



TECHNIQUES OF ESTABLISHING CREDIBILITY AND ELICITING IMPACT IN DOCUMENTARY FILMS: TWO CASE STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

A documentary like other film must be considered in terms of production, distribution and its potential impact on producers, participants, activists and decision makers. Its success lies in its capability of creating and sustaining alternative discourse. A documentary film primarily aims at eliciting appropriate impact and establishes credibility. Credibility is at the core of a documentary film. Among many strategies of authenticating the narrative, use of real people, archival of Photographs, interviews with 'Experts' and 'Eyewitness', and real footage events help in establishing credibility to a higher degree. Authoritative narrator does not form essential characteristic feature of documentary. Unlike its fictional counterparts, documentaries demand hard efforts and deeper research on the topic. Use of real people, emotional appeal, exclusivity, and familiarity contribute to elicit immediate and appropriate impact of the viewers. These are the strategic tools used by filmmakers to gain viewer's support.

Anand Patwardhan's Jai Bhim Comrade (2011) and Atul Pethe's Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap – Sanitary Workers of Indian Cities (2012) are popular Marathi Documentaries locating the lives of Dalits in Maharashtra. Jai Bhim Comrade records police violence in 1997 and explores various aspects of lives of politics of Dalit people in Mumbai. It was produced over fourteen years, and finally released in 2011 after the conclusion of court trials consequential to "Ramabai incident". Ruthless suppression of Dalit movement under organised political and social influences forms its core thematic concern. Kachra Kondi is the documentation of plight and pathetic life of garbage cleaners in Pune. It juxtaposes citizens, administrators, politicians, labour leaders and the sanitary soldiers and allows viewers to draw their own conclusions.

The present study intends to discuss important Marathi documentaries followed by two case studies namely, Jai Bhim Comrade and Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap – Sanitary

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Workers of Indian Cities in terms of techniques of establishing credibility and eliciting impact.

Key Words: *Visual impact, Credibility, Documentary technique, Dalit, Politics*

INTRODUCTION

Every work of art is weaved around a purpose which serves as a medium to motivate its form. Visual media with its mesmerising power to capture the attention of the world has been proliferating into wider range of forms to show its potential capability to expand into a huge world of factual and fictional stories. One of the growing forms that have been used for specific purpose of creating an alternate discourse is documentary film. Documentary is a record of an event or a series of events in visual form to present a point of view countering or complimenting established points of view in the contemporary world. It is often compared with fictional visual narratives which are fictional stories, often total fantasy, primarily aiming at entertainment of viewers and eying the box office. Character development becomes an essential characteristic feature of fictional visual narrative whereas documentary films are often informative and intend to confront people with reality. They are nonfiction films without additional dramatic flavour in which action leads the way.

Documentaries along with their fictional counterparts are bound to gain maturity with the passage of time. Innovative efforts in filmmaking consequently resulted into abandonment of Aristotelian notion of art and of defining and interpreting it. Nonetheless, the basic principles of genre remain unaffected throughout the timeline. Feature film and documentaries are undoubtedly part of film making but differ in style, content and audience. Documentaries can deal with social, political and economic issues or even with persons, places or things. Discovery and surprise is key feature of a documentary in production. Cieply writes:

Documentary films, like government programs, generally target a national audience, aim to serve a social purpose, and often do not provide a return on their investment. Participant Media, the most visible and arguably most successful documentary production company in the film industry, made recent headlines for its difficulty in making a profit during its seven-year history.

Documentary film has been used as a tool for promoting social change throughout its history. They are often used to promote an alternative point of view. The success of a documentary lies both in its technique and its overall impact on the viewer. Indian documentaries are known for their genuine efforts to confront people with bitter realities of life and have been serving as the eye opener. Though the success of a nonfiction film lies in its credibility, it is not the sole purpose of documentary. A documentary is made with a specific purpose of making some desired impact on the viewer so that an alternate discourse could be formed and

propagated. This can be achieved with the help of techniques like credibility and impact which are essential to a documentary film. A “coalition model” for the assessment of documentary films with regards to political impact, developed by David Whiteman of the University of South Carolina was expanded by Amma Marfo, University of Rhode Island to assess its impact on all levels demands that:

1. It must conceptualize films as part of a larger process that incorporates both production and distribution;
2. It must consider the full range of potential impacts on producers, participants, activist organizations, and decision makers; and
3. It must consider the role of films in the efforts of social movements to create and sustain alternative spheres of public discourse.” (3).

