

Knowing the Indian Web Series: A Sacred Games' Analysis

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ABSTRACT

A change in the way Indian shows and television shows are produced may be seen in the release of Sacred Games, the first Indian original series on Netflix. It is essential to understand this series because it has generated a market for Indian television shows on Netflix in India. Even though the relationship between cops and gangsters in a city is a well-known one, this show's portrayal of it takes the form of seasons and episodes, with the city's portrayal being the main focus to help the viewer understand it. With regard to gendered politics, women, patriarchy, and intergroup violence, it discusses how criminals, politicians, the mafia, businessmen, and the Bombay Police are depicted. Also, it focuses on contentious issues like the dynamic between lawmakers and lawbreakers, religious violence, staged encounters, and bribery in the entertainment sector. Because of its distinctive portrayals of cities, people, topics, and plot lines, and because of its narrative approach, the series Sacred Games stands out from the competition. An extensive content analysis technique is employed for each episode of Sacred Games to comprehend the web series as a whole. This research paper examines the distinctive elements of the Indian television series Sacred Games, including its unique storytelling style, character depiction, and storyline structure.

Keywords: Web-Series, Sacred Games, Police, Challenge, Violence, Presentation

1. Introduction

One of the most watched western television programmes, for instance, is Game of Thrones, which had 12.1 million viewers globally for the season 7 finale alone (Rodriguez, 2017). This shows that because online series tend to have more open-minded content, people are really interested in viewing them. As for the Netflix Original series Sacred Games, people have flocked to Netflix and other platforms to view it because they want to be able to watch what they want to watch when they want to without a third party pointing it out. These were purposeful choices made by the audience for their own amusement (Jhaveri, 2019). The format of the web series, which consists of seasons and episodes, aids in the script's development. Flashbacks are used to connect the past to the present and show how it relates to Mumbai in the Sacred Games story. In the show, gangsters, politicians, the mafia, businesspeople, and the Bombay Police are all depicted, along with issues of gender politics, communal violence, and racial tension. The controversial topics of religious violence, staged encounters, and pervasive sexual harassment in the entertainment industry are also addressed. In addition to showing the city's transformation into a character, it also shows how the city interacts with the don.

The Indian web series Sacred Games established the web series subculture there and became wildly popular with viewers. According to a newspaper story, "2 out of 3 viewers of Sacred Games were from outside India" (HindustanTimes, 2018). Anurag Kashyap and Vikramaditya Motwane are responsible for directing this Vikram Chandra novel adaption. As more individuals become interested in online material, the market for it is changing. McKenna, 2010 Simply put, a web series is an episodic fictional story in video format that is distributed online or on mobile devices and is a part of the developing web television industry (Whedon). The way the city of Bombay is portrayed in the series is another thing to note. Mumbai is a multicultural metropolis with a variety of social classes, religions, and castes as well as a unique atmosphere. Everyone is drawn to it differently, though. Mumbai is often depicted as a sin city while also being renowned as the city of dreams. As it covers the development of

slumlords, garbage-lords, and drug lords, *Sacred Games* is a classic example of a gangster narrative. From the 1950s, the city has served as the focal point of popular storylines in Indian cinema (Florian, 2017). Yet, Bombay as a city in Indian cinema is an expression of the country's modernity quotient. People from the rich and the poor, who both work to realise their aspirations, make up the city's population. The show employs the narrative technique of flashbacks to create a foundation for understanding and the importance of events that are taking place in the present. For instance, in episode 1, Ganesh speaks to Sartaj while he is on duty and takes him down memory lane by recounting his entire narrative. This reveals who he is and how he came to be what he is today—an international gangster. This study analyzes how the characters experience exploitation and come into contact with various types of urban violence in their day-to-day lives, and how this violence becomes a key factor in creating Bombay's urban landscape.

