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Title of the paper: **Caste and Cinema: Study of Marathi Cinema with special reference to '*Sairat*' and '*Fandry*'**

Authors:

1. Ashwini Kamble

Assistant Professor,
IIMC, Amravati, Maharashtra
ashwini.iimcamravati@gmail.com

Abstract

Caste and Cinema: Study of Marathi Cinema with special reference to ‘*Sairat*’ and ‘*Fandry*’

As the cliché goes, cinema, like all art, is considered as a mirror of society; but caste, which is deeply rooted in Indian society, has never found strong enough reflection in cinema, barring some exceptions. In most of the Hindi movies, the characters are casteless or from the upper class/caste. If we look at Indian Hindi film history we can find that films like ‘Achhut Kanya’, ‘Sujata’, ‘Ankur’, ‘Aakrosh’, ‘Sadgati’, ‘Manthan’, ‘Damul’, ‘Bandit Queen’, and in recent times ‘Aarakshan’, ‘Swades’ and ‘Masan’ have touched the issue of caste. The list is not exhaustive. But the point here is that not many movies talk about such an integral character of our society. Hence it is important to study the portrayal of the ‘Dalits’ or so called ‘lower castes’ in cinema, which is the most popular medium of communication.

The situation of Marathi cinema is not better than the mainstream Hindi cinema. Most of the Marathi cinema shows the dominance of ‘Brahminical’ or Pune-Mumbai urban culture. But in 2016, the film titled ‘Sairat’ was an exception in this case. It broke all records on the box office and became the most successful Marathi film, and it triggered a discussion on caste and cinema.

Directorial ‘*Sairat*’, directed by Nagraj Manjule, talks about the love affair of an upper caste girl and a lower caste boy. In this film Manjule has tried to break the conventions about the popular film. His directorial debut ‘*Fandry*’, which won five national awards, also talked about the aspirations of a lower caste young boy. Director-writer Nagraj Manjule himself is from a lower caste and he likes to throw light on *his* realities and he strongly believes that cinema is a powerful medium to talk about these issues.

Through content analysis and interviews of some experts, the authors will try to analyze portrayal of caste in Marathi and Hindi movies in general, with special references to *Fandry* and *Sairat*, films directed by Nagraj Manjule.

Introduction:

The effect of caste on the ethics of the Hindus is simply deplorable. Caste has killed public spirit. Caste has destroyed the sense of public charity. Caste has made public opinion impossible. A Hindu's public is his caste. His responsibility is only to his caste. His loyalty is restricted only to his caste. Virtue has become caste-ridden and morality has become caste-bound....There is charity but it begins with the caste and ends with the caste. There is sympathy but not for men of other caste. (Ambedkar, 1979)

-Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

The cinema, let us remember, is one of the biggest influences in the modern world. There are many other things which influence people—books, newspapers and so on. But I think it is perfectly correct to say that the influence of the films in India is greater than the influence of newspapers and books combined. (Nehru on Social Issues, 1989)

-Pandit Jawaharlal Nahru

With above two quotes the importance and impact of two things are very clear: caste and cinema. It is said that films are mirrors of a society. But still, caste conflict is not reflected adequately in cinema. Every year thousands of movies are made in India but the protagonist is hardly ever from a lower caste, which is the majority of the population. 'One could say that since the majority of the stakes in the film industry is held by higher castes, their films portray a very elitist image and way of life. The culture and traditions shown in the films, for instance are very brahminical. Or the concept of class has taken over caste in popular cinema'. (Mehta, 2014)

A good film creates a debate over an issue. 'Michael Moore makes movies from a point of view and whether you agree with him or not, whether you like him or not, it doesn't matter—his movies create debate, and that is a good thing'. (Tom Sherak, 2011) That could be a purpose of good cinema. Though the eminent director Satyajit Ray has said that the films cannot change the society, he has accepted that films have a role to play. He says, '[I]n the midst of a revolution, a filmmaker has a positive role, he can do something for the revolution.' (Ray, 1982). For the sake of a better society, all art forms should talk about evil practices. Caste discrimination is one of them. Considering the impact of the medium, cinema should focus on it.