Marathi Documentaries gained wide popularity due to genuine efforts of people like Anand Patwardhan and Atul Pethe who have been working to serve the purpose of confronting people with bitter realities of life and to establish an alternate discourse of the voice of oppressed through their works. It becomes essential then to discuss techniques used by directors to establish credibility and to elicit impact. This paper discuss the techniques used in two documentaries viz. *Jai Bhim Comrade* and *Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap: Sanitary Workers of Indian Cities* in relation to issues dealt with and techniques used to make a powerful impact on the viewer.

Case Study 1: *Jai Bhim Comrade*

Based on the atrocities of caste and a tradition of reason *Jai Bhim Comrade* is a social change documentary of 199 minutes, edited, produced, and directed by Anand Patwardhan. The film begins with police violence led by CRPF sub-inspector, Manohar Kadam in Ramabai colony, Mumbai on 11 July, 1997 which killed 10 protestors and injured 26. Produced over fourteen years, and finally released in 2011 after the conclusion of court trials following Ramabai colony incident, the film explores various aspects of Dalit lives. The film was praised nationally and internationally and won several awards like, *Ram Bahadur Grand Prize*, Film South Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2011, *Best Film/Video*, Mumbai International Film Festival, India, 2012, *Firebird Award for Best documentary*, Hong Kong International Film Festival, 2012, *Special Jury Prize*, National Film Awards, India, 2012 and *Bartok Prize*, Jean Rouch Film International Film Festival, 2012.

Initially, the film describes Caste system and oppression of Dalit community highlighted by the songs of Dalit poet and activist, *Shahir Vilas Ghogre* who hanged himself after the Raamabai Killings. It was argued that the violence was motivated by caste-based prejudices,



as the leader of the police team stood accused of several cases of mistreatment of Dalit people. The second part of the film deals with *Kabir Kala Manch*, a troupe of singers and its activities to raise awareness through their musical performances. The film elaborates the initial successes of the troupe during the protests and then goes on to describe *Khairlanji* massacre in 2006 and its consequences. Ideologically, the group was a mixture of that of Ambedkar's thoughts fused with left-wing ideology. However, the group was soon branded as *Naxalite* and targeted by the Anti-terrorist squad. Several members of the group had to go underground, while others were arrested. The film ends with interviews with the mothers of two of the members of *Kabir Kala Manch*.

***Jai Bhim Comrade* and Techniques of Impact**

Use of Real People:

Anand Patwarhan, editor, producer and director of the film and *Vilas Ghogre*, one of the Dalit singers, popularly known as *Shahir Vilas Ghogre*, who could not withstand human insensibilities and committed suicide after Ramabai Killings, were friends. The film is also believed to be a tribute to Vilas Ghogre for his exemplary after Ramabai Killings in Mumbai. The characters used in the film are real and not being orchestrated or choreographed. It is true in case of all the characters: characters that hail from Dalit community as well as characters that hail from the upper castes. Some of the upper caste male and female characters are interviewed in the film to understand their point of view and to assess the base of their point of view to judge its validity on rational grounds. There is no deliberate attempt to develop the characters at any point in the film. Only character that seems to develop in the film is that of Bhai Singare, a left-wing activist, who appears through his fiery speeches every now and then confronting people with bitter realities of life. There is no deliberate attempt to force a story. Bhai Singare's death remains a mystery to the director of the film as well as for the viewers though some of the eye witnesses speak of it as a planned murder in the rally. No characters are created, they are all real characters either involved in the protest, bystanders or the members of *Kabir Kala Manch* or their close relatives.

