

Hollywood Evolution: A Probe from History to Current Eon

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Abstract

The development of motion pictures involve the diverse phases and stages. This step by step progress contains to drawing to photograph, to projected images, to sound, to color, to wide screen, to 3D and further expansion. Being an influential medium, films in the world are widely used to accomplish the commercial or state interests so as in the USA. The down heartiness and the Witch-Hunt era evidenced the leading Hollywood studio's interests in favor of US capitalism. During the two world wars and cold war, Vietnam War and then the 9/11 changed the subtleties of Hollywood and its priorities. The Current work's main focus is on to reveal the concise Hollywood's evolution in special regard to the advancement and the ways Hollywood dealt with the world real issues at one place.

Keywords: *Hollywood, Evolution, Industry, progress, audience, movie, genre, World Wars, 9/11, Propaganda.*

Introduction

Movies reside in a vital portion of the culture. A number of people have a preference of movies then others, nonetheless the people who are considered as non-movie goers are responsive of these films because of the of societal event attention given by the movie makers. Exposure of Movies having very influential effect on an individual psyche. A frequent 100 years Progress is there behind the bygone of motion pictures. Standard involved the better equipment, technologies, machineries, new ideas and so on. Hollywood film industry consuming a reliable position everywhere in the world faced many ups and downs in the history. The start of 19th century is subsequently related to the subjugated motion pictures in United States by way of the foremost major studios.

It is sometimes criticized that the US media is partaking a biased approach, using Hollywood to propagate certain aims, beliefs or ideas towards certain issues (Salwen and Garrison, 1991). Nurrullah analyzes one of the Hollywood television serial "24". In his analysis he locked down the image that the American media always depicts Muslims and Arabs as negative as they can. Nurullah points out the clash among civilization

among the west and Islam and considered the statement as not a new one. Soon after the world war II with the invention of new technologies the negative portrayal of Muslims and Arabs begun in American media (Nurullah, 2001).

United States always have a compulsive fear of communism. The wars in Korea and later in Vietnam were fought to save the world from the threat of communism. (Holtzman, 2000). The above stated approach cater the attention on the way to Hollywood behavior in world's event and its evaluation phase.

Beginning of Motion Pictures

Consumption of the initial motion pictures can be seen in the 19th century as Joseph Niepce and Louis Daguerre Drawings jointly invented photographic method in 1822 and still photographs were continuously being used in the process of reproduction of motion by the number of inventers in the same era. Theory of persistence of vision was preceded forward in 1824 by Peter Mark Roget in his scientific research paper that discoursed the method of the sequential, in such creativity, pictures were quickly glanced over the impression of motion because the brain takes each image quickly in a second that appears as a flash picture. Perceptual contemporary psychology had taken the theory in an oversimplified manner but the truth is that it was the basic opinion of cinema. (Knight, 1957).

After 60 years, the theory was applied by Edison from United States and French Lumiere brothers who were all appeared and were seen in the glimpses of film history and introduced a mechanism for Production of first motion picture with some technical inventions including a strong light source, a transparent medium for showing photographs and a device that would stop each frame of picture after displaying for an instance behind the lens in front of strong light source. (Ramsaye, 1964).

Lumiere brothers are known as the first documentary makers who experimented with the camera tool in their office entrance where they captured and photographed the employees. The earlier inventions were minor but considered the backbone of the cinema as Edison always wanted talky movies and wanted sound with the pictures called phonograph, moreover, with the help of his assistant William Dickson, he invented Kinetograph that allowed a single person to visualize the film with the help of peephole (Cook, 1981).

In early 1900's a clever French Magician, George Melies comprehended the importance of camera and made number of illusion movies for amusing his audience. His lively imagination counted in a very famous "A Trip to the Moon". Even with the great success with camera, he never came to the camera in further growth. An American film director, Edwin S Porter appeared with his ground breaking film in 1903 "The Great Train Robbery" advanced the developmental process. In his creative approach, he used the number of new techniques and inventions adding Medium Close-up, the camera pan, rear projection, important the back at the ranch shot and the discovery of presenting parallel action. David Wark Griffith was an actor but soon he realized the importance of camera and became a director. His next ten years with cinema industry were world-shattering in which he turned the cinematic tone in as an art form, with his cameraman Billy Bitzer, he developed a powerful cinema language, experimented with camera (drew camera very close with actors), using lights and framing, and variations in the acting majorly, moreover he established complex and extensive stories, especially in 1915 his great masterpiece of cinema came in front of audience named "The Birth of a Nation" (Mast & Kawin, 2006).

