

## CHALLENGING COLOUR COMPLEX AND CINEMATIC AESTHETIC: A STUDY OF NAGRAJ MANJULE'S *FANDRY* AND *SAIRAT*

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Paper Received On: 21 AUG 2023

Peer Reviewed On: 27 AUG 2023

Published On: 01 SEPT 2023

### Abstract

*He portrays the challenges faced by marginalized sections, the humiliation, injustice, discrimination, pitiable conditions, and lowly status against the backdrop of Dalit identity, illustrating the most oppressed existence on Earth, devoid of any wrongdoing. His films strive to counter stereotypical representations and highlight the lives and issues of socially excommunicated and marginalized individuals. Drawing from his own experiences as a Dalit in rural Maharashtra, he tackles issues of caste, class, gender, and religion-based discrimination. In all his works, he incorporates Ambedkar's 'Idea of India' and challenges the entrenched myths of cinema.*

**Key Words:** Marginalized, discrimination, dehegemonize, unequivocal etc.



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### Introduction:

It is evident that when the feudal class portrays Dalits, marginalized individuals, and Bahujans in their films, they frequently trivialize and romanticize caste-related issues while overlooking the cultural and factual aspects. The arts, culture, traditions, language, and customs of Dalit-Bahujan communities are often misrepresented. Upper-caste characters frequently assume the role of saviors for Dalit individuals, reinforcing the notion that the problems of the Dalit community can only be resolved by individuals from the feudal castes and classes. Consequently, Dalit scholars often find themselves lauding these feudal protagonists. Feudal caste characters are consistently depicted as rescuers of Dalit-Bahujan and women. One could

argue that Indian cinema had not presented a strong, educated, and empowered Ambedkarite Dalit hero who fought for his rights until Nagraj Manjule's narrative emerged. Dalits have consistently been portrayed as malefactors, servile individuals, laborers, hapless souls, feeble beings, unsanitary figures, indigent citizens, and the unknowing who require the assistance of feudal lords to emerge from their abyss of destitution and squalor. Against this backdrop, Indian cinema has predominantly fixated on either rural narratives featuring dominant feudal protagonists or Brahmanical urban settings. The genuine articulation of caste-related issues and discussions remained conspicuously absent in Indian films, largely under the sway of feudal influences.

### **Caste and Colour Complex:**

Cinema came in India in 1995. From the beginning of it, it has controlled by Brahmin and feudalists of India. The Brahmin and other feudalists disseminated their hegemonic ideology from its beginning. The class has created and established various 'myths' in society through cinema. The hegemonic myths were very supportive to caste system and Brahmanical ideology. But a revolutionary film maker, Nagraj Manjule has started a new wave of cinema; that is called 'Dalit Cinema' (Yengde 503). He used Ambedkar's 'idea of India' in his all movies. He has challenged old classical frames of cinema and aesthetic parameters. He does various experiments with cinema. He has challenged previous established cinematic myths and parameters, which were disseminated by Brahmin and feudalists. For example, in *Fandry*, a black-skinned actor (Somnath Awaghade) represents the lower caste Jabya and a beautiful girl (Rajeshwari Kharat) represents the upper-caste Shalu; vice versa in *Sairat* Manjule used a white-skinned actor (Akash Thosar) represents the lower-caste Parshya, a dusky girl (Rinku Rajguru) represents the upper-caste Archi and a short, dark actor Prince represents another upper-caste male character-choices that challenge the specific caste-based colour standard carved in the Indian minds. Identifying caste, based on skin colour is so prevalent and naturalized a practice in Indian culture.

Nagraj Manjule tried to challenge all old frames about cinema and breaks above rules; heroine should be beautiful, white-skinned, lovely and fair; hero should be strong, fair-skinned and handsome. They should speak classical and *Puneri* Marathi. They should wear highly modern cloths and eat just vegetarian food. The role of lead hero or heroine should be performed by a high caste, well-trained actor or actress only. Hero should have straight nose and chocolate image. He should be tall and smart. Marathi film industry and Bollywood have never challenged it strongly. About this responsibility of media and cinema, Stuart Hall points out that:

*Media messages are complex but connect to the established patterns of the distribution of power and influence. They do not simply reflect this, but are ordered in such ways as to ultimately represent a particular view and contribution of the world. These messages are normally dealt with in terms of the dominant or negotiated code. There is then, a hegemonic understanding and representation of the world,*

*which benefits powerful groups and which is shared as a common sense by the majority of the population. (Hall 89).*

Mass media develops mindset of society. It has lot of power to hegemonies the masses, and because of this, masses hegemonies by advertisements and movies. Jabya feels inferior complex about his colour, body structure, language, cloths, occupation and culture due to his hegemonized mindset. Jabya is just a representation or a face of masses. He uses powder for face and puts forceps on his nose for straight nose. Media stated rules for charming personality deceives people for their benefits. Sometimes film directors and producers are being under the hegemony, believe that, Dalit characters should be black, meek and obedient. It is caste alignment maintained by the industry and one manifestation of its Brahmanical worldviews.

### **Conclusion:**

Nagraj has reformulated and reconstructed film aesthetics, sharply contrasting with Brahmanical aesthetic parameters. Manjule has initiated a powerful movement to dehegemonize and demythologize cultural identity. His characters, while reactionary in nature, simultaneously serve as a stern warning to the oppressive feudal system, foretelling an impending uprising. This constitutes an unequivocal rejection of the ingrained mythical stereotypes that bolster the supremacist and feudalistic social structure. This, presumably, is Nagraj Manjule's intention.

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### **Cite Your Article as:**

Sutar Yuvraj Subhash & Thakur Riyanka P. (2023). CHALLENGING COLOUR COMPLEX AND CINEMATIC AESTHETIC: A STUDY OF NAGRAJ MANJULE'S FANDRY AND SAIRAT. *Scholarly Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies*, 12(78), 658–660. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8337476>