Titles to Establish Setting:

Titles form one of the important techniques of impact in this film. The CD/DVD of the film is inscribed with the titles "atrocities of caste, a tradition of reason, a song that will be sung forever" which itself becomes a significant message. Titles are used many a times to provide technical information of the video footage of a particular incident. Titles appear every now and then to establish the setting of the scene in the footage. Identification of the singers and speakers in the video can also be done with the help of titles appearing on the screen. Titles are extremely helpful throughout the film. The title message that appears at the beginning provides historical information about the condition of Dalits.



Hazaro saal Purani varna vyavastha ne is samaj ko Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaish aur Shudra me Banta jinse neech kaam karaye gaye unhe 'achuut' maana gaya. 1950 me Aazad Bharat ke sanwidhan ne nyay aur bhayichareki buniyaad rakhi. Jaatibhed gairkanuni ghoshit hua.

This clarifies the condition and cause of these events to viewers. Intensity of the atrocities and sincerity of Dalit activists to establish tradition of reason is located through the titles. Titles play a significant role in the film as the film intends to create social awareness against the atrocious caste tradition and inhuman sufferings Dalit people have to undergo especially, in Maharashtra.

Establishment of Stories:

There is a deliberate attempt to establish stories in the film. The film locates Dalits in the ancient period with the help of title message followed by constitutional commitment of upliftment of oppressed and focus political hostilities to cope with constitutional provision of their betterment. In fact, it establishes government and other political parties and their hostilities to be responsible for sufferings and injustice to Dalits.

Though the film depicts condition of Dalits from Raamabai incident to suppression of Kabir Kaala Manch as a single story, there are multiple episodes woven in one thread. The title *Jai Bhim Comrade* suggests Ambedkarite tradition of thoughts and fuses it with left-wing ideology though the difference between them is contrastively pointed out by the end of first part. Left wing ideology argued that caste system would automatically vanish with the demolition of class system and that caste is the problem posed by super structure while Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar thought that caste system lies at the bottom of oppression of downtrodden people in India. Titles help to establish the settings as well as the story in the film. Titles, paper cuttings, video footages and interviews are artistically woven to establish the story. "*Jai Bhim Comrade* is an incredibly important work that brings to attention a broad culture of atrocious oppression, dismantling entirely any argument that caste-discrimination is a thing of the past". (Turner Matt)

Emotional Appeal:

The documentary makes an indirect emotional appeal to viewers through a series of incidents presented with the help of titles, paper cuttings and interviews of eye witnesses and relatives of Dalits involved in the movement. The emotional appeal comes through sufferings presented in the film. It appeals to both, Dalits and caste people as well. This is also an appeal to political leaders and concerned officers to look at the marginalised Dalits in a sympathetic way so that they can be mainstreamed. Sometimes, the film contradicts its aim of appealing



emotionally to high caste people because some of the recordings of Bhai Singare's speeches are so radical that caste people may feel hurt. However, these video clips are required to portray the nature of movement launched by left wing leaders hand in hand with Dalit activists.

Exclusivity:

There is a real footage of Raamabai colony killings accidentally captured in the camera by Ravi Shinde, the owner of the petrol pump in Ramabai colony. There are several other video recordings like Gundewar inquiry commission, Bhai Singare's speeches and Balasaheb Thakre's contravercial public speech justifying killings in Mumbai. Manohar Joshi, the then Chief minister of Maharashtra publically announces that he would rather resign from the post of Chief Minister than to arrest Balasaheb Thakre on the basis of report of Shrikrusna Commion. This makes the viewer feel that these videos are made exclusively available to them which adds to the impact of the film. Viewers believe that the secret information is shared with them which results into a feeling of trust between viewer and the film maker.

Familiarity:

Right from the title to all other incidents shown in the film a thread of familiarity runs making viewers feel that these are incidents they have been listening to and talking about vaguely. All these incidents are known to people in India in general and to people in Maharashtra in particular. Politics in Maharashtra has seen great upheavals resulted due to issues like *Raamai Killings*, *Riots against Muslims in Mumbai* and *Khairlangi Massacre*. Viewers are familiar to issues dealt with in the film. The film adds to the knowledge of viewers and helps them to understand the situation thoroughly giving them the satisfaction of knowing the truth. Songs that Dalit activists sing in the videos are familiar to people in Maharashtra which makes deeper impact. The issue of Dalit atrocities has been discussed since the times of pre-independence. This familiarity makes viewers feel that this is the topic of their concern helping them to understand the truth behind issues.