2. Research Questions

1. Comprehending how the internet television series' narrative is constructed
2. Mumbai is portrayed as a character in web series
3. The importance of voice-overs and flashbacks in *Sacred Games* Narrative

3. Research Objective

Identifying the newest web series trends in India

4. Review of Literature

Web series are well-liked in new media as more people turn to internet content. To mention a few, they had very high viewership: *Game of Thrones*, *Friends*, and *Narcos*. More than 52.5 million people watched the *Friends* conclusion, giving it one of the largest crowds for a series finale ever (Carter, 2004). The season 7 finale of *Game of Thrones* attracted 12.1 million viewers from around the world (Rodriguez, 2017). *Narcos*' third season drew a staggering 27.2 million viewers (Chichizola, 2017). Many studies have already been conducted on these programmes, indicating that they are well-liked and thus successful in arousing research interest. For example in the case, Shraddha Mhasawade's book *Breaking Stereotypes and Rewriting Identities in Game of Thrones* helps readers see how characters change as the plot progresses and power structures shift (Mhasawade, 2012). A content analysis of *Friends* was conducted to see how it popularised the hangout comedy (Picone, 2014).

Understanding *Sacred Games* as an Indian online series is now crucial. It uses narration that is both seasonal and episodic. The author of *Flashbacks in Film: Memory and History*, Turin, has chosen to approach her topic by chronologically tracing the development of the flashback from the earliest silent films to the contemporary avant-garde, using these theoretical approaches sparingly at a time as appropriate to the film being observed (Turin, Summer 1991). The main purposes of these flashbacks are to build suspense and motivate the characters. By the creation of both the present and the past, which appears in the present as a succession of very personal experiences, these films represent historical ideas as the subjective experience of individuals.

An investigation into the function of flashback in a story by Young, Byung-Chull Bae, and R. Michael. According to narrative theories, (Young, 2008) authors can reveal details to readers up front or withhold details until a certain moment to create tension. Analepsis and prolepsis are concepts used by the narrative theorist Gerald Genette to describe this temporal mismatch. In the first, what has already occurred in relation to the present is described (or illustrated), whereas in the second, what will occur in relation to the story's "now" in the future is presented. It takes into account the past, present, and future, combining all three into a memory-like intimate experience. Flashbacks describe specific prior events related to the present, whereas foreshadowing draws allusions to specific future events. Films frequently employ flashback to assist the main plot by giving back story. It can be delivered either sequentially or continuously, focusing only on the key details of the back story in each segment.

Understanding how Mumbai is portrayed in movies about criminals is crucial to understanding the series. Mumbai is a multicultural metropolis with a wide range of social levels, religions, and castes. By a knowledge of political representation and references to historical events and their repercussions on Bombay, this article aids in understanding how the city of Bombay is represented in cinema, notably in underworld movies. Three major incidents, include the Emergency of 1975, the destruction of the Babri Mosque, and the Bombay assaults (Stadtler, 2017). In doing so, *Sacred Games* establishes itself as a classic instance of a gangster tale by showing how slumlords, garbage-lords, and drug lords rose to power.

Transgender people, commonly referred to as Hijras, have long been a part of the Indian population. The

community is diverse and well-known for playing important parts in Hindu celebrations such as marriage and childbirth. As they keep the bad ones at bay, they are seen to be a positive omen. Regrettably, they are mocked in real life and treated with contempt by society. They also experience physical and verbal assault. The true substance of their lives is lost as a result of how inaccurately their lives are shown in the film world (G.K, 2015). As a result, it could hurt and offend the community's feelings. In order to portray sexualities, it is crucial to comprehend the social and cultural background. Since, that Sacred Games are the study's primary area of interest, this piece is crucial. It features a transgender character, and the narrative centres on her life. The notion of Male Gaze and its explicit depiction in web series are also used in the story. The centrality of male sexuality and the male gaze is a topic Prince Stephen explores in his essay, *The Pornographic Image and the Practice of Cinema Theory*. The male strata of society consume the majority of the sexual content, which is largely influenced by their imaginations and desires. There is a catch despite the scenes being generally sexy. It discusses how men dominate women in terms of intimate relationships.

If you pay close attention, the majority of pornographic content is produced in accordance with masculine fantasies. The article explains why sexual objectification is never something that men can bear. (Stephen, 1988 Winter) It is impossible for a "Man to be Seen as a Sexual Object," according to psychoanalysis. It is depicted through the lives of certain characters and is extremely relevant to Sacred Games.

