SPECTATORSHIP IN THE SERIALS OF EKTA KAPOOR

Spectator is a person, who looks at the spectacle, the spectator may look at a spectacle with various reasons, and it is an observation of an act and its registration into the cognition, for instance, the beautiful ladies and the handsome men play various roles in Ekta’s soaps. The characters are a spectacle as they draw attention of the spectators. The actors must draw attention for their acting but a spectator does not to judge a character’s acting but admires his/her personality, their makeup and overall appearance in general.

The birth of the concept ‘spectator and spectatorship’ took place after French revolution where the masses had been observing the political changes and its impact on the common folks; which has been studied by Althusser with the Ideology apparatus. In India spectatorship began with the films in the year 1912 and was totally based on ISA. Indians did not appreciate cheap art forms that gave scope to the emotions. They rather believed in seeking enjoyment through classical art forms. Every society had its folklores theme in the ballads and dances performed in the temples during the festivals. Hence art forms were treated with great respect as they were considered to be an achievement.
Dramas and street plays always sent a message to the viewers and Indian spectatorship was male dominated for more than five decades. Women turned spectators in large numbers in the year 2000 with the soap operas. Althusser’s analysis is proved right in this outlook to any spectacle will be totally based on a person’s accepted ideology. Indian prime time soaps are based on ideologies. India is one best example for Althusser’s ISA, the characters and the script of the serial are a spectacle; as both of them together draw the spectator’s attention. These ideologies are closely associated with faith and belief of the masses. Indian prime time soaps and the other soaps are family oriented, promoting the importance of moral values and the great Indian culture.

Ekta Kapoor’s soaps are based on Joint families, which, easily demarcates a fact that, it is a family show. ‘K’ series have a great fan following because the script of the soap is in the regional language and the attire is regional too. The dialect of the soap first draws attention of the spectator. Next it is the beautiful ethnic dress draped around these middle aged Indian women with matching jewellery, most importantly the story line of the serial reflects a typical Indian middle class family and their struggle to make a best living. All the characters look stunning on screen; even though it is unrealistic the spectator would like to ignore that fact and look at their spectacle.
“Jacques Ranciere” “Emancipation starts from the principle of equality. It begins when we dismiss the opposition between looking and acting. Then understand that the distribution of visible. Spectacle itself is a part of configuration of domination and subjection. The spectator observes compares and interprets [1]

Jacques Ranciere is right in declaring that spectacle is a part of configuration of domination and subjection, an artist is scared of creating a spectacle which is unique and not affected by domination and subjection; because he believes that a spectator will not easily accept something that is revolutionary. New concepts are not accepted in ideologically based groups, instead a spectator comments on it, makes fun of it, then after a timely gap accepts it. A spectator is trained to look at the world ideologically; he/she is trained to appreciate the age old customs, traditions and the culture. At the same time they are taught to ignore the new cultural changes as they will harm the cultural integrity of the spectator.

“Plato” concludes it as; “theatre is a place where ignorant people are invited to watch pathos, the manifestation of a disease, a disease of desire and pain.”

Theatre definitely manifests a disease of desire and pain in the spectators, as the story line of the drama, soap or a short story basically revolves around desire and pain. Most of the soaps are based on both agony and desire. The characters of the show crave for love, money, name and fame. When the same is not bestowed on them they tend to
grow malicious and conspire against each other to attain the most desired and finally end up in pain and misery. Ekta Kapoor also has manifested her soaps on the disease of desire and pain. Guy Debord’s says ‘a spectacle, is its externality; the spectacle is the reign of the vision’