The Hollywood

Hollywood industry took its start by Thomas Edison's first Studio at the end of 19th century from the New Jersey that was considered the center of motion pictures. (Palmer, 1978).

The history in terms of cinema technological development process is considered challenging and its financial system as well. Earlier, the film sharing process and to make income was difficult enough from that way that turned the mindset of the professionals to introduce studio system that was able to completely capture the next forty years of Hollywood activities. The simple formula was behind at the end of studio's errands to generate the film, bearing the cost, films print reproduction and selling them to exhibitors who were there to show and to promote the films (Jacobs, 1968).

Hollywood's Evolution

Films are considered the carrier of the culture which represents the society as a whole. Different epochs in the history provided different styles and trends in the popular film industry. The end of World War I is seen the tremendous social change in American society that changed the way of Hollywood. The film making styles and techniques were reached to its peak who dominated the industry for the next 35 years. Industry was controlled by the major studios and the hit box office stars. The glamorous film industry was the dream of million people who rushed to the California and gained the central attention. One similar aspect to the current days was the industry's importance and its imperialism outside the world particularly dominion side of the Europe and Russia with the facility to language conversion. Comedy mode of film making in America could be seen on priority basis that trend reached to the peak. Historians estimated that after the war, seventy percent seen films in Italy were shown of the American movies. In 20's , Studios were in attendance to hire producers and stars from the European studios containing Emil Jannings, PolaNegri, Victor Seastrom, Asta Nielson, Mauritze Stiller and Greta Garbo. Similarly, Hollywood favored the production of their own stars and directors including Theda Bara, Rudloph Valentino (Knight, 1957).

Hollywood and World War I

The tensions between two super power groups including one, Germany, Austria, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, while number of Allied countries like England, France, Italy and Russia armed together in the other group during World War I might not allow US to be part of one or different side. The delayed war entrance led US to spread out the Capitalism and its increasing dependence on the world. Soon after, the president Wilson proclaimed the war on 6th April 1917, announced universal production headed for war. Number of films were made with titles of *Uncle Sam at Work*, *The War Waif*, *The Birth of Patriotism* and *Uncle Sam's Gun Shops*. Additional propaganda films were *The Kaiser*, *The Beast of Berlin* (1918) and a satire, *The Geezer of Berlin* (1918).The fall of 1917 directed Universal studios and the government first official contract to make authorized state films. 1918's *The Wonder of our War Work* by Laemmle's studio was also in the war propaganda context. A Universal studio's petitioned newspaper backing was very high to support the motion picture industry's activities in favor of the state agenda in war time (Alvarez, 2010).

30's, Sound Epoch

Early in 1930's, additional practices of asset growth and organization prepared by the Hollywood style of production gave a rapid change in the rearrangement of industry (Bordwell, Staiger& Thompson, 1985).

In 1926 epoch, primarily, "Talkies", kind of silent movies, were seen; these were not completely silent but with the addition of some sound of piano and a bit sound of orchestra. *Don Jaun* released in the October 1926 by Warner, it was an accompanied with full orchestra score, and acquired an incredible success among the audience. The success of sound medium further confirmed with another release of *The Jazz Singer* in 1927. Within three years, the silent era was completely silent (Mekas, 1966).

The efficacy of sound made known to primer of many new trends, *Broad Way Melody* introduced Talking, singing and dancing movie drift, added next to *42nd Street* 1933, *The Gold Diggers* series

(1933,1935,1937), and the series from *Flying Down to Rio* (1933) to *The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle* 1939. *Little Caesar* came forward in 1930 following the gangster films including *Public Enemy* 1931, and *Scarface* 1932. Another trend was the Crazy comedy, resulting *One Night* 1935 to *Bringing up Baby* 1938. Sound increased the animated leanings; Walt Disney had given three extra ordinary movies, *Snow White* 1937, *Pinocchio* 1941 and *Fantasia* 1940 (Langford, 2005).