There are several intriguing female characters in Sacred Games. Women have started to assume roles outside of the home and the kitchen in recent years (Agrawal, 2014). In the past, women were portrayed in lesser roles as conventional housewives in films and television programmes. But, as viewers' attitudes and expectations have shifted, women are assuming more active roles. Sacred Games is one such television show that exemplifies this wonderful transformation of women into powerful forces in a made-up universe. The researcher will then be able to explain the several females and their responsibilities in the television programme using the timeline and its relevance in the present.

The journal article *Bombay Films: The Cinema as Metaphor for Indian Society and Politics* explains how the marginalised groups in India appear to be connected to the larger Hindu strata of society. Racial tensions and rising levels of insecurity make minorities seem more exposed to the outside world, which fuels ongoing unrest in various Indian states. In Indian cinema, Muslims are shown in a distinct way, and both their role and their image are commonly portrayed poorly. All ethnicities and religions coexisted in Bombay in a condition of relative peace prior to the advent of politics. Notwithstanding India's diversity, some political philosophies have a propensity to breed casteism and classism through fostering societal divisions (Ahmed, No. 2 (May 1992)). The researcher will gain insight from this study on how politics is quietly portrayed in films and television programmes. The way in which the communal riots, the Bofors swindle, the period of emergency, genocide, etc. were highlighted in Sacred Games was masterfully done. As a result, the researcher will be able to explain how politics functions in society more clearly and, most crucially, how the video content depicts it.

5. Theoretical Framework

5.1 Representation Theory

In the context of mass media, representation refers to the creation of elements of "reality" such people, things, places, events, cultural identities, and time. They can be employed and portrayed in words, moving pictures, or even still images. This idea focuses on how a particular group of people is portrayed in the media and how that can have an effect on society. Understanding that viewing a TV show is not the same as witnessing something happen in real life is necessary to comprehend the idea of representation. These media products don't represent reality itself, but rather only one representation of it for the public (Shekhar, 2009). In light of Sacred Games, this idea will help readers comprehend how the city and its inhabitants are portrayed in the story. In order to construct and develop characters through the process of representation, filmmakers employ a variety of strategies. The choice of lighting, camera angles, sound, acting, and editing all play a part in how a character is portrayed. In addition to how identities are portrayed and produced inside the text, this theory also examines how identities are constructed during the production process and during audience reception, where audiences' identities are marked in connection to demographic characteristics. This idea can help us better understand the idea of "masculine gaze," which is crucial to comprehending Sacred Games.

5.2 Narrative Theory

The study of stories, their structures, and how they affect our perception, cognition, and emotion is known as narratology. We frequently encounter this phenomenon, which is the art of storytelling. It is a crucial component

of our existence, particularly whether we watch movies, watch television, or even read books. 2016 (Cutting) The story starts when a movie or television play starts. We as viewers draw meanings by analysing what is being represented by the plot and story's structure. Plot and story, however, have different meanings. What is heard and visual in the movie is considered the plot. While a story includes everything that occurs in a narrative. It may also consist of events that we can infer are taking place or those that are not explicitly depicted since doing so would be superfluous to the plot. Also, it might contain information that we only learn about as the story progresses. Sacred Games is a thriller, therefore it combines elements of the past and present. As a result, it incorporates the narrative technique of analepsis and prolepsis, which forms the basis of the plot.

6. Methodology

The primary focus of this research is a qualitative analysis of the online television programme Sacred Games. The substance of the show will be investigated using a method called content analysis, which belongs to qualitative analysis. The criteria are utilised to understand the various issues covered by Sacred Games by looking at the flashback narrative approaches and how Bombay city is portrayed.

Study of the content based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Indian mythology in the sacred games
- ✓ Women's representation in the sacred games
- ✓ Mumbai as seen through the prism of caste, politics, religion, and violence

A. Indian mythology in the sacred games

Throughout ancient times, mythology has dominated Indian society. These mythology are composed of 5000-year-old, rich literature that is entangled with religious and moral principles. From prehistoric paintings to modern architecture to soap operas to movies, and now to online series, it has sparked an addiction among media producers and users. The fact that the drama is based on Hindu mythology is one of its most notable features. It explains the connections made between each episode's title and its story. Ashwathama, Halahala, Atapi Vatapi, Brahmahatya, Sarama, Pretakalpa, Rudra, and Yayati are the names of the eight episodes, and they all have a strong relation to the Hindu epic legend Mahabharat. Each of these titles has a tale to tell, and each episode's symbols are more than just decorative elements. Each symbol is an allusion to a modern tale from Hindu scriptures. 2018's Sadhwani.