Why this study?

Released in 2016, *Sairat* changed the perception of film direction in the Marathi film industry. Made with complete non-actors, it is now the most successful commercial film. Young Marathi director Nagraj Manjule has directed two feature films. *Fandry* and *Sairat*. Both these movies have received national awards and critical acclaim. Though both the films are love stories, caste is the major issue the director has focused without directly stating it and without sending any direct social message. He has shown how caste is a major factor in today's 'modern' and 'progressive' society. There have been other films made on caste, but Manjule has also shown how economic liberalization has affected the lives of the lower caste people. This paper is an attempt to find out that impact.

Review of Literature:

A research done by daily *The Hindu* on almost 300 films released in 2013 and 2014 shows that Bollywood films 'remain backward on caste'. Just six of the lead characters in the nearly 300 Bollywood movies released over the last two years belonged to a backward caste, an analysis of data by *The Hindu* shows. The study was based on the characters' names and the movies' storylines, and used secondary sources of information. The study shows that Bollywood films lack diversity on caste and religion. Considering the 'sensitivity' of the topic, lots of film directors and writers refused to talk with *The Hindu*. (*Hindu*, 2015)

Shoma Chatterji, a film critic, talks about caste and cinema in her article 'The Dalit in Indian Cinema' published on the 'india-together' website. She talks about caste and the portrayal of Dalits in Hindi cinema beginning with Bombay Talkies *Achhut Kanya* (1936) to Bimal Roy's *Sujata* (1959) followed by many mainstream films like *Aarakshan*, *Akrosh* and *Eklavya*, and the small-budget, low-key ones like *Masaan*, which have focused on this significant social issue during the past so many years.

In the article 'Portrayal of Caste in Hindi Films' the researcher writes on caste on the basis of ten movies made in different decades. He has selected those movies based on i) the caste of the protagonist and other major and minor characters, ii) narrative, costume & dialogues and iii) camera movement & composition. The article concludes with the remark, 'It was only during seventies and eighties, when directors like Shyam Benegal, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Govind

Nihlani, Prakash Jha started making films, that socially relevant issues got highlighted. The present research is an attempt to examine the films that touched partially or fully the issue of untouchability or caste related portrayal. It was observed that in the history of film production in India, where thousands of movies are made every year only two or three hundred films were made that touched or highlighted the issue of untouchability/caste' (Pandey).

In an article published in online film journal 'Films for Liberation' in 2014, the writer says, 'Popular Hindi cinema has dealt with caste in a weird fashion. The popular genre does not focus on the problems of caste and casteism. Their main focus is to entertain and the plots therefore, are light'. The writer adds, 'One could say that since the majority of the stakes in the film industry is held by higher castes, their films portray a very elitist image and way of life. The culture and traditions shown in the films, for instance are very brahmanical'. (Mehta, 2014)

Jyoti Punwani writes for the rediff.com on caste issue and cinema with reference to the popular Marathi film *Sairat*. The article concludes with the remark, 'Tragic stories of doomed love have always been popular in literature and cinema. But in India, caste has never been mentioned. Class has always been the culprit. However, as the newspapers will tell you every day, it is love across castes that remains forbidden and provokes the most bestial retributions and murders.' (Punwani, 2016)

In an article published on online portal Quartz India titled the writer says that popular Hindi movies are Hindu male dominated. She writes, 'India's popular film industry definitely does not celebrate diversity—and not just in terms of class, but also caste, religion and gender'. (Walia, 2015)

The article published in *The Guardian* talks about how Bollywood films have started to deal with the caste. The writer says in the report, 'despite there being more than 150 million dalits in India, not one has made a major dent in Bollywood.' He says that 'the brutal realities of caste, its violence and sustaining context of superstition, ignorance and social neurosis have rarely been addressed head-on' (Dhaliwal, 2010).