Use of Popular Regional Songs:

Though the Human Rights Watch criticised the style of the film, saying that the use of music got repetitive, and that the length of the film made it inaccessible, it should be noted that music is the characteristic feature of Ambedkarite activists. The awareness campaign launched by Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar included use of music. It is stated in one of the interviews in the film. Moreover, the music used in the film is popular regional music. Some of the songs are original creations, but most of the songs are based on popular Marathi melodies which serves the purpose of inspiring the spark of awareness with greater impact. *Kabir Kala Manch* was a troupe of singers which used to reword popular songs for their



purpose. The tradition of rewording the popular songs to suit the purpose still continues in Maharashtra. One of the most popular Marathi songs that appear repetitively in the film is *yenara bai barrister saheb mazaa* which is rewording of popular Marathi melody *Sajane Bai yonar sajan maza*.

Use of popular Marathi songs form one of the remarkable characteristic features of the film not because it would appeal the viewer but because it was how Dalit activists created awareness among illiterate masses. *Shahir Vilas Ghogre* who committed suicide after *Raamabai killings* was a *Shahir* which literally means a Balladeer. Use of popular regional songs thus serves manifold purpose in the film. It makes an emotional appeal and adds to the feeling of familiarity.

***Jai Bhim Comrade* and Documentary Techniques that Establish Credibility**

Jai Bhim Comrade uses some typical documentary techniques that establish credibility of the film. These techniques are used by Patwardhan so that viewers should not doubt the authenticity of what is portrayed in the film. Apart from the narrator and the titles which probably would lead viewers into confusion of authenticating the incidents and the whole narrative, Archival Photographs, Authoritative Narrator, Interviews with Apparent 'Experts' and 'Eyewitnesses' and 'Real' Footage of Events are used to authenticate the narrative.

Archival Footages:

Bernier, Catherine notes that "The documentary (*Jai Bhim Comrade*) also uses a significant amount of archival footage from Patwardhan's previous documentary *Bombay Our City*, released in 1985". The use of archival footage helps to recall the previous incidents and link them with the present scenario so that story authenticates its claims. It also uses some archival footage from another popular documentary, *Raam ke Naam*. All these footage help establish the credibility of the story. The newspaper cuttings and archived photographs used by film maker help to establish the credibility of the film.

Authoritative Narrator:

Many fictional visual narratives are separated from their non-fictional counterparts by the use of narrator though it is not the characteristic of all the documentaries. Patwardhan has given importance to the narrator to establish credibility. The narrator's voice is followed by the video footages and interviews of the concerned people. Narrator's voice helps to clarify the situation which viewers might not understand through video clips and newspaper cuttings. Interviews also would fall short to clarify the situation. Hence the authoritative narrator used in this film is supplanted by enough proofs to authenticate his voice.

Interviews with Eyewitnesses

After the Raamabai incident is narrated the documentary follows to Ghogre's house and those of killed in police firing at Raamabai colony. People on both the sides are interviewed to reconstruct the incident. The description given by the police is presented in the form of newspaper cuttings and the voice of the narrator. The footage shot by the bystander civilian is shown to contradict the description given by the police. Eye witnesses and the family members of the dead are interviewed to make the situation clear. The interviews of Ghogre's colleagues and other Dalit leaders follow the scene of his suicide. In a voice-over, life of Ambedkar, and his activism against the caste system is describes. The interviews are interspersed with other Dalits who describe problems in their lives. Interviews also serve the purpose of understanding psychological hatred of caste people for Dalits.

'Real' Footage of Events

Patwardhan has added real footage events in the film. The incident of Ramabai killings shot by a bystander tells the truth. Footages of various protest rallies organised by Dalit activists, speeches delivered by Dalit and Left-wing leaders, and public speeches given by political leaders are shown in the film. These footages are capable of telling the truth of the story. This helps in establishing the credibility of the film. Besides, actual footages of the inquiry commission and that of views expressed by intellectuals like Vijay Tendulkar make a greater impact and establish credibility of the film.