❖ Ashwatthaama

The opening episode has the name of a formidable antagonist to the Pandavas from The Mahabharata. For such, he was given an immortality curse for almost 3,000 years. Ganesh Gaitonde tells the tale of his life as a criminal at the start of the episode. His persona is comparable to Ashwatthama because even after committing suicide, he continuously tells his tale, proving his immortality. "I told you, I'm Ashwatthama," he declares. Up until the conclusion of the game, I won't leave. (Second episode, 46:59) 2018 (Motwane)

❖ Halahala

The second episode bears the name of one of the most lethal poisons that has ever existed. Halahala means "time conundrum" or "dark mass" in its direct translation (Sadhwani, 2018). Several abundant items were gathered during the Gods and devils' churning of the ocean of milk, including Amrut, the nectar of immortality, and Halahala, a poison that may destroy and dissolve all of creation. Since the poison's fumes were enough to kill the Gods, Lord Shiva had to take this poison to stop their deaths.

In the show, Sartaj's awareness is put to use as he concentrates on the warning that Ganesh Gaitonde gave him, launching an inquiry that eventually leads him to uncover international espionage. In this case, espionage is analogous to poison because it has the potential to completely wipe Mumbai off the map.

❖ Atapi and Vatapi

According to Pankaj Tripathi, the third episode makes reference to the two demon brothers Atapi and Vatapi from Hindu mythology. According to legend, these devil brothers would invite saints over for supper and then murder them in the most bizarre manner. The younger brother would be killed by the older brother, whose meat would then be cooked and served to the saints. He would call out for his younger brother, who would then rip open the saints' guts and return to Atapi when the Saints had fled and reached a distance. Then they would consume the dead while preserving the surplus remains for later. 2018 (Motwane) When they equally welcome people, govern them, and ultimately feed off of their souls, Atapi and Vatapi in India come to represent Hinduism and Islam,

respectively. It might also be a metaphor for the two Badriya brothers, Chota and Bada. Bunty enters the scene, nevertheless, as the demon that enters Gaitonde's stomach and emerges as a metaphor of communalism's division.

❖ **Brahmahatya**

The fourth episode specifically highlights Brahmin's passing. A member of the Hindu social class is known as a brahmin. According to ancient literature, murdering a Brahmin was the most horrible crime. According to mythology, Lord Indra killed Visvarupa, a Brahmin, in a fit of wrath. Because he was unable to accept responsibility for the death of a Brahmin, Earth, Woman, and the Forest shared the blame in order to absolve him of all blame. This may be the reason why the earth is damaged by excavation, women are damaged by menstruation, and trees are damaged by deforestation. 2018's Sadhwani. Ganesh Gaitonde's life and character are illuminated when he participates actively in religiously motivated communal killings because he is a brahmin himself. His father was a saint and a typical brahmin from Godawari, Maharashtra, as is seen in the first episode, which demonstrates his very deep Brahmin roots. He commits atrocities including killing his own mother and her boyfriend for having an extramarital affair, eating non-vegetarian cuisine (chicken), and approving the poaching of Muslims for deceitful politician Bhosale, among others. They are all categorically incompatible with brahminism. As a result, it symbolises Gaitonde's loss of his Brahmin identity. Ganesh, however, dispels the modern idea that a Brahmin cannot eat meat when he eats flesh. (Ajaz, 2015)

❖ **Sarama**

Sarama is a figure from the vast Indian Mythology who is revered as the mother of dogs. The show's creator, Vijesh Rajan, claims that the episode was mostly focused on canines. There are many problems raised by the show's opening sequence, which shows a dog being thrown over the roof. Later on in the programme, it is revealed that the dog belonged to Zoya, and in this episode, she exacts revenge for the dog's demise. As Sartaj's mother tells him the story about how Dilbagh Singh, his father, spent nearly three days seeking for the Parsi man's lost dog, it also alludes to this. At that point, he understands the value of the police in the nation and turns on Anjali Mathur (Sadhwani, 2018).