Media academician Richard Rego writes an article on 'Castesim in Girish Kasaevalli's Films'. The article was published in *Sage* journal on March 2011. In this article the researcher talks about caste and Kannada films, with special reference to internationally renowned director

Girish Kasarvalli. Some of the themes which keep recurring in Kasarvalli's films are casteism, women and identity, inter-relationships and violence done to elders. The article discusses three of his films: *Ghatashraddha*, *Bannada Vesha* and *Thayi Saheba*. In these films Girish Kasaravalli critiques the practice of discrimination based on the caste system (also known by its more vicious practice called untouchability) in the Indian society. This article employs textual analysis to examine his above mentioned three films to explore the practice of casteism in the Indian society as represented by him, and Kasaravalli's vision of his society and as a human being vis-à-vis the caste system.

Focus of the Study:

After discussing with experts and taking account of available documents, the paper focuses on the following points:

1. Major Hindi films which have touched on the caste issue.
2. Major Marathi films which have touched on the caste issue.
3. Introduction of Nagraj Majule and his two feature films
4. Post liberalization of portrayal of caste in Manjule's films.

Caste and Hindi Cinema:

Dadasaheb Phalke made the first known Indian movie 'Raja Harishchandra' in 1913. Before that, attempts were made to make films. According to official statistics, as many as 1,602 films were produced in the country in 2012, a sizeable increase from the 1,255 films made in 2011. (TNN, 2013) In spite of the huge number, the following is the list of movies which are notable for the portrayal of the caste as a centre of the story.

Achhut Kanya (1936)

This is considered as one of the earliest films made on caste. It is based on the life of a dalit girl and her position in society. This is one of the earliest examples of unhappy love stories filmed in Bollywood between lovers coming from different social strata of the society. Starring Ashok Kumar and Devika Rani, this film shows an unhappy love story of youngsters coming from different social backgrounds. Though there are clear dialogues about the difference, there is no clear picturisation of social difference.

Before this, only two other films had touched upon the caste problem in any significant way – Nitin Bose's *Chandidas* (1934) and V. Shantaram's *Dharmatma* (1935).

***Sujata* (1959)**

This Bimal Roy directed movie is considered one of the important films on social issues. Backed by an expert ensemble of cast and crew, this film critiques Indian society's love for caste-based value judgment through a love story between two people of different social castes. The movie has Gandhi's fight against untouchability and the myth of Chandali as its subtexts, on the basis of which it tries to criticize the practice of untouchability in India.

***Ankur* (1974)**

Ankur, directed by Shyam Benegal, shows many evil social rituals and a complex social system. The protagonist of the film Lakshmi is a poor dalit woman who works for the son of the landlord of the village. The movie provides a deep insight into the vigorous caste system that is seen in, and very much is, a part of rural India.

Along with *Ankur*, some of Benegal's other films like *Manthan* (1976) *Aarohan* (1982) and *Mandi* (1983) also show the dark reality of caste. None of these three films glamorizes or celebrates the caste issue, but focused mainly on how caste plays havoc with the lives of these unfortunates who are also crippled by poverty and illiteracy.

Aakrosh

In Govind Nihalani's *Aakrosh* (1980), Lahanya Bhiku a low-caste, poor and illiterate tribal, is accused of having murdered his wife Nagi. The woman had been gang-raped and murdered by the bigwigs of the village. Lahanya refuses to speak, even to his empathetic lawyer, who has risen from a poor background. While on death row, he is brought to perform the last rites of his dead father, his hands and feet shackled. As he circles the burning pyre, he lets out a final cry of anguish (*Aakrosh*) and slays his young sister, lest she suffers the fate his wife did. His silence stands on its own.