Case Study 2: Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap: Sanitary Workers of Indian Cities

Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap: Sanitary Workers of Indian Cities is a nonfiction film produced and directed by Atul Pethe dealing with the life of the sanitary workers of Indian cities. It is the documentation of plight and pathetic life of sanitary workers of Indian cities. The documentary makes an immediate impact on the viewers because thematically it deals with a very serious issue of miserable life of those people who take care of health and hygiene of all others residing happily in the cities. Atul Pethe's *Kachra Kondi* significantly justifies its title which literally means garbage trap. Unheeded pathetic life of ignored poor Dalits in the cities passes through silent tortures into miserable untimely deaths due to their inability to pay for medical help or due to accidents lies at the bottom of *Kachra Kondi* as a nonfiction narrative. Atul Pethe launches his campaign to give voice to unspoken sufferings of garbage workers in the city and portrays their struggle for existence through this film.

The film begins with "Revolutionary salute" to Jyotiba and Savitribai Phule, Dr. Ambedkar, Vinoba Bhave, Gadge Maharaj and Annabhau Sathe and "Red salute" to comrade Bhai Phatak, Appasaheb Bhosale and Prabhakar Gokhale who founded and nurtured the Pune Workers' Union followed by homage to comrade Chandu Nath Chavan, Sitabai Waghmare,

Bhiva Edke, Tarabai Sonwane and Babu Kabu Netke who laid their lives while fighting for the cause. Article 47, Clause 4- directive principle of state policy which states that “It is the duty of the state to raise the nutritional and living standard of the people and to improve public health” is highlighted soon after the salutation and homage through titles followed by narrator’s voice in the background.

The film goes on to explore pathetic condition of garbage cleaners in Pune Municipal Corporation and factor’s responsible for it. Though the film depicts garbage cleaners’ life in Pune, it gains universality because the condition of garbage cleaners in all the cities of India is same. It is also noteworthy that Atul Pethe directs our attention to insensibilities of politicians, administrators and general public towards these people.

Kachra Kondi or Garbage Trap and Techniques of Impact:

Use Real People:

Atul Pethe has used real characters in the film. Much like in *Jay Bhim Comrade*, they are not being orchestrated or choreographed. Characters used in the film are Garbage cleaners and their family members, Left-wing leaders, administrative officers of Pune Municipal Corporation, political leaders of Pune Municipal Corporation, Labour Contractor, and upper cast civilians. None of these are actors. They are real life characters narrating their point of view in the film. Upper caste characters are interviewed to know their take on garbage cleaners. The film shows very little concern about the character development or even about the characters as individuals. They are presented as representatives of their kind. Those who got injured while working and those who became handicapped are interviewed personally to depict their plight. Left-wing leaders, who fought against all odds for the welfare of these workers are also original people involved in the movement for garbage cleaners.

Titles to Establish Setting and to Project the Contrast

Titles form the most important techniques of impact in *Kachra Kondi*. The film begins with the titles read aloud by the narrator to create desired impact. The film begins with title slide saluting the champions of Dalit welfare, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Sant Gadge Maharaj and Lokshahir Annabhau Sathe. It give a Red salute in its second slide to comrade Bhai Phatak, Appasaheb Bhosale and Prabhakar Gokhale who founded and nurtured *Pune Workers’ Union*. Third slide pays homage to comrade Chandu Nath Chavan, Sitabai Waghmare, Bhiva Edke, Tarabai Sonwane and Babu Kabu Netke who laid their lives while fighting for the cause. Directive principle of state policy (Article 47, Clause 4) stating “It is the duty of the state to raise the nutritional and living standard of the people and to improve public health” is highlighted soon after.



Titles are red out aloud by the narrator to achieve greater impact. Directive principle that appears immediately before the opening of the first scene forms a contrast with the rest of the film. It is suggestive of how unjust it is to neglect the pathetic condition of garbage cleaners. Titles do not appear frequently as the footage itself is capable of telling the whole story. Titles occur at appropriate places and whenever needed. Identification of the important characters can be done with the help of titles appearing on the screen.

