modernity, and personal agency, reflecting both the challenges and opportunities of a changing world.

In the films we analyzed, the traditional social system now causes social inequities, poverty, and exploitation. For example, the moneylender in *Mother India* is a character that represents the transition from traditional society to modern society. It constantly shows "Money as a significant element", and the traditional chaotic and unfair environment caused by money is questioned. The character's actions convey the message that traditional values are no longer sufficient. Secondly the completion of the irrigation canal and the introduction of new technologies bring optimism for a better future.

In "*Awara*," the film challenges stereotypes associated with criminals and their potential for rehabilitation. Historically, societal perceptions often categorized individuals with criminal records as irredeemable and destined for a life of continued wrongdoing. Such stereotypes perpetuated a sense of hopelessness and societal exclusion for those who had transgressed the law. The film disrupts these stereotypes by portraying Raj's journey towards reform and redemption. Through his character arc, the narrative emphasizes that

individuals with criminal backgrounds are not confined to their past actions. This challenges the prevailing notion that a criminal identity is static and unalterable. Instead of organically addressing societal attitudes towards crime and justice, *Awara* aligns with Westernized narratives of moral reformation through state mechanisms, subtly reinforcing an external ideological framework rather than authentically engaging with indigenous cultural discourse.

This portrayal can be interpreted in the context of Peter Brooks' concepts of melodrama. Brooks often emphasizes the tension between virtue and vice, morality and immorality, which are integral elements of melodramatic narratives. In "Awara," the depiction of Raj's moral struggle and his eventual redemption align with Brooks' exploration of moral conflicts and emotional intensity within melodrama. Regarding the relationship with post-colonial discourse, "Awara" can be seen as reflecting the broader societal shifts that occurred in the post-colonial era. As nations gained independence, there was a collective reevaluation of social norms and values inherited from colonial powers. The film's emphasis on individual agency and personal growth reflects a Westernized melodramatic framework that reshapes post-colonial identity through external ideological structures rather than indigenous cultural perspectives. Rather than organically addressing the complexities of inherited stereotypes and identity struggles, the film presents a vision of transformation that aligns with Western narratives of self-actualization, reinforcing a Eurocentric model of progress and autonomy.

Furthermore, the film's exploration of family and identity resonates with post-colonial discourses on cultural reclamation. Raj's search for his father and his complex emotions reflect the changing dynamics of family structures in a rapidly modernizing society. This quest for familial connections can be interpreted as a metaphor for post-colonial nations seeking to reconnect with their cultural roots and traditions in the midst of societal transformation.

While "Mughal-e-Azam" serves a broader purpose within the film's narrative and its relationship to patterns of melodrama and post-colonial discourse. In the bigger picture, this narrative serves to depict the intricate interplay between individual choices and societal norms during a time of profound societal transformation. The film delves into the tensions between personal desires and societal responsibilities, reflecting the complexities individuals faced in a changing society. By presenting these moral and legal dilemmas,

"Mughal-e-Azam" engages with the moral fabric of a nation undergoing transition and encourages the audience to reflect on the broader implications of personal decisions on the collective well-being. In terms of patterns of melodrama, the exploration of moral conflicts aligns with the heightened emotional intensity that characterizes the genre. Melodrama often thrives on presenting characters torn between competing virtues and vices, right and wrong. In "Mughal-e-Azam," Emperor Akbar's struggle embodies these melodramatic elements, evoking empathy from the audience as they witness his internal turmoil. The film's treatment of moral dilemmas is a reflection of melodrama's ability to create emotional engagement by highlighting the binary structure of human nature.

The connection to post-colonial discourse is multifaceted. During the post-colonial period, many nations, including India, grappled with redefining their legal and moral frameworks as they transitioned from colonial rule to independence. "Mughal-e-Azam" captures this moment of reevaluation by portraying the clash between traditional values and changing societal norms. The film's depiction of moral dilemmas can be seen as a metaphor for the broader colonial discourse to navigate conflicting influences and establish a new identity.