Damul: (1985)

Directed by Prakash Jha, the film is about a bonded labourer who is forced to steal for his landlord, to whom he is bonded until death. Set in rural Bihar of 1984, the film focuses on caste politics and the oppression of the lower castes in the region, through bonded labour. The film also highlights the issue of heavy migration of the poor villagers of Bihar to richer states like Punjab in search of livelihood.

Sadgati (1981)

Satyajit Ray directed *Sadgati* was based on a novel of the same name by Munshi Premchand. In less than hour, the film shows the influence of caste. Dukhi, a poor dalit wants to invite a ‘respected’ Brahmin priest for his daughter’s wedding, without whom the ritual is incomplete. For this Dukhi has to work for free for the entire day without food. Working relentlessly under inhuman conditions, he succumbs—and what follows afterwards is a heartrending saga of the vicious atrocities of the Indian caste system.

Bandit Queen (1994)

It is a film based on the life of Phoolan Devi, the infamous lower caste dacoit from India. The Shekhar Kapoor directed film focuses the evils of caste and how a lower caste woman was treated. It is about all the trauma and injustice that women of lower castes have to face every single day at the hands of the Thakurs, or the feudal lords. The film blatantly puts forth all the caste-related issues of India, without trying to reform the society or be preachy. This gives the film its authenticity.

Masaan (2015)

This Neeraj Ghaywan directed film has two narrations. One forcefully shows a love story between a boy from the Dom community (a low-caste of corpse burners) and an upper caste girl. The boy wants to transcend the restrictions of his caste. He studies Civil Engineering at a polytechnic college where he meets and falls in love with Shaalu, an upper-caste girl. After some time he tells the girl about his caste and the work he does of burning corpses. She remains firm and tells him that she will be with him even if her parents refuse. She asks

him to focus on his placements and get a job, while she reaffirms her commitment to him. This part of the story is about how young India takes the caste issue.

Manjhi - The Mountain Man (2015)

It is a biographical film, based on the life of Dashrath Manjhi directed by Ketan Mehta. Manjhi, widely known as the "Mountain Man", was a poor dalit labourer in Gehlaur village, near Gaya in Bihar, India. He carved a path 9.1 metres wide and 110 metres long through a hill measuring 7.6 metres using only a hammer and chisel. The film is directed by Ketan Mehta, jointly produced by Viacom 18 Motion Pictures and NFDC India. The film received positive critical acclaim. Though caste was not the central message, this is a film where the protagonist is dalit.

Some other movies:

In movies like *Eklavya*, *Lagaan*, *Swades*, *Aakshan*, *Akrosh* the caste issue has been talked but not like in the above mentioned films. In these films, characters belonging to the low castes are portrayed. Besides, all these films are highly commercialized and hence the issue is not focused with enough sensitivity, unlike in the above mentioned films.

There are many similar films that play the Dalit card in Bollywood, but the intention behind these movies is more to gain cheap brownie points than to look at the issue with any seriousness. The technical brilliance and artistic excellence are neatly undercut by the pretentious hypocrisy presented in the narrative.

Caste and Marathi Cinema:

The first Marathi cinema was made in 1932. It was 'Ayodhyecha Raja'. V. Shantaram, Anand Mane, Rajdutt, Shankar Patil and Dr. Jabbar Patel are some well known directors. Marathi cinema has always focused on either rural stories with dominant Maratha characters or brahminical urban set ups. Caste issue was rarely focused in Marathi films. Below is the list of some films where the protagonists are from the 'lower' caste or the central issue is related to caste. The list is not exhaustive but only suggestive.

Saamana (1974)

One of the classics of Marathi cinema, *Samna* is directed by Dr. Jabbar Patel and it talks about power, politics, caste and ethics. This film shows the classic conflict and confrontation between a middle-aged, penniless drunkard teacher (earlier freedom fighter), called Master, and the sugar baron Hindurao-Dhonde Patil. Though these are two protagonists, the story revolves around the character Maruti Kamble, a dalit military man who has gone missing. The master tries to solve the mystery of his missing, and asks the disturbing question, 'What became of Maratu Kamble?' to Hindurao. The confrontation (*saamana*) between two protagonists is the theme of the film against the backdrop of the missing dalit character.