The quality of watching is very common among people but summing up, what is seen differs from person to person as the ideologies, beliefs, faiths, communities; religion, class, caste and the gender vary from one another. The understanding is based on the information already stored in one’s mind. Language a major difference on each and every individual, language has been an age old means of understanding each other. Images and pictures of every word are commonly used in the language and have been deeply registered in each one’s cognition; which helps an individual to differentiate between two words, situations, ideas, concepts, people, families, nations, it is also the main reason for likes and dislikes amongst people. Althuser suggested that the ISA creates ideologically-governed subjectivity. India is a best example for ideologically governed subjectivity; ideologies rule the masses, for instance, Words like family, friends, school, society, relationships, nation etc are introduced to the child with certain fixed meanings, a child is first introduced to various concepts, ideologies, stereotypes, prejudices, beliefs, lifestyles
etc. While a mother trains a child to be disciplined, she uses the concept of ‘GOOD’ and ‘BAD’; which is most popularly accepted by the kids. Each and every word has a meaning registered in the form of an image or a picture. All the words used by people are interrelated and associated to each other as it creates a structure of every concept, ideology, theory that has been practically implied by the people; as it has been transferred to them by their teachers, parents and elders. Structuralism is an important tool that helps the spectator to understand, interrelate and co-relate all the things that are most important, while he is viewing something spectacular.

Soap operas are doing the same work of instilling the existing images with special effects as visual education has a longer memory. The serials are family oriented; Indians have given first priority to family since the evolution of Indus valley civilization. The soaps in the serials have given special significance to the family values, they have cinematographed the intensity of the relationships on screen. Scenes are elaborately shown to the spectator as the director is confident of the passive involvement of the spectator. Anxiety and excitement are successfully created among the audience and the spectators either discuss in favor of their favorite characters or against them, they discuss on the content of the episode and relate it sensibly to the reality.
The agony a character goes through is clearly shown by the camera to the viewers; hence it is not necessary for the directors to play with the words to express what is telecasted. In the serial “Bade Ache Lagte Hain” the death of an important character Priya brings in a lot of shock to her husband who is deeply in love with her. The annual reports declare that the episodes that reflected agony on screen had received higher TRP than the regular episodes that link one plot to the other. Similarly the soaps draw attention when a plot discusses a love failure; A character from the Soap ‘Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’ sacrifices his love on his mother’s request, Karan and his nostalgic love story was an important episode where Karan hardly speaks but his facial expression communicate his feelings to the spectators and they to sympathize with Karan. Even though there are no dialogues, the visuals with a sad Bollywood song at the backdrop communicate the theme of the episode to the viewers. The involvement of the spectator is such that he/she starts sobbing or feels sad for the character.

The spectator forgets that the character on screen is just performing and entertaining instead forgets that fact for a couple of minutes and sympathies with the characters. It is also noted that a few spectators turn aggressive after watching a sentimental episode; this is only an example to signify that visual effects have a greater influence on the viewers. A few scenes instigate a fight and humor amongst the
common spectators, the soaps not just have a common story line but have common spectators willing to watch the repeat telecast of the same. Hence it is proved that camera communicates emotions to the spectators without words.

Language helps the spectator to identify, distinguish, and understand the meaning of the words, signs, signals, expressions etc. The spectator usually looks and judges the spectacle in two possibilities, the first one knows much about the subject and the second could be a silent observation based on the accumulated knowledge of the spectator. A spectator is generally multitasking as he looks at the spectacle, he does his job, and along with it he listens to the conversations, studies the signs, signals, body language, and cultural back up and then comes to a conclusion on a spectacle. The spectators watch the soaps for entertainment but tend to forget that they are cooked up stories, and they often relate the episode to a real life incident. The plots are very natural, the families members of the serials are not related to each other hence enact but the spectator views the show and the characters as a part of the family. This deceptively of the camera is often not understood by the spectator hence entertainment medium are mass deceptive.
Soaps in India are based on ‘power and culture’. Since prehistoric times, people believed in ideologies and indignantly followed it, the powerful always decides on ‘the code of conduct’, for the common folks and these powerful ones have exercised their power mercilessly. Class system had been very prominent and the upper classes always dominated the society obliged to all the cultural concepts and ideologies delivered to a person from the powerful upper castes or the so called ‘twice born’. Such age old traditions are still a part of our society hence soaps telecast the inequality existing in the society through soaps. Such themes reflect; how the powerful believe in equality and try to emphasize it on the common masses in order to hold the higher position in a society. This domination of the powerful has throughout happened in the name of culture, religion and God in an Indian society.