Similarly, depiction of social issues like poverty and exploitation in "Shree 420" aligns with the central argument of the thesis, which explores the effects of the modernization process on the representation of Indian traditional culture and melodramatic elements in Indian popular cinema. The elements given as a dilemma make the melodrama universe think as a universe disconnected from real life. The audience is somehow imprisoned in the universe of these values. In the context of the thesis, "Shree 420" provides a lens through which the impact of modernization on social structures and individual behavior is examined. The fraudulent scheme orchestrated by Sonachand highlights the exploitation of the impoverished population, shedding light on the socio-economic disparities that were exacerbated during the era of modernization. But the point to be emphasized here is that Sonachand is constructed as an absolute bad person. Bad people drive this inequality. The distinction between good and evil is very clear. Sonachand, who cannot be defined as a modern individual, is a swindler who takes advantage of the systemless. The solution to this evil attributed to him is a modern legal system.

Raju's character transformation further reinforces the thesis's argument by showcasing the ethical quandaries faced by individuals amidst evolving societal norms. As Raju shifts

from an honest and ambitious individual to a confidence trickster, his journey make visible the choices individuals had to make when confronted with opportunities for personal gain, even if it meant compromising their values. In addition, the function of melodramatic aspects in amplifying the influence of modernization on traditional values in Indian popular cinema is central to this approach. The film uses these themes to highlight the emotional situations that its characters encounter in the midst of societal change. The profound emotional conflicts, heightened by melodramatic techniques, give a compelling canvas on which to investigate the erosion, negotiation, and modification of established ideals. Thus, by using melodrama as a lens, "Shree 420" effectively emphasizes the subtle ways in which modernization reshapes deeply rooted cultural norms, thus strengthening the thesis' argument. Shree 420 contributes to the thesis's argument by illustrating how the representation of social issues, ethical dilemmas, and character transformation serves as a microcosm of the broader societal changes occurring during the modernization era.

Melodrama fulfills its function in the modern world by creating fictional universes that allow the audience to experience the world of missed times, providing a way to endure the secularized modern world. The depiction of melodramatic elements within these films, characterized by profound emotions, acts of sacrifice, and grandiosity, establishes a profound resonance with audiences. This connection draws viewers into the intricate lives of the characters and their arduous journeys. He emphasizes that the modern state and modern institutions are the best option for both the country and individuals.

CONCLUSION

Spanning the years 1945 to 1965, Indian cinema played a vital role in shaping national identity, fostering national consciousness, depicting ideal family structures, critiquing class biases, and disseminating phenomena like globalization, westernization, urbanization, and modernization. However, the onset of modernization posed a profound challenge to Indian culture and identity, as popular cinema, while entertaining audiences, often showcased foreign cultures that overshadowed indigenous traditions. The acceptance of modernization within Indian cinema marked the crux of ensuing issues. From extreme nationalism to fantasies and melodrama, all these genres emerged from the embrace of modernization by post-colonial India's film industry. In contrast, Indian art cinema, which celebrates Indian traditions, culture, religion, and family values, remains relatively lesser known locally due to its opposition to utopianism and absolutism.

This study has explored the impact of modernization on the representation of Indian traditional culture in the Golden Age of Indian cinema (1940-1960), focusing on *Shree 420*, *Awara*, *Mother India*, and *Mughal-e-Azam*. Through the lens of melodrama, the research has highlighted how these films navigate the complex interplay between tradition and modernity, reflecting broader societal transformations in post-independence India. Modernization gave rise to melodrama, fantasies, and extreme nationalism as themes/characteristics in post-colonial Indian cinema. Modern cinematic genres like melodrama, rose to prominence in post-colonial India, reflecting the country's complex sociopolitical environment. Not as much attention has been given to Indian art cinema, which respects traditional practices, culture, religion, and family values. This genre provides a more nuanced picture of Indian society by rejecting absolutism and utopianism. Bollywood's portrayal of ethnicity, class, gender, and religion frequently reinforces Orientalist clichés while showcasing the variety of stories found in Indian cinema and how they interact with modernity and tradition.

Early post-independent Indian cinema prioritized themes derived from traditional Indian concepts through British influences. These films frequently used Indian traditions, religious and cultural symbols to help the people re-establish a connection with their roots. These films usually have hidden messages within their stories, genres, and social values. Through intertextual analysis of post-independent films, these hidden themes can be found, revealing aspects of desire and change within the films' narratives.