Zunj

It is the story of a primary school teacher and the son of the chief of the village (known as Patil). It's their love story, which brings the younger generation in confrontation with the older generation to accept the change. As the film begins, everyone believes that the teacher is upper caste, as she is well-behaved and educated. Later, the villagers realize that she is from the lower caste. The father of the hero is against their relationship. The youth of the village who want some change support the love affair where the older generation has a problem accepting the relation.

Jait re Jait (1977)

Jait Re Jait is a film directed by Dr. Jabbar Patel and produced by Usha Mangeshkar. The film is about the tribal community called Thakar. This Mohan Agashe and Smita Patil starrer shows all the traditions of the tribe. The film has a classic paradox, where in the end the hero succeeds in his revenge, (against queen honey bee) but loses his wife. The film highlights a strong, independent tribal woman who dares to abandon her husband as she considers him useless and falls in love with a drummer and lives with him.

Mukta (1994)

Directed by Dr. Jabbar Patel, *Mukta* is a film about an upper caste girl and her relationship with her political family members, liberal parents, a black American friend and a very close dalit friend. She returns from the United States to her ancestral home and her political family after a long time. Her grandfather is a veteran of Maharashtra's co-operative movement and was an

influential politician. At the university, she is doing Sociology and joins a street theatre group of Dalit activists. There she meets group's leader Milind Wagh, a fearless dalit student leader and poet. Her family is upset with her closeness with this dalit student leader. The family's unease increases when her black friend from America Julian arrives. Then the story revolves around the relationship between Mukta, Milind and Julian with reactions and discussions with her family members and their positions on it.

Wajir (1994)

This is the story of Purshotam Kamble, an ambitious personal assistant of Chief Minister Babusaheb Mohile. Purshotam Kamble is so ambitious that he starts forging a place for himself with an agenda to seek power. To fulfill his political ambitions he gets married to a sexually molested woman Kamal Juvekar. He then uses her to better his prospects in becoming the next Chief Minister. The film is directed by Ujwal Thengdi and it is one of the rare films which have shown a dalit character as ambitious and power hungry as Purshotam Kamble is.

Dusari Gosht (2014)

This is a biopic on the Congress leader Sushilkumar Shinde. Directed by Chandrakant Kulkarni, the film shows the life journey of a dalit boy who becomes the chief minister of the state and later the home minister of the country.

Court (2014)

Court is written and directed by Chaitanya Tamhane as his directorial debut. The film throws light on the Indian legal system through the trial of an ageing dalit folk singer Narayan Kamble at a Sessions Court in Mumbai. The critically acclaimed film does not directly comment on caste, but the protagonist is a dalit, and the case registered against him is about a sanitation worker who also belongs to the lower caste.

About Nagraj Manjule:

Nagraj Popatrao Manjule is a National Award-winning young Marathi filmmaker known for his first short film *Pistulya* and then two path-breaking feature films *Fandry* and *Sairat*. He was born in 1977 at Jeur, a village in the Solapur district of Maharashtra. Though he considers himself

casteless, he belongs to a lower caste. He did his M.A. in Marathi literature from the University of Pune, followed by Masters in Communication Studies from the New Arts, Science and Commerce College, Ahmednagar. His first National Award winning short film *Pistulya* is a reflection of his 'felt experience', Thereafter he made his debut feature film, *Fandry* in 2014. His experiences with caste reflect in his films and poems. (www.nagrajmanjule.net)

Fandry: (2013)

Fandry is the story of a sharp revolt against caste discrimination from completely unexpected quarters: an innocent young boy barely thirteen years old. The lead as well as the support actors are all amateurs. The story focuses on a romance amidst caste-based discrimination. The film set in Akolner, a village near Ahmednagar, is about a teenager from a Dalit family, who lives at the village fringe, and falls in love with an upper caste girl.

