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SARFIRA: A WORTHY REMAKE

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ABSTRACT

Movies or films have become part and parcel of our lives and have an unmeasurable impact on the minds and the cognizance of the people and audience who watch them. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, OTT platforms have taken over to fill in the entertainment void. Movies made out of true stories or real-life incidents have become a thing of the past. The recent release on Amazon Prime Video, Sarfira, is a remake of the critically acclaimed Tamil blockbuster movie, Soorarai Potru, which had Surya in the lead role. The current research study is envisioned to provide a critical analysis of this Akshay Kumar movie. The current research study adopts Iconography as the methodology through content analysis.

KEYWORDS: Films, Content Analysis, Intrinsic Review, Sarfira, Iconography.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Impact of films on the audience

Kubrak, T.A. (2016), and Kashani, T. (2016), in their respective studies, emphasized how films influence the audience in myriad forms. Films create slow and steady changes in an individual's behavior as a long-term effect. Zizek, S. (2014) study revealed that cinema or films are used as a tool or mechanism for broadcasting state ideology to the masses apart from influencing them in myriad ways.

1.2. Effect of Films, and Mass Media on Audience

Latynov, V.V. (2013) ascertained that it was very difficult to pinpoint or ascertain a particular reason or mechanism for the impact of mass media on the psyche and behavior of the audience who watch films. Various factors interconnect and influence the impact of mass media viz. personal influence, realistic content, depth of identification with heroes, personality traits, etc. [Nabi, R. L., & Riddle, K. (2008); Russell, C. A., & Russell, D. W. (2018); Russell, C. A., & Russell, D. W. (2018); Kubrak, T. A., & Latynov, V. V. (2019)].

Research studies have shown the impact, diversity, exposure, and influence of films on the audience are effective in even changing human behavior, influencing opinions and attitudes (Harris, R., 2002; Latynov, V.V., 2013).

2. REVIREW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Indian films

Lalmaunpuii, J. (2017) in her study spoke about the history of cinema halls in Aizawl, which led to the documentation of its history using oral history and other historical documents. Kottamasu, S. (2020) spoke about how film viewers and audiences were enthralled to find out the reasons for the film industry's boom. Not many believed that a new medium of film would replace a previous medium – theatre.

Sharma, S., and Narban, J. S. (2016) in their study on Indian cinema and women explored women's spaces in Indian films both in terms of story, and time. Agarwal, R. (2014) spoke about stereotyping as well as roles that were assigned to women in Indian films.

In all the major state-bound film industries in India, viz. Kollywood, Tollywood, Sandalwood, or

even in Bollywood, we always have a sensation called a superstar. It is pertinent to note that the very term "Superstar" refers to someone who is revered and well-known amongst major audiences and viewers across the industry. The phenomenon has played a pivotal part in the cognition of audiences for a long time. However, exact results were difficult to achieve (Friedman, W.J. 2007).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research study adopts qualitative research approaches in the form of content analysis. The research study adopts Iconography which is about the interpretation of signs and symbols. Iconography is defined as a field of visual knowledge, centered on images that require fluency in textual and cultural codes before their content can be grasped, it raises essential questions about audience and reception (Fozi, A. 2019).

3.1. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To critically examine the movie Sarfira in ascertaining the worthiness of the movie, which was remade from the original Kollywood Tamil blockbuster movie Soorarai Potru.

4. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, & FINDINGS

Sarfira is a film made by Sudha Kongara under Pen Studios. The movie comprises the star cast of Radhika Madan, Akshay Kumar, Paresh Rawal, Suriya, Iravati Harshe, Krishnakumar Balasubramaniam, and Seema Biswas amongst others. The film was released on 12th July 2024. The film was made available for premiere on Disney+ Hotstar from 11th October 2024 onwards. This film is based on G R Gopinath's memoir *Simply Fly: A Deccan Odyssey*. The makers have given due credit right at the beginning of the movie.

The initial establishment shot of the movie shows a scene where there is a depiction of the pilot requesting permission to land at Begumpet International Airspace, and being denied permission to land despite stating that they are low on fuel. The latter part of the scene shows the landing being done at an Air Force station, and then being overpowered by security forces, a few ambulances are seen rushing onto the runway. (ICONS 1 TO 18).



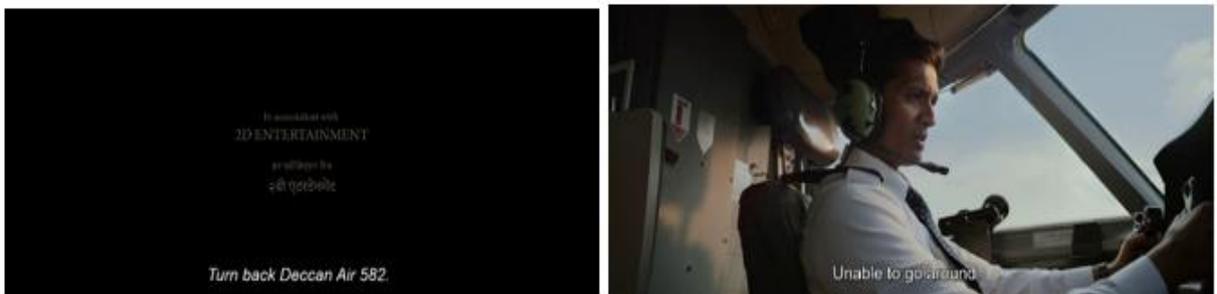
ICONS 1 & 2: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 3 & 4: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 5 & 6: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 7 & 8: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 9 & 10: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 11 & 12: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 13 & 14: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 15 & 16: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)



ICONS 17 & 18: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)

Begumpet International Airspace 2003

Begumpet Tower, this is Deccan Air 582.