The findings reveal two major themes: the elimination of religious elements and representation of cultural change, both of which signal an evolving cinematic landscape influenced by modernization. The analysis has demonstrated that the modernization process was not merely a shift in technology and aesthetics but a fundamental transformation in narrative structures and thematic representations. The selected films depict a nation grappling with the competing forces of Westernization and cultural preservation. Modernization introduced new aspirations, industrial progress, and changing gender roles, but it also disrupted deeply rooted traditions. The cinematic portrayal of this transition is evident in the ways characters struggle with identity, morality, and societal expectations. The use of melodrama as a narrative device intensified these struggles, making them more accessible to audiences who were themselves experiencing the effects of modernization in their daily lives.

A key finding of this study is the deliberate shift in the representation of traditional values. Religious motifs, once integral to storytelling, were increasingly replaced by secular themes that aligned with the modernist vision promoted by post-independence leaders. This transition reflects a further cultural shift as Indian cinema attempts to present a progressive and unified national identity while at the same time bearing the scars of the lingering effects of colonialism. The study also finds that cultural values were not entirely abandoned but rather recontextualized within modern frameworks. For instance, family honor, duty, and sacrifice remained central themes but were presented through a lens that resonated with the contemporary social climate.

Furthermore, the role of melodrama in this transformation cannot be overstated. As a genre that thrives on heightened emotions, melodrama served as a bridge between tradition and modernity, enabling audiences to process cultural shifts through familiar yet evolving cinematic conventions. The exaggerated emotional expressions, musical interludes, and moral conflicts provided a sense of continuity even as films introduced modern ideals. This research reaffirms Brooks' theory that melodrama operates as a moralizing force, helping societies navigate ethical ambiguities brought about by rapid change.

Despite modernization's profound impact, the study also uncovers a tension within India's Golden Age films, a tension between the embrace of modernity and the nostalgic longing for cultural authenticity. The commodification of Indian culture within popular

cinema further complicated this dynamic, as commercial success often dictated a balancing act between modern appeal and cultural familiarity.

In conclusion, the Golden Age of Indian cinema represents a crucial period in which modernization reshaped the cultural and traditional fabric of cinematic representation. Through the analysis of key films, this study has shown that Indian cinema's adaptation to modernization primarily involved the selective erasure and reconfiguration of traditional elements within a Westernized framework. Rather than an organic reinvention, these elements were repackaged through a colonial-influenced lens that imposed external ideals onto indigenous narratives. The findings highlight how postcolonial societies, instead of reconciling heritage with progress on their own terms, were subjected to cinematic narratives that reinforced Westernized notions of modernity, shaping national consciousness in ways that often distanced it from its authentic cultural roots. Future research could expand on these insights by exploring how these trends evolved in subsequent decades and how contemporary Indian cinema continues to negotiate the legacy of modernization.

Moreover, future research could be done by comparing the films from various eras to obtain insights into changes in narrative style, cultural representation, and the impact of globalization on Indian cinema. In order to understand how modern societal issues, technological developments, and international influences have influenced how tradition, modernity, and cultural identity are portrayed, it is also possible to analyze contemporary Indian films. Future research should also look into other genres besides melodrama, like action, comedy, and horror, in order to find different narrative techniques and thematic issues associated with postcolonial discourse.

REFERENCES

- Anantharaman, G. (2008). *Bollywood melodies: a history of the Hindi film song*. Penguin Books India.
- Armes, R. (1987). *Third World Film Making and the West*. England: University of California Press.
- Ashcroft, B. (2012). *Bollywood, Postcolonial Transformation and Modernity*. Oxford Scholarship Online.
- Alatas, S. H. (1972). *Modernization and social change: studies in modernization, religion, social change and development in South-East Asia*. Sydney : Angus & Robertson.
- Bajpai, R. (2015). Multiculturalism in India: An Exception?
- Banerjee, S. (2017). *Gender, Nation and Popular Film in India*. Routledge.
- Barman, S. (2022). Mother India : A Cinematic Discovery Of Indian Sentiments. *An International Refereed/Peer-reviewed English e-Journal*, 301-306.
- Barnouw, E. (1993). *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Barnouw, E., & Krishnaswamy, S. (1980). *Indian film (2nd ed.)*. Oxford University Press.
- Bateman, J. A. (2017). Critical discourse analysis and film. In *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies* (pp. 612-625). Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge.
- Ben-Ghiat, R. (2006). Modernity is Just over There (Colonialism and Italian National Identity). *Routledge*. 381-385.
- Bentley, E. (1957). *The Playwright as a Thinker: A Study of Drama in Modern Times...* U of Minnesota Press
- Bose, D. (2006). *Brand Bollywood: A New Global Entertainment Order*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Brooks, P. (1995). *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess*. Yale University Press.
- Çelik, T. (2021). The Theme of Destiny as an Original Quality in Yeşilçam Cinema: From Concerns of Modernization to the. *Aurum Journal of Social Sciences*, 1-23.