Jambhuvant (nickname: Jabya), a pre-teen, lives in a ramshackle house on the outskirts of a caste segregated village with his parents and two sisters (one a widow with a toddler). The family belongs to a low-caste community and earns its living by doing menial jobs. Owing to the caste-ridden power structure of the village society, the boy's father has a timid and submissive personality which is exploited by the upper-caste inland villagers. *Fandry* literally means pig in the Kaikadi language. Jabya is disgusted with the predicament of his family and shows interest in school where he also falls in one-sided love with an upper caste girl named Shalini (nickname: Shalu). He has never talked to her, but tries desperately to catch her attention.

This film is all about the dreams, aspirations and disillusion of that teen-aged boy and his reactions on caste discrimination. The film has a powerful end which shakes up the viewers and leaves them numb.

Sairat (2016)

Sairat (Madness) is a love story, and as a story it is not new. A girl and a boy fall in love. On the run from her influential father, they have to deal with the ugly reality of life in a new city with no money and no friends. Towards the end they manage to adjust with the situation and accept each other and finally succeed in coming to terms with life. We have read such stories and watched such movies. The new angle to this story is the caste. The girl, Archana (nickname: Aarchi) is the

daughter of an influential sugarcane grower politician from the upper caste and the boy, Prashant (nickname: Parshya) is the son of fisherman from the lower caste.

The uniqueness of the film includes many points like characterization, rural settings, dialogues, language and music. The film has lots of unconventional things. For one, the heroine is not fair, does not have an hour-glass figure, and is not the usual submissive, *abla nari* (helpless woman). She is dusky, fearless, dominant and has ability to take her decisions and suffer their consequences. The hero of the film is good looking, but he is no macho. He is better in studies than the heroine, but he is shy and submissive, and gets bashed up all the time. The girl takes the story forward. Unlike popular cinema, she leads the film. She is the real 'hero'. (Manjule, 2016)

There are two more characters, one is a Muslim boy Salim (nickname: Salya) and another is the handicapped boy Pravin (nickname: Langdya) who are friends with the protagonists. With these characters the director has again created space for the ignored sections of society. Unlike majority of the Marathi films, the language is not urban and brahminical. The language used in the film and in songs is contemporary. In the songs, English words like 'tattoo', 'initials' 'perfume' and 'techno' are used which have modern day relevance. The rural setting looks real and honest unlike popular rural Marathi cinema, where rural setting is either caricatured or over-dramatized. The film has two parts. One is focused on the love story and songs with great music, and the other is the harsh reality of the world.

Manjule has given a twist at the climax and made the end more impactful where he has provoked viewers to think like he has done in *Fandry* too.

Caste portrayal post-liberalization in *Fandry* and *Sairat*:

“As Victor Hugo once said, ‘No power on earth can stop an idea whose time has come.’ I suggest to this august House that the emergence of India as a major economic power in the world happens to be one such idea. Let the whole world hear it loud and clear. India is now wide awake. We shall prevail. We shall overcome.” (Mander, 2016)

-Dr. Manmohan Singh

With these remarks, the finance minister Dr. Manmohan Singh concluded his historic speech in the 1991 parliament. The opening of the market was the major change. With private investment

in many sectors it was assumed that the economy would get a boost, the entry of private investors would create many jobs as well as wealth, and these reforms would significantly reduce poverty, because in the capitalist world everyone would get the same opportunity to develop. Hence it was believed that, post-liberalization, people would change their attitude towards caste as money would be more important.

Earlier the lower caste person has always been shown as illiterate, poor and dark-skinned; clothes soiled hair unkempt and behavior rough, be it a man or woman. (e.g. *Sadgati*, *Ankur*, *Akrosh* or *Samana*) But post 1991 the characterization has changed. After the economic liberalization, the lower caste characters have been shown as educated, ambitious and trying to improve the situation for themselves and their families (e.g. *Mukta*, *Wazir*, *Masaan*, *Sairat*).

