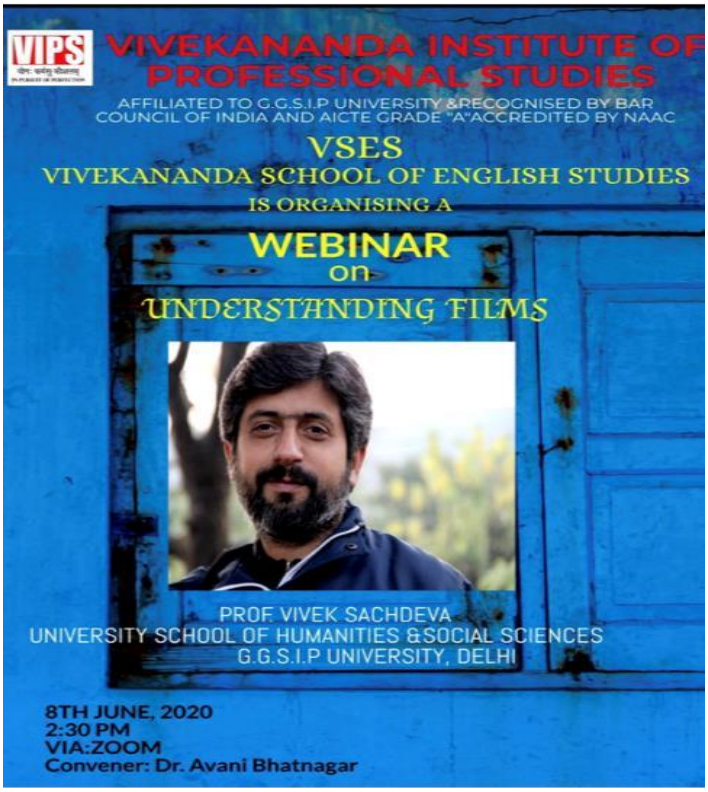
Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies

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Vivekananda School of English Studies (VSES)



On 8th June 2020, a Webinar was organized by Vivekananda School of English Studies which was convened by Dr. Avani Bhatnagar. The webinar was especially designed for the students of B.A. English (Hons) who have also been offered a paper on Film Studies in their syllabus in Semester IV. Prof (Dr) Vivek Sachdeva from University School of Humanities and Social Sciences, GGSIP University joined as an expert. Dr. Avani Bhatnagar formally welcomed and introduced the speaker and Dr. Salonee Priya, Dean VSES also welcomed sir formally on the webinar.

The faculty of VSES (Dr. Anshu Gagal, Dr Hardeep Kaur, Dr Bhawna Vij Arora and Mr Amarnath) joined the webinar along with another Guest, Dr. Chandrakant Langare, Associate Professor, Department of English at Shivaji University joined us on the Webinar as a guest.

Prof. Vivek Sachdeva started with the different perspectives of Film Studies and how the syllabus was designed for the Students of BA English Hons, to expand on the basic knowledge

about the subject and keep it rather simple however, also shift focus on how to study a film. Tracing the history of the films he talked about various schools of cinema being led by various directors, like *The Great Dictator* by Charlie Chaplin, who created this film during the Silent Era followed by another great director of the twentieth century. Sound system was introduced around 1920s, wherein the term Talkies was created and film language also developed, such as German Expressionism, French Impressionism, Soviet Montage, Classical Hollywood and so on.

He talked about the language of camera and how cinematic compositions create meanings. He discussed the functions of different kinds of shots such as the long shot, closeup shot, and a wide range of possibilities in between them based on distance and angles. The arrangement and positioning of objects of screen and how they are captured is also important to study the scene. This in film terminology is called Mis-end-Scene. Close-up shots make a sort of confinement, while long shot connects subject to nature and show a sort of contrast to show apart each object.

He further talked about the spatial composition of the scene which establishes certain connection to the subject or object on screen and the space around. The spatial integration between the subject and space becomes an important code to study, even the lighting is carefully chosen from the Colour Palette which also impacts the tone of the scenes.

He quotes "literature is like an iceberg" explaining that the visible part is not the only part with meaning attached to it, and that a lot of it hidden away, where our visual observation might fail us and thus understanding a film is complicated, hence a film language is supposed to be decoded. Paying attention to the language of Films and the context is important, then the issues dealt with have to be addressed. Formalistic reading of the book is Tip of an iceberg, he said.

Then he proceeded to show clips of the films Grapes of Wrath, Pather Panchali and The Good, the Bad and the Ugly to further explain the decoding of scenes and how the spatial integration has to be read along with the subjects on screen.

Prof. Sachdeva said that a novelist has a bigger canvas than an Auteur does. A film maker is rather restricted in expression. Camera becomes a tool of narration in films, while an author would simply explain whatever they please in the pages of the books, as it is not constrained by the limits of time.

The opening and the ending scene of Grapes of Wrath were discussed in respect to the shot captured and the subject on screen, and what meaning it conveys. The film is based on the economic state of America; the novel makes a strong political statement while the film does not make sharp statements. There is a sense of ambiguity in films, while details are provided for imagination in the books. He compares several similarities and differences between novel and films and how authors and directors proceed to convey certain messages through their art.

The last scene of the film however ends on the note that Poor people survive regardless of all their hardships, while the film mentions the plight of poor women through the character of Ma, which can be seen in feministic light, however it is about the struggles of class and certainly all of the people who belonged to it. "Everything confined in the specific space and time conveys a meaning," he added. Voiceover is one of the many kinds of narration in the films, however the quality of films decreases drastically with the repetitive use of this mode. He said that "art entirely depends on how creatively you make the rules and how creatively you break the rules".

He also proceeded to show the Scene of Train in the film Pather Panchali, discussing the various differences between the original novel by Bibhuti Bhushan Bandyopadhyay and the film adaptation by Satyajit Ray, he also talked about the adversities of film creator, comparing different kinds of shots, based on position and placement of camera as well as the angles. He

extensively talked about the role of sound in the film and how it is aligned with the narrative of the film.

Lastly, the film The Good, the Bad and the Ugly was also taken up by him wherein he discussed the shots of the film and discussed the genre of film known as "Spaghetti Western," also called as the Italian western which was viewed below the integrity of Western films, the term was coined by a Spanish Journalist called Alfonso Sanchez. He also touched upon Victorian morality and its restrictions and Rise of Middle Class and birth of Women authors and artists. He also expanded the process of Adaption, calling it a critical response to original text and genesis of transcreation, as a new text due to it.

In the end he said that a film maker has a right to mould the film based on their own Ideological position, taste and sensibility, concept of aesthetics and has the liberty to create a new narrative out of it. He also adds that post-modernist literature acknowledges the shadow of some old text in it, he added that this can be a way to look at the relationship between novelists and authors. The students were active throughout and asked some significant questions which were well addressed by the speaker.

To conclude with, it was an informative and critically engaging webinar. On behalf of VSES, VIPS, Dr Avani Bhatnagar extended a vote of thanks to Prof. Vivek Sachdeva, to the Dean, the faculty of VSES for organizing the event, Dr. Chandrakant Langare for joining the Webinar and to the dear students for joining in the Webinar.