- Chakravarty, S. S. (2000). The angel of "progress": woman and the Genesis of History. In *The Enemy Within*. London: University of Michigan.
- Chakravarty, S. S. (2011). *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema, 1947-1987*. University of Texas Press.
- Chakarvarty, S. S. (1993). *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema 1947-1987*. Austin. University of Texas Press.
- Chekki, D. A. (1996). Family Values and Family Change. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 409-412.
- Chibber, V. (2013). *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital*. London: Verso.
- Cooper, F. (2005). *Colonialism in Question*. London: University of California Press.
- Dellaloglu, B. F. (2016). *Modernleşmenin zihniyet dünyası : bir Tanpınar fetişizmi*. Ancient Publications.
- Dhami, M. (2020, June 24). *Changing family structure in India*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/manisha-dhami/changing-family-structure-in-india-22129/> Access Date 24/06/2024
- Dissanayake, K. M. (1998). *Indian Popular Cinema – A Narrative of Cultural Change*. London: Trentham Books Limited.
- Dissanayake, W. (2004). *Globalization and Cultural Narcissism: Note on Bollywood Cinema*. *Asian Cinema*, 143-147.
- Dissanayake, W., & Gokulsing, K. M. (2013). *Routledge handbook of Indian cinemas*. Routledge.
- Dirlik, A. (1994). The postcolonial aura: Third World criticism in the age of global capitalism. *Critical Inquiry*, 20(2), 328–356.
- Dutt, G. (Director). (1957). *Pyaasa* [Motion Picture].
- Dwyer, R. (2002). *Yash Chopra 50 Years in Indian Cinema*. New Delhi: Lotus Collection.
- Dwyer, R. (2006). The religious and the secular in the Hindi film. In R. Dwyer, *Filming the God* (p. 132). Oxon: Routledge.
- Elsaesser, T. (1987). Tales of Sound and Fury, Observations on the Family Melodrama. In C. Gledhill, *Home is Where the Heart is, Studies in melodrama and the woman's film* (pp. 43-69). Cambridge University Press.
- Emelobe, E. D. (n.d.). *Filmic Representation in Post-colonial Discourse*. Western Delta University Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria. 211-226.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. France: Francois Maspero.

- Ganti, T. (2004). *Bollywood, (A Guidebook to Popular Cinema)*. London: Routledge.
- Ganti, T. (2012). *Producing Bollywood*. Durham & London: Duke University, Vol. 34, No. 1, 32-42. Gledhill, C. (1987). Home is Where the Heart is, Studies in melodrama and the woman's Film. London: British Film Institute.
- Getino, F. S. (n.d.). *Towards a Third Cinema*. Retrieved from <http://documentaryisneverneutral.com/words/camasgun.html> Access Date 18/08/2024
- Hafeez, E., & Ara, A. (2016). History and evolution of Indian film industry. *Journal of History and Social Sciences*, 7(2).
- Hattangadi, V. (2016, December 21). *The unforgettable golden era of Hindi songs*. Retrieved from <https://drvidyahattangadi.com/the-unforgettable-golden-era-of-hindi-songs/> Access Date 14/04/2024
- Harshananda, S. (1982). Hindu gods and goddesses. (No Title).
- Hayward, S. (2000). Cinema Studies: *The Key Concepts (Second Condition)*. Routledge.
- Hegishte, S. R. (2018). Nostalgic Yearning for Rural Culture in the Select Short Stories of Manoj Das. *Navjyot*, 79.
- Heehs, P. (Ed.). (2002). Indian religions: A historical reader of spiritual expression and experience. NYU Press.
- Henderson, C. E. (2002). Culture and customs of India. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Hogan, P. C. (2008). *Understanding Indian Movies: Culture, Cognition, and Cinematic Imagination*. Austin: University of Texas.
- Huat, A. G. (2012). *Travels of Bollywood Cinema: From Bombay to LA*. London: University Press Scholarship Online.
- Iverson, D. (2015, September 01). *Post colonialism*. Retrieved from Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/postcolonialism> Access Date 11/09/2024
- İnceoğlu, M. Ç. (2008). Modernleşme ve Türk Sineması: Tarihsel ve Toplumbilimsel Bir İnceleme (Doctoral dissertation, Marmara Üniversitesi (Turkey)).
- Indian Culture. (n.d.). Retrieved from Cultural Atlas: <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/indian-culture/indian-culture-core-concepts> Access Date 09/11/2024
- Jaikumar, P. (2006). *Cinema at the End of Empire*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Karmakar, K. G. (2015). *Colonial rule and its effects on India's rural economy*. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 3(3), 227-288.