In these above mentioned two contexts (liberalization and portrayal of caste) Manjule has thrown a sharp light on dreams and reality. The capitalist system encourages dreams and imagination, but the reality could be different. Manjule has depicted this symbolically in both of his movies.

After the release of *Sairat*, there was a huge debate on caste and discrimination on social as well as on mass-media platforms. There were some Maratha groups that started agitations against the director-writer because they believed that the film targeted the Maratha community and damaged the image of the community. There were many writers-artists-scholars who supported the film and the director, and lots of messages were circulated about the films in support.

In *Fandry*, the young boy has a dream to wear stylish jeans and shirts, the kind he has seen on a poster-boy in the city, to impress his dream girl. He imagines himself as a hero with jeans and a new shirt and the girl with open hair like a film heroine. But the reality is that he can't buy anything, as he has no money. His father only can afford to buy him a shirt, no trousers. He has to compromise with a new shirt and old pants. But when he tries to talk to the girl, the upper caste boy, the son of the Patil (feudal lord) makes fun of him and ridicules him.

Jabya wants to become fairer to impress his girl and hence manages to get some popular face-powder but before he applies it he makes sure that nobody from his family is watching him. This urge to become fairer and smarter is again the gift of new economic development. But the film shows that the end result is not positive.

In *Sairat*, the first scene where the male and female protagonists are together is a dream sequence. The boy imagines the girl (who lives in the same village) in a short, sleeveless, glittering dress, high heels and with some make-up, asking him for a kiss. He dreams this because he has a poster of actress Katrina Kaif posted on the walls of his house. The poor, lower caste hero can dream this because the capitalistic system has created that scope for him. But the reality is different. When the time actually comes for the two to kiss each other, the feudal system intervenes.

The protagonists of *Sairat* use all the modern communication tools (mobile phone, Facebook in a café). Though the hero is smart enough to know how to use Facebook and mobile phone, he cannot afford to have them; he is dependent on his friends. This underlines the conflict between dream and reality.

When the protagonists elope and start living in unknown city with a *dosa*-seller single mother, there also the female protagonist loves to watch her favourite popular Marathi serial, the escapist, unreal variety. Her room is dusty and seedy, and she doesn't mind spending some money on a poster (natural scenery) that was meant for buying food items. These scenes not only focus the innocence of the girl, but also show the difference between dream and reality.

After settling down in the new city, both start earning. A change, however, has come in the male protagonist. Earlier, he would be beaten up by almost everyone, but now, suddenly, he starts dominating the girl. He starts doubting her character too. In one of the scenes he even slaps her. The girl too, who had earlier shown the courage to fire a gun on one of her family members for her 'hero' keeps quiet. In these scenes the feudal male mind set is quite vividly portrayed. The director is obviously underlining the point that in the city, unlike the village system, caste is not a barrier but feudal system can exist.

Economic liberalization encourages everyone to dream but the feudal system which exists within the capitalist society complicates the problem with issues like family structure, women's rights and caste. Nagraj Manjule has successfully and subtly depicted these issues in both his films; hence the films are important to talk about.

Conclusion:

The two important issues of caste and cinema have been discussed in this paper. Cinema is considered as a popular medium of mass communication. Thus film makers do not want to talk about issues with which the masses are not comfortable. Caste is one such issue. Thousands of films are made every year, but only a small handful has focused on caste. In this situation, director Nagraj Manjule came up with two movies *Fandry* (2013) and *Sairat* (2016) which focus on love stories with caste discrimination. Also, through his movies, he has tried to show how economic liberalization has affected the caste. Economic liberalization has allowed everyone to dream; reality, however, is far different: it is bitter. In a capitalist society everything seems possible and beautiful but, in feudal plus capitalistic society, reality is frightening and complex. Manjule has successfully captured this conflict. Hence his movies are important in the history of Marathi movies, particularly in the context of caste.

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