Today soap operas are introducing a mixture of the Eastern as well the Western concepts, the corporate world is establishing a society of its own kind and they are creating a new culture in the soaps, it is usually a picturization of the fight between the middleclass cultured woman and a high society modern women, the soaps exhibit both the characters; the middle class woman fights for the family and is selfless where as a high society woman believes in individualism and space for herself.
Prerna, Archana, Tulsi, represent the middle class and live for their family but their children want privacy and space, they also do not like anybody's interference, hence concepts like space, individuality, freedom are new terms in the Indian family system. The serial is about a joint family; which is fragmented because of the Western thoughts and is portrayed as the need of the day as it is the trend. The soaps win popularity because they begin with Indian family system, but they show the fragmented family under a roof which is the current reality; the fight between the characters to realize the right and ignore the wrong is telecasted, which is mass deceptive, the spectators believe that they are watching family dramas, but the shows are promoting the new trends and concepts like freedom, space, privacy, equality, individuality, modernity, technology, etc.

Hence the capitalist industries are the powerful and they are dominating on their subjects who are none other than their spectators, these industries generate plots that introduce new ideologies and bring in subtle changes in the society by partially educating the spectators. Indian society is a male dominated and caste based society, Brahmins were considered to be the most knowledgeable ones, as they were the only ones who knew to read and write and were worldly acknowledged as twice born. People looked at the society and culture as the Brahmins
exhibited it to the rest of the castes and society and today people are looking forward to media for the new changes all over the world.

Culture and power are two important concepts that have severe impact on the common folks in reality and the same reality is reproduced in the reel stories in theatres. Language, culture and power are the main source of all the other origins and their understanding in life, and all the three theories culture, power and language are subjected to change from one era to the other, with little application of the ancestral and more adaptation of the new philosophies.

Compliments like; “your eyes resemble the deer’s eye” to understand this simple construction of the sentence a person must be first familiar with the words ‘eye’, ‘deer’, ‘resemble’ only then both the spectator, commentator and the receiver will understand the meaning but while watching an episode it is not necessary to describe words because the camera catches the unseen and the unsaid. Work of art has won appreciation from prehistoric times in India, there are several genres of art that exhibit clarity and have the cultural impact in their performances, in the ancient India, and there were not many voracious readers but a group of spectators.

Spectatorship in Ancient India: The kings court would often be spell bound with the performances of the dancers, story narrators, debates, jokers, plays, dramas, used to be written for the sake of the common
public. Most of the times the crowds would be filled with men, they would organize special place for women where they could sit and entertain themselves, all the performances, based on Puranas and Vedas conveying a moral message to the spectators. Stories from ‘Vishnu Purana’, ‘Shiva Purana’ stories of the great sages, the great Indian epics were dramatized in episodes, as a part of the festival activities. ‘Valmiki’ and ‘Vyasa’ who wrote the great epics “Ramayana” and “Mahabharata” Bana Bhat, Kalidasa, Tulsi das are few popular writers, many historical works are also found in the libraries.

Spectatorship in India is predominant from prehistoric times, as Puranas reveal the fact that, lord “Indira” spent most of his leisure, watching the ballads performed in his court and would also be pleased to listen to the narrators, all the classical ballads enacted the glory of the king, power, victory and the triumph of the king in the dire situations. Gods had been the spectators, the ballads composed would either glorify the gods or the kings in the heaven.

The performance was composed with the thought of pleasing the spectator hence most of the court performances would involve only glorification as it pleased them and boosted their confidence, and satisfied their innate desires as the dancers in the courts have been women who’s twists, turns, jumps, facial expression, grace and
delicacy in their movements would create an elated atmosphere for the viewers. So if the gods gazed, then why not the common men and women, but for long the spectatorship was male dominated and women turned viewers in large scale only after the advent of TV.

Indian history records great musicians, who lit the lamps of the court by their complacent voices and the musical notes (ragas) that they sang, there are also records of pleasing the rain god with the raga and resulting into heavy rainfall in the draught hit areas, street plays also became common in prehistoric times as there is reference to “Lava and Kusha” sons of lord Rama and Sita recited Ramayana on the streets of Ayodhya. In this case the spectators considered Rama and Sita as gods and believed that this narration would yield to good deeds and people devotedly and dedicatedly followed whatever was narrated. For instance a wife learned to be a perfect wife by adapting the qualities of Goddess Sita. All the narrative street plays had a major impact on the audience.

