

A Report on an FDP
'Literature, Media and Films: Theory and Praxis'
jointly organised by
Government Arts College, Maninagar &
Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat
22/07/2024 to 27/07/2024

A ground breaking Faculty Development Programme on “Literature, Films and Media: Theory and Praxis” concluded successfully on July 27, 2024, after a week-long intensive exploration of the intricate relationship between these disciplines. Held from July 22nd to 27th at Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat, Ahmedabad, the programme successfully equipped more than hundred participants who comprised of academicians, faculty members and research scholars from various colleges and universities across Gujarat with the necessary tools and knowledge to effectively integrate these subjects in their curriculum and pedagogy.

The training programme, jointly organised by Government Arts College, Maninagar, K K Shastri Educational Campus, Ahmedabad and Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat (KCG), Department of Higher Education, Government of Gujarat from 22nd July to 27th July, 2024, featured a diverse range of experts and scholars who delved into the theoretical underpinnings of literature, film, and media studies and their practical implications. Renowned Film theoretician Mr. Amrit Gangar, eminent Indian script writer Mr. Anjum Rajabali, versatile Indian script writer and lyricist Mr. Mayur Puri, Documentary Film Maker and IDPA president -Mr. Sanskar Desai, well known Gujarati script writer - Raam Mori, Media experts Dr. Rupa Mehta, Dr. Malti Mehta and Dr. Sonal Pandya, critical theorists Dr. Vijay Pandya, Dr. Indira Nityanandam, Dr. Bharat Mehta, Dr. Nutan Kotak, Dr. Rucha Brahmhatt and Dr. Shubha Nigam, You tuber and Podcaster Ms. Deepali Chhatwani, Abhishek Shah, Gujarati writer and director of national award-winning film ‘Hellaro’, were amongst the reputed experts invited to provide an in-depth analysis and deeper insight into the subject during the course of one week.

Principal of the college, Dr. Namita Sharma said that the chief objective of this FDP was to explore the rich, multifaceted and complex interrelation between literature, films and media while simultaneously addressing their vast psychological, cultural and socio-political impact on the present generation. Coordinator of the programme and IQAC head of the college, Dr. Pinal Doshi said that one of the main aims of the programme was to emphasize the practical application of theoretical concepts through narration of case studies and the

creative journeys of the writers, directors and new media story tellers. Dr. Sharma and Dr. Doshi attributed the success of this innovative and path breaking FDP to the sincere efforts and commitment shown by the entire team of Government Arts College, Maninagar. During the course of the week experts and faculty members engaged themselves in critical interactions on literary texts, films, and media content, fostering a deeper understanding of their cultural and social significance. Co Coordinator Dr. Sudiya talking about the outcome of the programme said that it updated participants' knowledge about the rich inter connectedness of the three mediums. One of the participants, Sobhana Nair said that in this FDP she learnt how technology and evolution of new media has opened up new creative career options and research areas for students of literature, languages and media studies

22-07-2024

The inaugural session was chaired by Shri Amrit Gangar, renowned film theorist and historian. Principals of various colleges and OSD, Tirth Initiative, Mr. Mahesh Patel graced the occasion with their kind presence. Principal of the host college, Dr. Namita Sharma welcomed the guests, resource persons and the participants. The coordinator of the programme, Dr. Pinal Doshi briefed the participants with the aim, objectives and detailed schedule of the FDP. The inaugural session ended with a vote of Thanks by the co coordinator Dr. Suresh Sudiya.

Shri Amrit Gangar made a presentation on "Living, Teaching and Interacting in a Time of Erasure: When a Vision of the Past Persists." He gave an overview of some of the important milestones of Indian Cinema. He cited examples from the films by Mani Kaul, and Satyajit Ray. In his second session, "Word and Image: Process of Transmogrification-Literature- Cinema Symbiosis," he discussed the dynamics of media ethics. He described the harmful effects of undegradable waste of films on the environment and pointed out that there is hardly any study about it. He showed examples from a video clipping of film director Satyajit Ray's interview. He explained several technical elements of film-making.