First three slides are title slides asserting the tradition of reason launched with the emergence of Jyotiba Phule followed by Dr Ambedkar and many others. It also directs viewers to left-wing activists and the work undertaken by them for the upliftment of oppressed classes. Titles are as important as the narrator's voice in the film. Moreover, the titles are red out aloud for better understanding of viewers. Thus, narrator voice and titles together achieve a greater impact. Recommendations of *Load committee* and *Agreement as per Pune Industrial Court Ruling 1999* appear in the titles contrasting with the truth narrated by workers and its other side by administrators:

“As the condition of the conservancy staff and sweepers are health endangering and, at times, very risky, we feel that, to protect them from health hazards, they should be supplied with protective gear” (Recommendations of B. V. Load Committee).

“It's been agreed that each worker in the health department would be supplied with two bars of germicidal lifebuoy soap, weighing 150 grams each, mask and goggles every month along with pair of gumboots every year”. (Agreement as per Pune Industrial Court Ruling 1999).

These title messages are immediately followed by interview of garbage cleaner who tells that they are not provided with gumboots, soaps, masks and goggles. To see the other side of the story, administrative officer is interviewed who tells that they are supplied with everything needed for protection while working. To contradict this, garbage cleaner reports that *they say that they give us these thing but actually they don't give anything*. When asked about the corruption, the garbage cleaners say that they want a corruption free state.

Establishment of Stories

A deliberate attempt to establish stories makes greater impact on the viewers. It becomes a general story of the garbage cleaners in Pune Municipal Corporation on one hand and establishes stories of several garbage cleaners and their families on the other hand. It also reveals a bitter truth that almost all the garbage cleaners hail from Dalit community. One of the characters raises a vital question that if it was all that reservation gave them. The

'reservation policy' and 'Dalits in India' also form a separate story in the film. There are stories established through the interviews, paper cuttings and video clips supplanted by narrator's voice. The stories of the lives of the poor garbage cleaners are narrated and varied aspects of their miserable like poverty, illiteracy, health and food are highlighted. Those who became physically handicapped while working got nothing to feed their family members and others who are paid meagre salary of five thousand a month for cleaning the cities and maintaining the hygiene of the city are shown to complain that they cannot educate their children properly. It creates a story that starts at some unknown point of time when society was divided into castes and Shudras and Atishudras were forced to undertake dirty work of clearing the filth and continues to present when the condition of Atishudras remains unchanged despite of constitutional provisions.

One of the major reasons for the pathetic condition of Dalits is capitalism and growing influence of globalisation. They are socially and economically oppressed since ages and still continue to be oppressed. It is easy to say that they have the opportunities of education and better life now but it is really difficult to do so because an individual is affected by social and economic conditions one lives and raised in. The film establishes these and many other stories while establishing the story of garbage cleaners of Pune Municipal Corporation.

When garbage cleaners formed the union and started demanding their rights, Municipal Corporation chose to give contract of cleaning to private companies. The contractor, who happens to be the part of an interview in the film, does not hesitate to say that there is nothing illegal in asking people to work for a salary of five thousand rupees a month. He further adds that it not the question of exploitation but of availability. When there are other people ready to work for five thousand a month why shouldn't they be preferred to those who demand higher salary.

Emotional Appeal

Emotional appeal is one of the important techniques of documentary used for eliciting the impact. *Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap* makes direct emotional appeal to viewers. One of the best techniques that Atul Pethe uses in *The Garbage Trap* to make emotional appeal is to form a contrast between theory and the practice. The contrast is presented with help of legal rights of the garbage cleaners presented with the help of titles and narrator's voice and actual life of these people shown through videos and interviews. Emotional appeal is made to Dalits, high caste people, politicians and administrators. The film makes emotional appeal to intellectuals who care for humanitarian values. It makes an indirect appeal to all other people too.

There are different techniques used to appeal people. The pathetic condition depicted through videos clips and interviews appeals viewers to be sympathetic to garbage cleaners and Left-



wing activists make a constitutional appeal to be legal and just to these people. It is in fact, a series of events that proves eye opener to most of the sophisticated hygienists to the worst realities of life in the contemporary world.