Hollywood and World War II

The early 40s were not so much promising for the Hollywood due to the late attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese in 1941 and the loss of foreign market gave the more down fall to the industry. 1943-1946 was the era of more flourishing and developing for the Hollywood. Mid 40s is seen the World War II and the movie industry responded the national war efforts broadly. The most elusive of all wartime propaganda films was the romantic story of self-sacrifice and heroisms in Michael Curtiz' archetypal 40s studio film *Casablanca* (1942). The era saw the patriotic themes as well as encouragements and escapists themes as well. *Dive Bomber* (1941), *A Yank in the R.A.F.* (1941), *Wake Island* (1942), *Guadalcanal Diary* (1943), *Edge of Darkness* (1943), *The North Star* (1943), *Destination Tokyo* (1943), *Bataan* (1943), *Sahara* (1943), *Winged Victory* (1944), *The Purple Heart* (1944), *Objective, Burma* (1945), and the excellent *A Walk in the Sun* (1945). *They Were Expendable* (1945), *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945) are the movies released in the war era. Multi Oscar awarded film, *The best years of our lives* (1946) was made by William Wyler on dramatic glimpse on the three war veterans plights. Furthermore, *I Was a Male War Bride* (1949) was released on the same context (Filmsite.org, 2015).

Hollywood and its politics in 1940's and 1950's

Hollywood faced a forceful political period during 1940s and 50s. US fought the war against Fascism and formerly headed to the cold war to counter the global communism and under the pressure of anti-fascist organizations and such society, Hollywood industry's writers, producers and directors lobby was slow to deal against the threat stood by Nazi Germany. In this regard, Warner bros responded early against the threat, moreover, other studios were just interested in enterprising to move their studio business in the Fascist countries. The 1939's *confession of a Nazi Spy* by Harry Warner's was considered an imperative of anti-Nazi films. By following the trend including 1940's *foreign Correspondent*, *The Great Dictator* and *The Mortal Storm*. Congressional Committee on "Un American Activities" which was developed in 1934 turned their consideration against the American Fascist to the Leftists. Investigating communism in Hollywood was the idea given by the conservative Texas Democratic in 1939. In the same year his House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) accompanied the number of hearing against the poorly investigated charges. Number of actors, directors and producers faced those hearings and made them clear in terms of pro communism (Birdwell, 1999).

In the meantime, Hollywood charged for generating war panic and constructed propaganda films for the pro-interventionist pictures in which Hollywood was in courtesy of US involvement in the European war. Movies those had a sign of American involvement in the overseas including the famous *Sergeant York*, *A Yank in the RAF* and *Man Hunt*. An event that led motion picture industry and Government of USA involved in exceptional accord was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 (Doherty, 1993).

Post War: the origins of the Hollywood blacklist

In November 1946, Republicans bulk back to the congress after elections. The alliance of Hollywood and government became weaker as new ideological conflicts elevated. The occurrence of Hollywood Black list was the result of HUAC's 1947 decision to deal with the communism hearing in film industry. The evolving Cold War era made the HUAC a mean for politicians who were against to the new deal policies

and considered the Hollywood as defenseless to charge the communism rebellion. The Motion Picture Alliance, included Sam Wood, Walt Disney and Lela Rogers, were endorsing the left wing propaganda in war time films and left leaning stimulus of Hollywood screenwriters. Many alliance members had linked with William Hearst who was famed for using his media to follow an anti-communism agenda before the war (Schatz, 1997).

Huge economic crisis are seen in 1945-46 that led the Hollywood politics away from the State. Conference of Studio Union joined the Motion Picture Alliance. Coalition members of the Alliance heartened the House Committee to investigate Hollywood communism. Jack Warner, a Hollywood Tycoon provided the shelters and stories against the communists working in his studio (Schrecker, 1998).

