

“DALIT CINEMA” PHENOMENON AND REPRESENTATION OF THE LOW CASTE COMMUNITIES IN INDIAN CINEMATOGRFY

Cinematography in India is not only a multimillion-dollar entertainment industry, but also a reflection of current socio-cultural processes. The caste system, a unique phenomenon of South Asian culture, could not but be reflected in cinematography. Of particular interest in the representation of caste identity is the phenomenon of low caste identity. Films devoted to the topic of low caste communities began to appear in mass cinema starting from the 1930s. However, this topic is elaborated in more detail in the so-called parallel (auteur) cinema, which flourished in the 70s — 80s. Unlike mainstream cinema, auteur cinema depicts the low castes unvarnished; films in this category often raise issues of violence, exploitation, women emancipation, and so on. The article analyzes the ways of representing the low caste communities in Indian cinema of the 20th — 21st centuries and the paradigm shift from escapism to realism. The paper also considers recent trends, such as the emergence of the “dalit cinema”, the participation of copyright films on acute social issues in international film festivals, the struggle of low layers for the opportunity to take their rightful place in the Indian film industry, etc.

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For citation: Shcherbak, M. 2023. “Dalit Cinema” Phenomenon and Representation of the Low Caste Communities in Indian Cinematography. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)*. 3: 215–228.

Funding: The study was carried out within the framework of the project RSF 22–28–00505 “Special Worlds” of India: small peoples and social groups. Ethnocultural Strategies for Preserving and Smoothing Differences”.

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