Exclusivity

Exclusivity is a remarkable feature of *The Garbage Trap*. Atul Pethe has given exclusive footages of unseen life of these workers. Videos showing cleaner dipping in the drainage to clear the blocks, huge heap of drainage stored at Uruli Kanchan, are exclusively brought to viewers to elicit the impact. Exclusive interviews of street walkers abusing sweepers reveal the hypocritical nature of Indian psyche. This is done with an intention of contrasting the life of sweepers who set out of house early morning to clean the streets where these complacent beings come to have morning walk. The contrast can be seen when one of these tax payers asks them to come little early to clean roads so that they can have a dust free walk on the clean roads of Pune.

Familiarity

Viewers are introduced with the familiar things like Phule-Ambedkar tradition, Directive principle of state policy of constitution at the onset. All are familiar with the sweepers and cleaners who they come across in the morning and at certain uneven hours whenever needed. But nobody cares to think about the actual life they live. Every now and then there happens to be a harsh exchange of words between the sweepers and the walkers which enrages so called civilised people. But this film confronts them with the realities which are far away from what one could imagine in normal circumstances. Once confronted with these realities they feel that the people they know as dirty creatures are actually human beings and need to be given proper care and attention. They have the right to basic necessities of life. And their children have full right to everything that all other children have. This familiarity makes the viewer feel that this is the topic of their concern.

Use of Regional Songs:

Unlike *Jai Bhim Comrade*, the *Garbage Trap* is not a film with many songs in it but it is also not a film without songs. Left-wing or even Ambedkarites knew that Dalits are illiterate and won't understand the intellectual talks and discussions. Hence, they used music as a medium to create awareness among them. Popular regional songs are reworded and sung to suit their purpose of creating awareness among the illiterate Dalit masses. *Kachra Kondi* or *The Garbage Trap* like *Jai Bhim Comrade* is inspired by thoughts of Ambedkar and also by the left-wing ideology.

Kachra Kondi and Documentary Techniques that Establish Credibility



Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap: Sanitary Workers of Indian Cities uses typical documentary techniques to establish credibility of the film. Pethe uses these techniques to make viewer feel that places, incidents and events portrayed in the film are authentic. Narrator's dialogues and titles used are also acknowledged so that its credibility is established. The narrative establishes its credibility because there are counter arguments included in the film. Of course, the film tries to establish a counter discourse in favour of the depressed classes of India because it is the purpose behind producing this film.

Authoritative Narrator:

Narrator dictates the titles to audience so that they are not missed. The Garbage Trap uses narrator's voice on many occasions to enhance the quality of experience. It is separated from other documentary films because it has a male and a female as narrators. Using more than one narrator is actually a technique used by news editors. Pethe has used the same technique to establish the credibility of the events in the film. It serves the purpose of establishing credibility on one hand and avoids monotony on the other hand. Two-narrator technique makes this documentary more interesting. Often narrator dictates the condition and comments on the factors responsible for it. After Medha kulkarni, a left-wing activist complains that these people forget first of the three mantras (Educate, Unite and Struggle) of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedake and remember the other two, the narrator comments authoritatively:

There are many reasons to people's powerlessness. For the class that has suffered oppression for centuries, one generation is not enough to get back on its feet. Why don't they get educated, now that there are special opportunities? It is easy to ask. However, the struggle that the 'have nots' have had to wage for sheer existence cannot be fathomed by thanking alone. The economic and social class that one lives in, one is raised in, dictates the opportunities one gets. This is the sad reality of our society.

The narrator's voice is followed by the video footages that show the miserable condition of poor Dalits dwelling in the darkness of illiteracy and poverty, waiting to be brought to mainstream. Narrator's voice helps to clarify the situation which viewers might not understand through footages. Hence the authoritative voice of the narrator is immediately followed by authenticating videos and pictures.