The first post war HUAC hearing was being conducted at Washington DC in October, 1947 and a blacklist of 10 unfriendly witnesses, 8 writers, a producer and a director were solicited. The time when many Hollywood liberals were move towards other cities (Suber, 1968).

During 1948-1953 Hollywood released seventy anti-communist films and they measured the most effective propaganda in both America and USSR. The role of different anti-communist supporter organizations cannot be denied in this scenario. The two groups "Catholic Legion of Decency" and "the Production Code Administration" dispensed with the nationwide collection of the films and converted American cinema as an art film to cinema as a form of tactical defense. Political climate was reasonable in the mid of 1950. The anti-communist and Korean war films were seen towards decline, number of such films were produced but most of them were failed in the box office. The blacklist institution was about to be collapsed at the end of 1950s. Michael Wilson and Carl Foreman took 30 years for the script of *the Bridge on River* (Shaw & Youngblood, 2010).

Vietnam War (1st November 1955-30th April 1975) and the Hollywood

Second Indochina war or the Vietnam War was the follow up of first Indochina war (1946-54) that continued from 1st November 1955 to 30th April 1975 in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The war was flanked between North Vietnam supported by the Soviet Union, China and other communist allies, and the government of South Vietnam supported by the United States, Philippines and other anti-communist allies. It may be termed as the Vietnam Resistance against America or the American War or a cold war era proxy war that was occurred in Vietnam (Wikipedia, 2015).

At the end of war, it was seen the victory of Communists and merger of North and South Vietnam as one country, and governed by Communists (pohnpei, 2012).

According to the veterans, Vietnam war became the Hollywood subject after the end of the War in form of recurring War situation. Hollywood's extensive silence and biasness on the war indicated the uncertainty which alienated the nation as well. Only Two films John Wayne's and hawkish *Green Beret* (1968) were independently produced and made in the context of war, but these were largely ignored by the film audience. Furthermore, Peter Davis's *Heart and Minds* (1974) captured the audience's attention and it won the academy award as a best feature length documentary. *The Deer Hunter* (1978), directed by Micheal Cimino was the first film that brought the war on the screen, meanwhile, *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Coming Home* (1978) were also released in that same context and won five out of the six top Oscar awards in that year (Dittmar& Michaud, 1990).

Late 1950's and early 1960's

Between this time period, another growing trend was become the part of Hollywood and it was to deal with the racial Prejudice and interracial romance. *Edge of the City* and *Island in the Sun* (both 1957) and *The*

Defiant Ones (1958) were released in middle of the struggle for civil rights, these were refused and ignored by almost all the studios except the southern studios. These films were proved the industry earning than ever before because of the admiration of African-American actors and multicultural material in the films in abroad and in the overseas market (Neale, 2012).

Existence of “At home at hand” medium, by the American’s exposure convinced Television from 1948 to 1952. The major studios refused to give their hoardings on lease to television and Hollywood chose to ignore the new medium, but Television was desperate for the movie material, they bought some cinematic material of 1930’s from B-pictures Studios and westerners based mostly on detective stories. The confrontation between the major studios and the new medium was on peak, the major studios then introduced the new technology of 3D in which, Arch Oboler’s *Bwana Devil* (1952) was the first 3D briefed squirt (Schatz, 2004).

The production of Epic films and the great westerners and Biblical tales were not able to stop the wearing down of box office. The research proved the movie turnout was on its peak in 1948 and at that same time to onward its value rate was steadily being declined to down stairs. Television was the family medium, while cinema was objectively left for the youth who desired the elements of the action, sex and social criticism, this trend was seen on the climax point (Balio, 1990).

The takeover of the youth on popular culture with *A Hard Day’s Night* (1965), and the Cultural Revolution were interlinked by the end of 1950. The *Wild’s Ones* (1953), *Black Board Jungle* (1955) and most of all, Nicholas ray’s *Rebel without a Cause* (1955) were the movies discovered in the anti-parent and anti-system images of movies (Gamble & Gamble, 1986).