Theatre in India dates back to 1st century as Sanskrit was the only language that was identified and several plays have been written by play wrights like Bharatha Muni and other writers in Sanskrit. Indian theatres vary with languages as Hindi, Telugu, Bengali, Kannada, Urdu, Tamil, and Malayalam etc. All the languages have
reflected their cultural values in the plays; they have a message that is communicated through the play to the spectators.

Indian spectators always understand what is shown to them by the director’s end. Most of the times spectators are passive and only receive what is culturally right, the costumes used are similar to the common folks. Vulgarity, obscenity, has not been approved by the cultural framers, people give importance to values. No play goes against the tide and produces a spectacular theatre work with all the reservations for the culture. Plays have been about the warriors, faith, goddess and god. Plays on relationships, student-teacher relationship, husband-wife relationship, family, friendship, all the relationship that binds with some emotions have been the main plot in the Indian dramas and all these relationships, stand the test of time with severe ups and downs in the life.

Ideological spectatorship: Indian society can be easily identified with Althusers prolonged process of subject formation taking place through ideologies which act through ‘interpellation’ and ‘misrecognition’ being identified as a teacher, student, priest, soldier, king itself is interpellation and developing a deep trust in this ideological interpellation is misrecognition. According to the scriptures a man is supposed to control his mind, he is suppose to sing songs in praise of god but if he is found engaged in songs with low moral then he is
categorized as a weak character. For instance a character called Narayana Shastri was a born Brahmin and lived in an agrahara but involved in boozing, eating non vegetarian food and pleased himself in the company of a prostitute. An interpellation that the character is a Brahmin leads to a controversy in the hidden walls of the spectators mind. It is a best example of interpellation and misrecognition of the self by the self.

Spectators in India love watching the victory of good over the evil. The soaps are family oriented hence believe in morally educating the masses as per the requirement of the society. This male dominated society has produced several plays, dramas, stories, epics where men play a major role and woman play a secondary role; all their roles are most of the times within their homes. They are subservient and not on par with men, these roles are described and defined from a man’s point of view and the same is engraved in the minds of women. With the advent of soaps Indian spectatorship is overtaken by women as all the serial are based on family and its ladies.

Masses strongly believe in scriptures, a few scriptures are taken to be the revelations from god hence masses abide by it either with belief or by force. The writers wrote plays that would be accepted by the masses, hence all the plays, stories, dramas, epics reflect the culture
and the social life of the people. The same theme is often adapted by the script writers and directors in the soaps and movies.

Ekta Kapoor has adapted the same ideologies in her serials. Hence they are popular amongst the masses; her serials represent an ideal mother, father, husband, wife, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter, family, and son. Family has drawn a lot of attentions from the spectators since ages, whether it is Ramayana or Mahabharata the stories revolve around the families. Joint families have a greater prominence in India, hence they share business as well relationships with each other.

‘K’ serials project the same ideologies as the saying “old wine in the new bottle” the serials represent an ideal subservient mother at the same time she doesn’t succumb to the unrealistic demands of near and dear ones. She gives the best of education, clothes, food, and freedom but pull the reins of the horses when she smells something fishy. This punch in the serials actually draws attention of the viewers.

She serves her in-laws very faithfully but if the same relatives comment on her and underestimate her then the same lady counter argues to safeguard her self esteem and dignity. The projection of rebellious attitude in an obedient daughter, mother-in-law, and a daughter-in-law draws a lot of attention from the viewers as most of them are humiliated to the core from their family members and similar
relationships. When the sufferer counter argues with her mother-in-law and makes her point clear, most of the viewers feel happy because they would unconsciously be playing the role of the daughter-in-law.

Spectators watching these dramas are culturally and psychologically connected to the dramas as they associate themselves to the social issues that are represented in the dramas, spectators are psychologically tuned. To understand the Indian origin play ‘Ekalavya’ one must know the importance of a teacher and humbleness of a student, a spectator will not enjoy this play, if he/she is not aware of the student-teacher relationship that existed in prehistoric times. Today representation of a student-teacher relationship is very comical in the movies and soaps where the student act smart by playing fool out of their teachers.