Interviews with Eyewitnesses, Family Members, Leaders, Administrators, and Others

Interviewing concerned people is a common technique adopted in non-fiction films. It is done with a view to give objectivity to the topic. To establish the credibility of the narrative, it is often essential to interview all the concern parties so that the narrative does not become one

sided dismissing the other side of the issue. Atul Pethe has added interviews various garbage cleaners, their family members, their children, left-wing activists, contractor, bystanders and high caste people. The interviews of all these people help to understand the truth of garbage cleaners. It also establishes the truth that they live a miserable life and issue needs to be taken seriously on the government level. The obvious tension between high caste hegemony and low caste oppression is reflected through these interviews. A thin line of ideological tension between Leftist and Ambedkarites is focused as most of the left-wing activist hail from high caste and garbage cleaners hail from low caste. Parallel to *Jay Bhim Comrade*, *The Garbage Trap* brings out the ideological difference that lies at the bottom of thoughts of Ambedkar, who believes that caste is at the root of Indian system and left-wing ideology, which believes in demolition of super structure. This is the difference at the base which would not allow Ambedkarites to work hand in hand with leftists though their agenda remains all the same. Contractor who looks at things by economical point of view, on the other hand, is the spokesperson of capitalist economy. Interviews of high class people show their indifference to issue and want their life to be free of troubles. Interviews with administrators and politician reveal prevalent corruption apparently engulfing everything as one of the factors responsible for miseries of poor people. Atul Pethe interviews every concerned part for the viewers and lets it to them to draw their own conclusion.

Summing Up

Thematically, *Jai Bhim Comrade* and *Kachra Kondi or Garbage Trap: Sanitary Workers of Indian Cities* deal with miseries of Dalits in India. In Both documentaries, Dalit people and their miserable life remain at the centre of discussion. Categorically, *Jai Bhim Comrade* can be placed in the line of political documentaries, but on the ground level it becomes a social change documentary. Thus, it forms another parallel with *The Garbage Trap*. Basically, the issues with Dalits in India as Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar believed are rooted deep in the soil and form the base for all other issues. Although Dalit is not a constitutional word, people prefer to use it because it has a political value to be identified as oppressed. What lies at the bottom of miseries of Dalit people is highlighted by Patwardhan through a video clip in which Bhai Singare refers to Dr Ambedkar's decision to burn *ManuSmruti*. It is an ideological difference between Ambedkarites and Leftists highlighted in both the documentaries. In *Jay Bhim Comrade* it is directly referred to by one of the characters while in *The Garbage Trap* it is indirectly referred to by narrator in his indirect reply to one of the left-wing activist's opinion about hypocritical nature of Dalits in forgetting first and very important of Ambedkar's teachings: educate, unite and struggle and remembering the other two.

The Garbage Trap in one sense can be called a documentary depicting singular aspect of Dalit lives that has been discussed very briefly in *Jay Bhim Comrade*. *Jay Bhim Comrade* deals with various aspects of lives of Dalit people but concentrates mainly on atrocities they

have to face every now and then at the hands of caste people and political will. *The Garbage Trap* on the contrary concentrates more on their sufferings than on atrocities. *Jai Bhim Comrade* thus, tries to establish an alternate discourse of traditions of reason while *Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap* tries to make an appeal to mainstream to heed this marginalised section.

Both the films adopt documentary techniques like titles to establish settings, establishment of stories, emotional appeal, exclusivity and use of popular regional songs to elicit impact with little variations. The use of popular regional songs is more in *Jai Bhim Comrade* while it is moderate in *Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap*. However, excessive use of popular regional songs in *Jai Bhim Comrade* and Moderate use of songs in *Kachra Kondi or The Garbage Trap* does not affect the quality of these films. Songs serve dual purpose of authentication the narrative and increasing the entertainment value of the films. It is to be noted that songs are used in the films not because they have entertainment value but because this is the way Dalits used to protest.

Anand Patwardhan uses techniques like use of real people, archival of Photographs, interviews with 'Experts' and 'Eyewitness', and real footage events to establishing credibility in *Jai Bhim Comrade*. So does Atul Pethe in *Kachra Kondi*. The success of these documentaries undoubtedly lies in themes they deal with but the techniques used contribute equally to their success.

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