Shri Arvind Barot began his session by describing the origin of Gujarati folk songs and folk stories. He explained how such folk tales were compiled by

Jhaverchand Meghani. On account of this compilation, such folk tales reached educational institutions. He described the rich cultural heritage of Gujarati literature. He further gave us an insight into the adaptation of folk tales in early Gujarati films and attributed the success of Gujarati cinema to the art of connecting the regional audience with their roots. This revived regional stories and cultural connotations and thus resonated well with the local audiences.

Dr. Vijay Pandya gave a detailed analysis of Indian mythology with particular reference to *The Ramayana*. While discussing the relationship between *The Ramayana* and Hindi cinema he brought together diverse perspectives on *The Ramayana*. He educated us to gain a deeper understanding of various interpolations and interpretations of *The Ramayana* in comparison with Valmiki's version of the epic. The session inspired us to appreciate the rich diversity of our cultural heritage.

23-07-2024

Shri Anjum Rajabali presented his insights about cinema, mythology and life as a whole. He gave a unique perspective of life from the view point of science, time, nature, relationships, literature and mythology. He demonstrated using several examples how the characters like Drona, Kunti, Karna, Draupadi and Devavrata drastically influenced *The Mahabharata* as a story by the sheer choices they made. He even described some of the challenges of scriptwriting. By describing the integral components of mythology, he established a clear concept of how mythology affects film-making.

Dr. Indira Nityanandam and **Dr. Shubha Nigam** made an elaborate presentation on digital media as a pedagogical tool. The session was replete with demonstrations and illustrations from their first-hand experiences of preparing and recording videos. Prof Indira Nityanandam narrated her journey of recording educational videos to simplify concepts for students of English Literature. Prof Shubha Nigam spoke about her experiences of preparing and uploading her videos narrating the short stories that she has written.

Dr. Bharat Mehta pointed out through his engaging session how the most successful films and TV soaps become popular because of the strength of their logical arguments. He opened his discussion with the example of Sunil Gangopadhyay's story "Shodh" which inspired a popular Oriya film. Another

story by Sunil Gangopadhyay was adapted by film-maker, Deepa Mehta for her controversial film *Water*. Due to the strong statements of this film, it had to be shot in Sri Lanka instead of India. Dr. Mehta gave further examples of logical arguments in films like *Mountain Majhi*, *Paan Singh Tomar* and *Rang Rasiya* among others.

24-07-2024

Shri Sanskar Desai described the process of documentary film-making. He started his presentation with a discussion of a documentary film on Satyajit Ray's popular detective character, Feluda (or Pradosh Mittir). He also screened the documentary film *The Arrival of a Train* by the Lumiere Brothers and discussed the making of frames in a film. He spoke about the commercial aspects of a documentary film and how making documentaries and documentary films are subjective and can be coloured by biases opinions and attitudes. He gave the example of the films *Nanook of the North*, *Glass* and *King of Romance: Shammi Kapoor*.

Dr. Nutan Kotak explained the process of writing a screenplay for a film. She gave the example of Alice Walker's novel *The Color Purple* and how the story had to be re-written in the form of a screenplay in order to be adapted to a film. She also talked about the challenges of drafting a screenplay. She spoke about the different kinds of stories that can be adapted to a screenplay. She concluded with examples of individuals who successfully adopted screen-play writing as a profession.

Shri Raam Mori's speech centred on an analysis of a trajectory of popular Hindi serials on TV channels and their impact on TRP. He described the difficulties and challenges of story-telling. Through the narrations of the scenes of the stories of some daily soaps and impersonating some key characters, he shared the excitement of the gargantuan task of screenplay writing. He analysed the adaptation of Saraswati Chandra as a TV serial. He thus demonstrated the challenges of adapting literature to suit the requirements of the television audience.

25-07-2024

Shri Mayur Puri began his presentation with the evolution of technology and its impact on film-making, viewing and reception. He also spoke about the impact of digital media on content creation and music royalties. In his second session, he

spoke about adapting the movies of Hollywood for an Indian audience through a transcreation of dialogues. To add interest to the characters, he added various regional accents to some of the characters ("reverse racism") and illustrated this through his presentation about the various films he worked for.