❖ **Pretakalpa**

It is a passage from the Garuda Purana, one of Hinduism's 18 Mahapurana books. It discusses the idea of the life cycle, including life, death, and afterlife. When Hindus are performing the last rites for a deceased person, it is typically read out. In this episode, Katekar passes away, and Sartaj murders the person who was responsible for his death. The cremation of Katekar serves as a metaphor for Sartaj's killing of his former self as an upright police officer and his transformation into a new person. 2018's Sadhwani.

❖ **Rudra**

The god Rudra is a fierce warrior who is connected to storms and hunting. It can be rendered as "the roarer" immediately. It represents fear as a person in this episode. 2018's Sadhwani There is turmoil among the Hindu and Muslim communities as a result of the Babri Mosque demolition, and this episode is about an irate Gaitonde who embarks on a Muslim killing rampage when his wife Subhadra dies. He is apprehended and imprisoned, where Parulkar beats him. Because of the explosions, Bombay is often shown as a furious creature (1993). Gaitonde becomes personified as Rudra at this point because a storm is developing within of him.

❖ **Yayati**

The Pandavas' ancestor Yayati was cursed with early death because she committed adultery. Then he requested that his son Puru switch their ages with him. He thereafter conquered the entire world and gained the title of Chakravartin Samrat (Sadhwani, 2018). In the most recent episode, Guru Ji persuades Ganesh Gaitonde to support his cause, forging a father-son bond. Ganesh acknowledges that Guru Ji, his third and only father, was the cause of his demise. He learned devotion from one, courage from the other, and destruction from the third. If you look closely, you can see that this is actually a picture of Lord Brahma's three faces: the Creator, the Preserver Vishnu, and the Destroyer Shiva.

B. Women's representation in the sacred games

Most communities viewed males as the primary providers of income, while restricting women's roles to those of decent housewives and mothers (Agrawal, 2014). This holds true for women living in India's strongly patriarchal society. The position of women altered significantly as nations advanced in modernity. The media had a significant impact on the modernisation of societies and the perception of women in the contemporary world. I've chosen 4 ladies and discussed how they were portrayed in the series in this section. They are picked based on their prominent roles and the amount of time they receive on screen throughout the entire season.

- Kanta bai
- Subhadra
- Kukoo
- Anjali Mathur

She makes an appearance in each of the series' eight episodes, starting with Kanta Bai. She embodies the ideal Maharashtrian kaaki. She is depicted as a solitary woman who may be a widow or who was never wed. She runs a bar where all the gangsters, professional murderers, and other advocates of violence congregate. Due to her vast sense of building authority and her capacity to overturn men with firearms and even the most deadly criminals just with her loud, nasty remarks and gritting teeth, Kanta Bai is one such powerful person that outshines the other current female analogues. Despite not being Gaitonde's biological mother, she develops into a maternal figure for him. This is true because every time he is ready to kill someone, he touches her feet first before carrying out the murder. She is held in such high regard in Gaitonde's life that he seeks out her counsel and counts on her as one of the major decision-makers. She exemplifies a progressive woman because she owns a liquor adda, is self-sufficient, and leads a life of her own choosing. She bravely approaches Bunt about arranging for his sister to marry Chota Badriya, a Muslim, because they are both much in love. She would be the Khaleesi if Mumbai had a spirit animal, and that animal would be a dragon. Kanta Bai is a steadfast woman who never holds back from expressing an unvarnished view and being stern when necessary.