- Kashyap, L. (2004). The impact of modernization on Indian families: The counselling challenge. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 26, 341-350.
- Keay, J. (2011). *India: A history*. Open Road+ Grove/Atlantic.
- Khan, M. (2020). "No "Me" before the Nation: Portrayal of Nationalism and Religious Identities in Bollywood Movies Created during Modi-era" (2020). Theses and Dissertations. 1294. <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/etd/1294>
- Khilnani, S. (2004). *The idea of India*. Penguin Books India.
- Kumar, K. J. (2014). The 'Bollywoodization' of Popular Indian Visual Culture: A Critical Perspective. *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique*.
- Lee, H. H. (2020). *Depiction of Post Colonialism in South Asian Cinema: A Semiotic Analysis of Pinjar*. *International Journal of Applied & Creative Arts*, 43-53.
- Loomba, A. (1998). *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. New York: Routledge.
- MacBean, J. R. (1975). *Film and Revolution*. Indiana University Press.
- Mathur, S. (2007). *India by design: Colonial history and cultural display*. University of California Press.
- Mazumdar, R. (2007). *Bombay Cinema (An Archive of the City)*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mehta, R. B. (2010). *Bollywood and Globalization: Indian Popular Cinema, Nation, and Diaspora*. London: Anthem Press.
- Mishra, V. (2001). *Bollywood Cinema Temples of Desire*. New York: Routledge.
- Mukherjee, M. (2009). *India in the shadows of empire: A legal and political history (1774–1950)*. Oxford University Press.
- Mukherjee, D. (2023). Media wars: Remaking the logics of propaganda in India's wartime cine-ecologies. *Modern Asian Studies*, 57(5), 1585-1614.
- Mutlu, D. K. (2010). Between Tradition and Modernity: Yeşilçam Melodrama, its Stars, and their Audience. *Middle Eastern Studies*.
- Mullatti, L. (1995). Families in India: Beliefs and Realities. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 11-25.
- Nochimson, M. P. (2010). *World on film: an introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Pattanaik, D. (2003). *Indian mythology: Tales, symbols, and rituals from the heart of the subcontinent*. Inner Traditions/Bear & Co.