In 1960, roughly, there were 550 art houses and 450 film societies in United States, further, colleges and universities reserved their interest in films studies. The elements of various genres were gradually shown and debated purposely by Scholars and students. Educational institutes were offering approximately 18,000 film courses in Universities and Colleges in the United States that time (Lev, 2003).

Hollywood Renaissance: The late 1960s to early 1980s

New generation of filmmakers dominated in the late 1960s to early 1980’s, this descibed period is known as the Hollywood renaissance when the new practices of production, filmmaking, and marketing were introduced, further, film directors took the key role in the film making decisions and introduced the new subject matter and styles which were exceptional from the past (King, 2002) New generation of Hollywood filmmakers were the film school educated and were counterculture-bred with the point of view of the studios, they indulged themselves to effort more to stop losing their audiences (Berliner, 2010).

Giving importance to realism by the Hollywood filmmakers was the main reason for the greatest technical change in the way of this art, in this regard; start of Motion Picture Association of America Film Rating system and the location shooting carried the revolution in the Hollywood industry. Moreover, the introduction of Panavision Panaflex camera in 1972 and later editing to artistic effects were some more rapid advancement in new Hollywood. *Easy rider*’ (1969) and *‘The Graduate’* (1967) are the examples of editing to foreshadow the climax of the movie (Monaco, 2010).

The audience liked the way of some more themes including anti-establishment political themes, custom usage of rock music and sexual liberty shows the more cinematic knowledgably spectators (Schatz, 1997).

Likewise, triumph of another controversial themed film *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), even with its X rating, made the indication of weakness of rating system and the audience division .The era of sixties is seen the production of spy films that was flair to craft menace on the way to the communism in American films. The

portrayal of enemy in these movies was in a sense that made a general feeling of mistrust, distant and domestic threats on both sides. At this time, the conflict between two world systems was these films that made a general feeling of mistrust, distant and domestic threats on both ends (Sikov& Belton, 2005).

169-1974 is the period that is known as Blaxploitation era contained African American; the period is seen more than sixty action oriented films declared on the movie makers about the black benefaction.

Gordon Park's *The Learning Tree* (1969) and Melvin Van's *Sweet Sweetback* (1971) gave the view that black theme movies can generate respectable revenue for the box office (Keith Grant, 2012).

Getting on to the 1970s gave a mark to the declination of women on screen. Quigley Publication poll showed the 50 percent top stars of the 1930's were women but the situation clearly traced the decline of women in 70s. some more trends like soft pornographic films, science fiction films remained on screen but with very limited success. Another trend was the Buddy films trend *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969) the box office hit of the year, and *Mid Night Cowboy* won the academy award for best picture of the year. The buddy film trend sustained with *MASH* (1970), *Papillon* (1973), *All the Presidents Men* (1976), *Apocalypse Now* (1979), the Eddie Murphy –Nick Nolt hit *48 Hours* (1983) (Gamble & Gamble, 1986).

Hong Kong based action films were facing decline after the death of Bruce Lee again practiced a revival in 80s with the entrance of Jackie Chan. in 1978' films, Jackie Chan combined the Comedy and martial arts but later he added the dangerous stunts as well. The trend was later adopted by Hollywood in late 1990s and 2000 (Marchetti & Kam, 2009).

Studios faced the cinematic viewership decline with the start of VCR and Television. In 80s, the studios tried to take some legal actions against the VCR home ownership ban but it proved unsuccessful effort. In the end, the home videos sale and ownership became the 2nd highest source of revenue for the film industries (Pautz, 2002).

Hollywood in 90s

In 90s, the Asian actors from Japan, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and India were seen in the Hollywood even the Hollywood was well aware to Asian Cinemas since long time that was the root cause of changing style and overall view of Hollywood films, due to the inclusion of these above mentioned actors in the Hollywood. In 90s, considerable impact of Asian film art included in the Hollywood, Asian filmmakers were come to stay there but the Hollywood self-following their movies lead to make more exciting, innovative, action, thriller, adventure and fantasy work (Donovan, 2008).