As one of the most significant ladies in Ganesh Gaitonde's life, Kukoo's transgender representation in Sacred Games is crucial. She made an overtly fantastic and jazzy impression. She appears in 5 of the show's 8 episodes, making her a significant character. She is portrayed as a glamorous person who adds zest to anyone's life who is fortunate enough to have her in it. If the same manner Kukoo was to Ganesh Gaitonde as Parveen Babi was to Amitabh Bachchan. Yet secretly, she is a transsexual woman who is used by criminals to vent their resentments through sex and lessen their viciousness (G.K., 2015). There are instances where a woman is the main character in a movie rather than just the object of a man's desire. The gender gap is seen both in front of and behind the camera (Shalini, 2017). Gaitonde was enamoured with "Kukkoo ka jaadu," yet he never lost sight of his desire to use her to conquer Bombay. Gaitonde had a crush on her and Isa's red automobile and wished he could have both of these "things" for himself. Even Gaitonde makes use of her to seize control of Mumbai, set off Isa, and alert him to the presence of a fresh elephant in the room. Jiski Kukoo, uska Bambai (Motwane, 2018) is a powerful term that emphasises the way men and gangsters utilise her as a stepping stone to control over Bombay. Kukoo is now utilised as a pawn by several guys to take control of Bombay. The interaction between the exploiter and the exploited is also depicted.

In terms of criticism, Kukoo's character was depicted as transgender and was also targeted by men. The majority of sexual content is created exclusively for the imaginations and aspirations of the masculine strata of society. Only women portray the show's nudity and explicitness through the depiction of their bodies, mostly by accentuating their body parts in a very sexual way. It is made clear through Kukoo's persona that women are obedient to men when it comes to intimate relations. Further consideration reveals why males are incapable of carrying the burden of sexual objectification. (Stephen, 1988 Winter) It is impossible for a "Man to be Seen as a Sexual Object," according to psychoanalysis. (Stephen, 1988 Winter) It is impossible for a "Man to be Seen as a Sexual Object," according to psychoanalysis.

Ganesh was brought back to his masculinity by Subhadra's character, as seen by her appearance in the six episodes in which she is featured. After Kukoo, she is one of the few women who can control Gaitonde's sexuality. His

sexuality abruptly dies after Kukko's passing, and only Subhadra can revive the male inside him by dominating him in bed. Despite not being like her contemporary counterparts, Subhadra's character is just as ambitious and works to realise her desire for a "Sukhi ghar sansaar." As she casts a love spell over a Ganesh coated in deceit, she successfully breaks the "Kukko ka Jaadu". She uses parallels from The Ramayana in her closing moments to stoke Gaitonde's desire for vengeance. She kills 80 Muslims and threatens to murder 800 more to revenge Subhadra's death, acting as a modern-day Sita and Gaitonde as Ram. Her personality changes throughout time; from being a simpleton and a bashful Marathi bai, she develops into the deity who seizes power and rules Gaitonde. She resembles a mysterious woman who had a key role in Gaitonde's development into a merciless murderer.

Anjali Mathur has a powerful and driven personality. When it comes to managing her own office, she is the woman who doesn't give a damn about the male infestation surrounding her. She is an agent for RAW in this very male-dominated industry. She actually excels at what she does and shows no fear, even if it means risking her life. When the circumstance demands it, she is tenacious and assertive. Her persona is a perfect illustration of hubris and hamartia, two important literary elements found in the greatest tragedies. She brought herself to ruin with her curiosity and determination to expose the global espionage. She didn't give any thought to the implications of her actions, and as a result, her arrogance caused her death. She is egotistical and doesn't give a damn about the people that are on her side. For instance, if Nayanika had followed the car as instructed by Sartaj, her death might have been prevented. She also views other people as little more than pieces in a larger game. Her insistence that Sartaj look into Gaitonde's case despite being suspended is a good example of this. She is very cunning since Sartaj works for the Bombay Police Department and is eager to establish himself, making her a figure with power over him.

Women in Sacred Games have a key role in the series since the depiction of women is quite daring in terms of the explicitness and expression of emotions. The majority of women characters are killed off for the plot to continue and for the male heroes to complete what they had begun, despite the fact that there is an attempt to break free of patriarchy through such daring portrayals.

Whether we are male or female, we have the ability to enjoy ourselves when we watch a movie since what we see (or the "gaze") is fully patriarchal in design. In contrast, "the male hero acts," while "women are seen and shown simultaneously" as passive or inferior: "their look is so heavily coded for a powerful visual and erotic impact that it may be claimed that they connote the actual essence of being seen" (Collins, 2017). Indian cinema is a diversified form of expression in and of itself, featuring mainstream films with broad appeal that deal with current concerns affecting women. Cinema has very explicitly influenced this nation's cultural, social, and political ideals (Shendurnikar, 2012).