Deccan Air 582: Minimum Fuel, requesting landing clearance.

Begumpet Tower: You are not cleared to land Deccan Air 582.

Deccan Air 582: Begumpet Tower, requesting reason for denial.

Begumpet Tower: Turn back Deccan Air 582.

Deccan Air 582: unable to go around.

Vir: Divert the plane to the Air Force Station, Hakkimpet Airfield, N1733E07831.

Deccan Air 582: Hakimpet Tower, this is Deccan Air 582. Do you read us? This is Captain Chaitnya Rao,

Batch of 1987, Ex-Air Force.

Hakimpet Tower: Turn back Deccan Air 582. This is restricted airspace.

Deccan Air 582 lands and makes an emergency landing, thereby injuring both pilots.

After that they are overpowered by the security forces and are taken for interrogation.

The next sequence shows Vir Jagnath Mharte pitching his idea to Paresh Goswami, the head of JAW Airlines of starting a new low-cost airline for the poor and common man of India. However, Paresh isn't pleased and shows his displeasure by diverting the flight back to Mumbai. **(ICONS 19 TO 24)**



ICONS 19 & 20: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)

Vir: I want to start a new airline.
 Paras: You want to start an airline?
 Vir: Yes Sir.



ICONS 21 & 22: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)

Vir: An airline for the common man.
 Paras: Doesn't like it.



ICONS 23 & 24: (Courtesy: Sarfira DVD)

Vir: Sir, if you want a humble craftsman can fly with clothing tycoon.

Paras: If I want to make it happen... Yes. But I don't want to.

Paras washes off his hands as a mark of disapproval. Comments that Vir be moved to the Economy class. Vir protests and states that the ticket is his and he won't move. Paras calls over the cabin crew and asks the pilot to divert the plane to Mumbai.

The latter part of the story unfurls and shows that Paresch Goswami owns and rules the Civil Aviation Ministry. It also shows the troubles created by him to Vir to stop him in all possible manner to bring him down viz. licensing from DGCA, aircraft procurement, permission and clearance from the other departments and ministries, etc. The film also shows the various struggles Vir and his family faced to make it a success. He gets help from two of his friends with whom he had worked in the Indian Air Force. It also shows how one of them ensures that one of his friends postpones the wedding and convinces the people of his town to help out Vir.

The film then shows his struggles to resolve this issue, but he finds an ally in his wife, Rani. She does support him with the sales from her bakery. It also shows how he finds help from his senior officer in the Air Force – Nedumaran, who helps out Vir.

The film shows how both Vir and Paras take to the media for completely different reasons. Paresch to destroy the trust people have in Deccan Air, and Vir to win back the trust amongst the masses. The film ends on a happy note where it is shown that all his flights are full. At that time, Presh calls up Vir to propose a business deal.

In the end, it is revealed that the aviation minister comes to know that the antics made on Deccan Air previously were the work of Paresch and is reprimanded by the minister himself. The last scene shows how Paresch is helped by airport staff when he has a panic attack and realizes his fault in his thoughts that the rich and poor shouldn't travel together.

5. CONCLUSION

The present research study was envisioned to explore the critical analysis of the recently released movie – Sarfira. The core objective of the study was to examine the closeness to the original version of the movie – Soorarai Potru. The research study enlightened various technical aspects of the aviation industry whilst also giving a sneak peek into the politics that happened in the Aviation sector and the industry through the story. The research study revealed that although there existed resemblances to

this Akshay Kumar starrer, a blatant finetuning of the script existed to suit Bollywood and other general audiences. The plot and script of the movie engage the audience until the intermission. However, it is to be noted that the 2nd half could have been more engaging and is seen as lengthy. The research study revealed that there were quite a few changes made in this remake that were not in the original – Soorarai Potru.

There did exist situations where it was observed that there were unnecessary or lengthy dialogues and scenes in the latter half of the film. Another striking

resemblance in both the movies was that nowhere did they mention that G R Gopinath was a Brahmin. It was evident that the movie didn't fare well during the theatrical release, and hence, it was sold to Disney+ Hotstar for a substantial fee. Despite that, the movie was a dud at the box office as it garnered only 30 crores in the market in contrast to its production budget of 80 crores. Unfortunately, this movie is a stark reminder as to why Bollywood movies continue to be on the decline in comparison with their southern counterparts.

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