Ms. Dipali Chatwani gave an elaborate presentation on the use and relevance of story-telling by the paparazzi. She narrated several personal experiences that supported her interviews with many eminent dignitaries of Bollywood. She described how the role of storytelling shapes interviews, podcasts, videos and reels that are generated by the paparazzi. She also illustrated this by sharing her experiences of interviewing Shah Rukh Khan and BK Shivani.

Dr Rupa Mehta highlighted the significant impact of Doordarshan in promoting and preserving our rich literary heritage. She took us on a journey through the history of Doordarshan's literary contributions. The adaptations of literature to the TV screen not only educated but also inspired the audience to appreciate the power of media in shaping the cultural narrative of Gujarat. This preserved the forms of Gujarati oral literature like wedding songs, *fatana*, *bhavai* and many more.

26-07-2024

Dr. Rucha Brahmhatt described the concepts of myth, mythology and mythography. She gave various examples of Greek characters like Poseidon and Percy. She described how myths are the primitive equivalent of science. She illustrated this by giving examples from Jules Verne's novels and Homi Wadia's films. Movies are making myths in the 21st century, instead of myths making movies. She gave the example of Spiderman and Superman. She also spoke about Uri Hossan's concept of the Neurocinematics as the emerging field of research, analyzing how the brain receives audiovisual elements of a film.

Dr. Sonal Pandya's session contained a description of the evolution of film-making for children in India. She described this process right from 1954 with films like *Jagrut* and *Boot Polish*. She described how film studies can become a channel for teaching the English language and communication. She emphasized the need to learn how to watch films. She pointed out how some of the prominent filmmakers like Shyam Benegal, Satyajit Ray and Mani Ratnam have also made films for children. She stressed the role of the media to educate, inform and entertain.

Ms. Malti Mehta described the evolution of Gujarati films from 1932 onwards. She also spoke about various kinds of adaptations. She gave the example of the novel *Devdas* written by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay which was adapted into films by Bimal Roy, K. N. Saigal and Sanjay Leela Bhansali, among others. She pointed out how adaptations can be literal, faithful or loose. She even gave the example of the film *Rajneeti* which was based on *The Mahabharata*. She further illustrated her viewpoints with examples from films like *Builder Boys*, *Kasumbo* and *Wrong Side Raju*.

Prof Javed Khatri made a systematic presentation on various theories that shape our perception of a film. He based his session on several accepted theories. He gave several categories of heroes, heroines, villains and stereotypes with examples from Bollywood for each of the categories. He ended his talk with some common concepts and theories about cinema spectatorship.

27-07-2024

Shri Abhishek Shah delivered an energetic presentation about how cinema educates society. He elaborated that cinema should not only entertain but also be thought-provoking and raise questions. However, he pointed out that cinema should not merely instruct. He demonstrated this through his experiences as the casting director for various Gujarati films. He also gave examples from films like *Hellaro* and *Chello Divas* to illustrate his point about how a film can inspire the revival of human values in society. His presentation had several illustrations from his own directorial experiences to show how they had been borrowed from real-life instances.

Valedictory: Mr. Abhishek Shah, renowned Film writer and director, Shri Abhishek Shah, Dr. Geeta Pandya, Former Principal Government Arts College, Maninagar and OSD teerth, Dr. Mahesh Patel graced the Valedictory Session with their esteemed presence. Principal of the host college Dr. Namita Sharma welcomed the guests and Co ordinators- Dr. Mahesh Patel and Dr. Pinal Doshi extended the vote of thanks. Certificates were distributed to the participants at the end of the programme.

The programme received overwhelming positive feedback from the participants. The faculty members expressed their enthusiasm for including the newly gained

insights into their future researches and incorporating the acquired skills into their classrooms.

The joint organisers of the programme, Director, Higher Education - Shri Dinesh Gurav IAS, and KCG OSD, Teerth, Dr. Mahesh Patel expressed their satisfaction with the success of the training programme and highlighted its potential to enhance the quality of teaching and research in the field of literature, film, and media studies.

The programme served as a testament to the commitment of the Department of Higher Education, Gujarat Government and Government Arts College, Maninagar towards fostering academic excellence and providing faculty members with the resources to inspire and engage their students with the latest knowledge and skills.