C. Mumbai as seen through the prism of caste, politics, religion, and violence

Mumbai is a city where there are many different castes, religions, and social classes. To depict the city's development, the filmmakers haven't failed to emphasise some of its most significant features and the contrast between the past and present. Films about criminals often depict Mumbai in very complex ways. The way Bombay is portrayed in Sacred Games is a wonderful illustration of a gangster narrative style since it shows the growth of slumlords, garbage-lords, drug lords, and other evil characters who live in Bombay's streets. Several Hindi films that deal with Bombay's underworld have gone towards a nostalgic mise en scène of the city by going back in time and emphasising aesthetics. Hindi films exploring Bombay's underworld have evolved towards a nostalgic mise en scène of the city by going back in time and emphasising retro-chic aesthetics, while also seeking to explain Bombay's shifting structures and structures in the present (Florian, 2017).

Through the course of the story, Bombay is portrayed as the main character. With the advancement of infrastructure through the years, Bombay has transformed into Mumbai. The metropolis in "Sacred Games," which is controlled by crooks and dishonest police, has taken on a lot of beautiful and decaying flesh. However, when India's religious and political issues finally caught up with the city's typically business-minded and cosmopolitan communities, Bombay itself has undergone a rapid transformation over the past 15 years, during which time the city's official name was changed to Mumbai. Bombay has benefited significantly from the liberalisation of India's state-controlled economy in the 1990s, but it has also evolved into a haven for uncivilised types of capitalism. A number of scandals and frauds in recent years have shown a complex web of love, envy, and greed that links Mafia dons, Bollywood stars, and slumlords to politicians, tycoons, and government servants. The obscenity of Bombay street conversation is celebrated in the vocabulary employed in Sacred Games. Nonetheless, the show is

adamant about demonstrating how individuals, in especially Gaitonde, define and appreciate their identities through speech (Pankaj, 2007).

The metropolis managed to survive thanks to the flamboyance and dirt that coexist side by side. Such ambiguous identities are deeply established in the urban fabric of a city with "white" towers and "black" slums. Movies have also explored the legends of the Mumbai gangland, which are buried deep within South Bombay. Mumbai serves as the focal point of the complex web that links Bollywood celebrities with the shady underworld in Chandra's magnum opus (Majid, 2016).

As a product of the modern era, *Sacred Games* is tempered by a revaluation of Bombay city life prior to the communal riots and bomb blasts in 1992/93 following the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya by Hindu nationalists, the effects of which were felt most strongly in the city and were a turning point for the way that communal life was organised and structured. In contrast to the book, which is set at the start of the new millennium, the series was decided to be set in the present, according to director Vikramaditya Motwane. The director claims that their choice gives their story a sense of urgency. He reflects, "The threat felt a lot more apparent since it's practically a same sort of government [now] and the feelings are the same. 2018 (Rosario)

The country's political system and system of power are presented in *Sacred Games* in a very raw manner. By focusing on the 9/11 attacks and some genuinely apocalyptic violence on the Indian subcontinent, such as Partition and the Babri Masjid riots, which caused a racial rift inside India, it has brought attention to violence. The *Sacred Games'* diction is an amalgam of the local languages of Marathi and Hindi, which often gives the entire story a sense of the Bumbaiya effect. When politics entered the picture, all races and religions coexisted in Bombay in a state of relative peace. Notwithstanding India's diversity, certain political objectives have a tendency to create social divisions that give rise to casteism and classism.

In Indian cinema, Muslims are positioned differently than Hindus, with a typically unfavourable portrayal of their function and identity (Ahmed, No. 2 (May 1992)). Hindus and Muslims function as binary opposites, and the representation of their connection in *Sacred Games* well portrays this particular element. A prime example of how a cohabiting society disintegrated in the name of religion is Gaitonde's gang in Gopalmath. For instance, despite the fact that the Bunty and Badriya brothers belonged to the same gang, their differences over religion were never reconciled. It is the only city in India that is up all night, as if there is something peculiar about it that cannot be found anywhere else in the nation of more than a billion people. Sartaj is portrayed as the hero who will rescue Bombay from the impending disaster. Bombay is like a damsel in distress trapped in a beautiful disarray. Gaitonde and Sartaj have a unique connection to this city because they both adore it for various reasons.