Onward, the role of commercially independent cinema was increased in the Hollywood dominated by the special effects films like *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991), *Jurassic Park* (1993) and *Titanic* (1997) and the most important and the highest rating film *Avatar* (2009) also directed by James Cameron. Independent production by the leading cinema and commencement of films and videos distribution online in 1994 marked the prominent distinction of 90's. Side by side another trend of movie making got boosted and that is animated movie making aimed at family audience also gained the admiration with *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *Aladdin* (1992) and *The Lion King* (1994). Meanwhile in 1995 production of Pixar Animation Studios released by Disney, first full length animated feature film *Toy Story*. The success of the *Toy Story* opened the further scopes in the animation on the way to Hollywood. Getting on in 90s, the cinematic revolution carried the digital cinema technology that overlapped the physical film stock, in the same time VHS consumer tapes replaced by the DVD's (Dirks, 2015).

Hollywood Now

9/11 attacks completely changed the attribute of Hollywood industry and the demands of the movie goers. Audience never remark contrary to their heroes, but now they are anxious and conscious of various material as conscripted of *Iron Man*, *Thor* and *The Fantastic Four* were made in that context. Various trends are seen as the reversal of the comic books, the audience and the movie makers are always flag friendly in the United States but the 9/11 never left any mistake for this regard and created different mindset, the firefighters, police and other rescue workers in the movies are more concerned towards the handling and fighting against the disasters rather to move from (Ryan, 2011).

Something common in more than two successful films can be called trend that spot and highlight the covered and hid major issues including terrorism are still moving on, *American Sharia* (2015), in a story of an officer Richerdson, it is seen that every Muslim is shown as a terrorist and the *American Sniper* (2014) deals with the same framework. Diversity, adventure Fantasy, Autobiographical Comedies, Medical Dramas, generation gaps, period historical projects, work place shows, American adaptations are the current trends of the Hollywood now. Gravity 2013, the survival of a medical engineer and an astronaut a calamity destroyed their shuttle and left them floating in the orbit. *Rush* 2013, the cruel 1970s opposition between formulas one rivals. The *Hobbit: The Desolation of Smug* (2013), prisoners (2013) were the movies released in 2013, *birdman* (2014) is theme based upon an actor who brawls against his current status of failure. From the context of World War II, *The Imitation Game* a story of a mathematician who stabs to snap the enigma code with some experts, *Interstellar* (2014) is the story of travel of the space for the persisting of the Humanity, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* (2014), Bilbo and Company is forced to engage in a war against an array of combatants and keep the Lonely Mountain from falling into the hands of a rising darkness, *Fantastic Four* (2015) the four young outsiders using their shocking physical powers to save the earth from the enemy who was their former friend, *Star Wars: Episode VII- the Force Awakens* (2015), A George Lucas story established after 30 years of Star Wars. (Imdb.com, 2013, 2014, 2015).

Summary and Conclusion

Films goer can relief the depression at the time of depression, they receive patriotism in war times, ideological support, and escape are other functions of films which need film audience a lot. A penetrating historic period of Hollywood films from beginning to the current era showed that films attained various functions in different times for the State, Society and the audience separately and sometime collectively. Films can be seen as the vehicle for gaining the political, economic , commercial and societal interest; different real time manipulation and propaganda techniques can be seen in the movies at everywhere in Hollywood. Hollywood had a profound effect on cinema across the world since the early 20th century. The golden age of Hollywood which lasted from the end of the silent era in American cinema in the late 1920s to early 1960s, thousands of movies were issued from the Hollywood studios. Historians have observed the different real time events and the mix in the movies. The eras of new Hollywood and post classical cinema (1950-1980s) and the rise of the home video market (1980s-1990z) are considered very important by the historians including modern cinema as well. Different innovations, trends and styles were come to the audience as time passed on. Likewise the world wars and global conflicts were affected Hollywood depiction and style of presentation also. For now this is 21st century, the techniques, trends. Tendencies and persuasion apparatuses are utterly diverse in comparison of the earlier ages. At present the prospect is gigantic and viewers are more concerned to be part of more successful and real entertainment trials.

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