- Predator, C. (2013, February). 'Mother India' (1957): *The Matriarch of Melodrama*. Retrieved from Express Elevator to Hell : <https://expresselevatortohell.com/2013/02/01/mother-india-1957-review/> Access date: 19/09/2024
- Predator, T. C. (2013). 'Mughal-e-Azam' (1960): *An Old-School Romantic Epic that Stands the Test of Time*. Retrieved from Express Elevator to Hell: <https://expresselevatortohell.com/2013/10/08/mughal-e-azam-1960-review/>
- Ponzanesi, S. (2018). *Postcolonial Theory in Film*. Oxford Bibliographies, 1-18.
- Rajadhyaksha, A. (2009). Indian cinema in the time of celluloid: from Bollywood to the emergency (p. 12). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Rehman, S. N. (2016). The Role of Music in Hindi Cinema. *Interdisciplinary and Cultural Synergies*, 314-326.
- Rex, W. E. (2003). Music and the unity of Le Neveu de Rameau. *Diderot studies*, 29, 83-99.
- Roy, P. (2022). *Appreciating Melodrama: Theory and Practice in Indian Cinema and Television*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Ryan, M., Kellner, D., & Özsayar, E. (2010). *Politik kamera: Çağdaş Hollywood sinemasının ideolojisi ve politikası*. Ayrıntı.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Sapra, R. (2015). *Modernism and Film in South Asia and Indian Perspective*. The Modernist World (p. 109). New York: Routledge.
- Sen, A. (2012). The argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian history, culture and identity. *Penguin Books India*.
- Sharma, A. (2023), *Leading in a nascent nation: Critical analysis of Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership from 1947-1957* (Master's thesis). King's College London.
- Singh, Y. (2012). Modernization and its contradictions: contemporary social changes in India. *Polish Sociological Review*, 178(2), 151-166.
- Somaaya, B. (2012). *Mother Maiden Mistress: Women In Hindi Cinema, 1950-2010*. New Delhi: Harper Collins.
- Stadtler, F. (2013). *Fiction, Film, and Indian Popular Cinema*. Taylor & Francis.
- Singer, B. (2001). *Melodrama and Modernity, Early sensational cinema and its contexts*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Singh, S. (2021). Reel To Realpolitik: The Golden Years Of Indian Cinema Overseas. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 09-16.

- Sinha, R. K. (2005). *Popular Indian Cinema through a Transnational Lens*. New Delhi: Sage Publication India.
- Sinnerbrink, R. (2012). Sea-change: Transforming the 'crisis' in film theory. *NESCUS*.
- Smith, F. M. (2009). *The Hindus: An Alternative History*—By Wendy Doniger.
- Solanas, F., & Getino, O. (2021). Towards a third cinema: notes and experiences for the development of a cinema of liberation in the Third World. *Black Camera*, 13(1), 378-401.
- Spivak, G. C. (2023). Poststructuralism, marginality, postcoloniality and value. In *Postcolonism* (pp. 57-84). Routledge.
- Srinivas, M. N. (1995). Social change in modern India. *Orient Blackswan*.
- Ukadike, N. F. (2009). African Cinema. In J. H. Gibson, *World Cinema: Critical Approaches* (pp. 185-190). Oxford University Press.
- Varga, B. (2013). Tradition and Modernization. Contemporary Hungarian Popular Cinema. Images. *The International Journal of European Film, Performing Arts and Audiovisual Communication*, 13(22), 175-187.
- Vasudevan, R. (2008). The Meanings of 'Bollywood'. *Journal of the Moving Image*.
- Vasudevan, R. (2011). The melodramatic public. In *The melodramatic public: Film form and spectatorship in Indian cinema* (pp. 16-64). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vijayakar, R. (2013). The role of a song in a Hindi film. *The South Asianist*, 48-73.
- Virdi, J. (2003). *The Cinematic Imagination*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Waller, S. P. (2012). *Post Colonial Cinema Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Wodak, R. (2014). Critical discourse analysis. In *The Routledge companion to English studies* (pp. 302-316). Routledge.
- Young, R. J. (2001). *Post colonialism; An Historical Introduction*. USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Zapata, Jesse. (2021). Changing the Game: Indian Melodrama. 10.13140/RG.2.2.22446.74566.

CURRICULUM VITAE

FULL NAME: Sisa SISA	
Education Information	
Undergraduate	
University	International Islamic University
Faculty	Institute of Social Sciences
Department	International Relations
Articles and Papers	
1. Sisa, S. (2021). <i>Is truck art a kitsch art of Pakistan?</i> In 6. Uluslararası Öğrenci Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı -8- Sosyoloji. International Student Symposium. https://www.internationalstudentsymposium.com/dosya/2020-sempozyum-bildiriler-8.pdf 2. Sisa, S. (2022). <i>Ritual and faith healing in Pakistan (A case study of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar Shrine)</i>. In 7. Uluslararası Öğrenci Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı -9- Sosyoloji . International Student Symposium. https://www.internationalstudentsymposium.com/dosya/7-uos-9.pdf	