7. Study of the *Sacred Games'* narrative structure

The narration of *Sacred Games* has a highly distinctive tone as it alternates between the past and the present. According to the narrative theories, authors might provide details to the readers in advance or withhold details until a specific point to create drama. The names analepsis and prolepsis are used by story theorists to explain this temporal mismatch. In the story, the former shows what has already happened in the past in relation to the present, while the latter shows what will occur in the future in relation to "now" (Young, 2008). For example, the first episode starts in the present, where Gaitonde is still alive and attempting to contact Sartaj in order to save Mumbai. Gaitonde transported him back in time to start his narrative from scratch in order to make this happen. Historical events are established and described using analeptic narrative. Gaitonde utilises his memories to travel across time and explain Sartaj about his life and how he grew to be an international gangster in a chronological order. His recollections serve as a background narrative that serves as the justification for why things are playing out the way they are in the present.

It considers the past, present, and future, fusing all three into a sort of intimate experience that serves as a memory. An incident from the past that is relevant to the present is described in a flashback, and a nuclear assault on Bombay is alluded to in a foreshadowing. Flashback is typically used in film to support the main plot by providing back story. It can be presented either continuously or as a series of sequences that simply cover the most important parts of the back story.

In the case of *Sacred Games*, the series' whole plot is made up of a web of personal experiences that are connected in a chain and looped to one another.

An entire primary story can be referred to as a flashback. For instance, a narrator may recount the main plot in the form of a flashback in the past, frequently from the first person. Ganesh Gaitonde frequently acts in this way throughout the series to warn Sartaj that the city is about to face impending disaster in 25 days.

The use of voice-over narration is another observation related to narrative style. In *Sacred Games*, "homodiegetic style of Voice-over" is the predominant narrative technique. It refers to a type of narrative where the protagonist of a series, in this case *Sacred Games*, is also the narrator of a theatrical piece. The homodiegetic or first-person voiceover narrator can be given both a voice and a body in addition to the cinematic narrator and the hazy heterodiegetic voice-over narrator (Ferenz, 2005). In *Sacred Games*, Ganesh Gaitonde serves as the homodiegetic narrator and weaves flashbacks into his narration to connect the past and present. The main purposes of these flashbacks are to build suspense and motivate the characters. (Turim, 1991 Summer) The present and the past, which recurs in the present as a sequence of very intimate experiences, are created in these films to represent historical ideas as the subjective experience of individuals.

8. Conclusion

On July 6, 2018, *Sacred Games* made its Netflix debut. It was then made available in 191 nations with subtitles in more than 20 languages. Seasonal and episodic storytelling, which is new in the context of Indian web series, is used to tell the tale of the cop-gangster and the city. The performance received praise from critics for its symbolic commentary on Indian politics, religion, and the ways in which they control the populace. In addition, it offers commentary on prostitution scandals by including subplots involving an agent who also serves as a pimp for Bollywood stars who have been the victims of prostitution scandals. The show subtly exposes patriarchy through its depictions of women, whether they be mothers, wives, or transgender people. Also, it is built from a mythological perspective, emphasising its Indianness as a web series and making it familiar to Indian viewers. With this investigation, it was also possible to comprehend how Bombay is frequently portrayed as the main character in gangster stories.

Understanding how Bombay is portrayed as a significant character in the Indian online series *Sacred Games* is crucial to understanding the series. The narrative style used alternates constantly between the past and the present. Flashbacks are used to tell the story, and they are done in a mock-heroic manner with a dash of magic realism (a leopard appears out of nowhere at just the right time, and the gang boss smashes his enemies as a form of retaliation and retribution). The use of flashbacks enhances the suspense and adrenaline, creating a fantastic visual experience.

9. Future Study

The first Indian Netflix Original series is *Sacred Games*, and additional research on this topic can compare western and Indian series as well as online programmes to the conventional idea of television shows around the world.

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