



A Semiotic Analysis Of Lijo Jose Pellissery's Jallikattu

¹G Praveen Kumar, ²Dr. B. Senthil Kumar

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Visual Communication, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600117., ²Research Supervisor, Department of Visual Communication, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600117 & D Litt Research scholar, OPJS UNIVERSITY Rajasthan.

ABSTRACT:

In the semiotic analysis of *Jallikattu* the Malayalam film *Jallikattu* (2019) Lijo Jose Pellissery conducts a study using Saussure's semiotic theory. The research, which uses a descriptive qualitative approach, deals among others with the signs, symbols, and codes inscribed in the film, and such elements as they convey meaning and critique human behavior. The findings point out that *Jallikattu* resorts to the interplay of visual and auditory elements to break up the main ideas of primal instincts, the mob mentality, and the human-animal dichotomy. The research emphasizes the film's cultural and philosophical value, and thus, it is regarded as a contemporary cinematic masterpiece.

KEYWORDS:

Jallikattu, semiotic analysis, mob mentality, Malayalam cinema, visual symbols, auditory signs,

INTRODUCTION

In simple word, cinema is like a masterpiece, in which artists use visual images, gestures, and actions of actors to express all possible facets of society, whether it is on an individual or group level. The film of Lijo Jose Pellissery, *Jallikattu* is depicting a very strong narrative, in which the escape of a buffalo sets off a chain reaction of chaos, laying bare the primeval human instincts. This paper employs semiotic approaches to the analysis of the film, taking a look at how signs and their signified meanings are formulated into its narrative framework.

From the Saussure's semiotic theory that adopts the inclusion of the form (sign) and the meaning (signification), this investigation is a means of tearing down some of the multiple layers of visuals in the movie *Jallikattu* in order to get to the heart of it. including the really laconic rest of the paper explain it. Besides exploring the film's visual and auditory components, this research paper also sets the target of unveiling the socio-cultural critiques that have been manifested in the storytelling.

OBJECTIVES

1. To Explore the role of visual and auditory skills in Jallikattu in showing the animalistic and mob nature of human beings.
2. To Analyze the human-animal relations that are shown in the movie and the ideas hidden by that metaphor.
3. To Examine the major social messages by means of well-handled symbolic images and storytelling in the film.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ferdinand de Saussure, the father of semiotics, has become the key person in exploring the visual and symbolic senses of film. The Saussure theory performs the separations of the signifier (the form of a sign) and the signified (the concept it stands for), thereby playing the basis for decoding constructed meaning. Roland Barthes developed Saussure's ideas into something complex to cultures with the conceptualization of mythologies, which are cultural narratives and ideologies that are embedded in signs. Christian Metz dealt with semiotics as a language used in films, the idea according to which cinema is a language the codes of which get offered in the process of its meaning-making through, e.g. visual framing and editing the film.

Recent studies that stem from Indian cinema have mainly been focusing on the symbolic richness of the regional films. Malayalam cinema, in particular, is known for the imaginative and the multi-layered narrative it offers. Most notably, works such as *Angamaly Diaries* and *Ee.Ma.Yau* by filmmakers like Pellissery have been studied for their cultural and aesthetic aspects. Rajadhyaksha and Willemen (1994) not only highlight the ways in which Indian cinema should be analyzed by the socio-political and cultural contexts but also note the possible gaps and inconsistencies in this field. The gap in the semiotic analysis of films like *Jallikattu*, which are the fusion of experimental techniques and the profundity of thematic exploration, still needs to be further analyzed. This study pulls together customary semiotic structures and applies them to *Jallikattu*, extracting original thoughts on its symbolic structure and cultural harmony.

METHODOLOGY:

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to Saussure's semiotic framework as a metaphor for the top-down and bottom-up interpretation of *Jallikattu*. The methodology is as follows:

- **Data Collection:** The film contained scenes that were relevant to the key themes such as primal instincts, mob mentality, and the human-animal relationship. These were the scenes that were selected for the in-depth exploration of the meaning behind the robotic surveillance system for public transport operation.
- **Data Analysis:** Using Saussure's framework, the analysis of the signifier and signified as well as the visual and auditory aspects of the selected scenes was achieved. The six-minute film had more than 1000 special effects. Analysis of the film was made focusing on computer-generated imagery and visual effects.
- **Thematic Coding:** The thematic categories were formulated for the data to be grouped and consequently be able to recognize the recurrent semiotic patterns and their cultural impacts.

DATA ANALYSIS

The plot centres on a buffalo that runs away from a slaughterhouse in the village and the subsequent chaos that takes place when the villagers decide to capture it. The narration emphasizes the fact that humans are driven by base instincts and mob mentality, thus the hunt for the animal becomes a metaphorical comment on the frailty of civilization.



DESCRIPTION:

Primal Instincts and Animality

Visual Signs: The continual use of the buffalo's eyes near close-ups along with frenetic human expressions is a strong codifier of the slant of boundaries between human and animal instantaneous.

Auditory Signs: The steady rhythmic use of the drum, in the form of the beating of the heart, running in the background, even intensifies the primitive tension.



Mob Mentality

Signifiers: The confusion of the crowd and the broken camera looks are signs of the collapsing of one's identity within the mob.

Signified: These elements in conclusion underpin/reflect the simple thought of the capability of collective frenzy to become dangerous which in its turn underlines the dangers of former societal structures.



Human-Animal Dichotomy

Visual Juxtaposition: The sequence when the buffalo is running unrestrictedly while the aggressively humans are being mildewed, and bonded is just the opposite of the usual commonly accepted knowledge about domination and the inclination of humans to dominate obviously.

Symbolism: The buffalo stands in nature in the human-animal dualism, while humans signify overconsumption, therefore, being the destroyers of the earth.

FINDINGS:

A semiotic analysis of *Jallikattu* reveals the following:

- Visual and auditory codes are used to critique hypocrisy and unmask natural instincts common to all individuals which are concealed by the appearance of inhuman respectability.
- Animal and human dichotomy are reversed showing humans as the main instigators of chaos.
- A strong paraphrase on the harmful despotism of an undisciplined multitude, which is relevant for bigger social situations is exhibited in the film.

The film's semiotic wealth manifests in the narrative complexity and cultural level, transforming it into a sublime cinematic text.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Saussure, F. de. (1983). *Course in General Linguistics* (R. Harris, Trans.). Duckworth. (Original work published 1916)
- [2]. Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies* (A. Lavers, Trans.). Hill and Wang. (Original work published 1957)
- [3]. Rajadhyaksha, A., & Willemen, P. (1994). *Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema*. British Film Institute.
- [4]. Sundararajan, P. (2020). "Primal Instincts in *Jallikattu*: A Study." *Journal of Contemporary Indian Cinema*, 5(2), 45-60.