Motherhood: Cultural connotations are added to the identity, for instance, the term mother represents the socially constructed image of a woman, in case a woman breaks this image of the ‘mother’ then the spectator does not accept it because it does not fit into the definitions of motherhood made by this patriarchal society. In the serial ‘Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’ when ‘Karan’ realizes that his mother had cheated him, ‘Karan’s faith in the term ‘mother’ fades away. A mother in India is glorified because she sacrifices her personnel interests to attend to her child and its requirements, she is the first teacher for her
child, and a Child’s behavior is completely based on the training it gets from its mother. She introduces the child to all the cultural attributes. Cultural connotations are added to the identification.

Motherhood in India has highest accord and a mother stands next to God. Even though this trend has reduced in the twenty first century, the legacy of the mother hood continues to a certain extent in the nation. Mother Hood is a cultural phenomenon and cultural attributes have been added to this phenomenon. A picture of a mother in every Indian’s mind is that of a very affectionate, caring, serving, loving, docile, pious, protective, and responsible and is the one who acts as a first teacher to her child. A spectator along with these characters will be looking forward for the new cultural changes in the projection of mother, it is not just, acting as a mother but she needs to act like a friend and give her children their space and privacy which is a new ideology.

In the serial ‘Kasauti Zindagi Ki’ Prema finds her abducted son and accepts the challenge of changing his outlooks towards life, she succeeds, she uses several methods to correct him; she makes Prem realize the importance of a mother and every other relationship. The episodes that showed transformation in his attitude won a lot of appreciation and were the most viewed episodes. The talent with which
the mothers influence their children and set them on track is tactfully screened.

All the ‘K’ serials have scenes that express ‘love for her children’, ‘mothers cooking delicacies for their children’, ‘eagerly waiting for her child’s return late in the nights,’ ‘tough taskmasters in disciplining their children’, ‘weep in their child’s suffering’, ‘fight for their children’, ‘protect their children from enemies,’ ‘friendly bonding between them’ ‘possessiveness of a mother’, ‘concern of a mother’, these scenes are common as they gain immediate sympathy, by the viewers, most of the plots are tragic, viewers curiosity increases with suffering as they unconsciously wait for the victory of their loved characters. Such episodes gain a lot of appreciation as well TRP

The spectators are unconsciously associated with the characters as a result they laugh and cry with the characters on screen. The serials project a good mother and a bad mother, a good family and a bad family. The role plays of mothers in the serials play a very important role in catching the viewer’s attention. A description of a good mother is male dominated and is accepted by the spectators. Hence characters like Tulsi, Parvathi, Prerna and Archana play the role of the good mother.

Ideal Wife: typical representation of a wife is screened in the soaps, pretty ladies in a regional sari with light makeup and ethnic jewellery
are screened; their appearance brings in joy and the ethnic touch; in the serial ‘Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Bahu Thi’ Tulsi is presented as a typical Indian wife, with her hair tied in a knot and a big bindi on her forehead, matching jewellery. The changes in the dress can be seen in the next generations; as wives are still in saris but their makeup and hairdo is modern. The wives offer prayers to the Tulsi plant early in the mornings and cook breakfast. They usually wake their husbands with a cup of tea. Help him out with his dress, wallet and a hanky and they see him off to office with a smile. Apart from her household chores, she plays the role of a friend, guide, and a compatible partner. She is smart; she knows to tackle her relationships and trusts her husband to the core of her heart.

Prerna from ‘Kasauti Zindagi Ki’ is an independent wife and an ideal wife; the directors have revealed the other side of the women. Her looks differ from that of Tulsi, but their values and ideals are the same. Archana from ‘Pavitra Rishta’ is docile, down to earth and very understanding and adaptable in nature. She understands her husband’s feelings, without his expression. And both of them have a good relationship with each other. Wives either of the modern age or the ancient times are similar while they take care of the family. Mona from ‘Kya Hua Tera Vada’ and Priya from ‘Bade Ache Lagte Hain’ are the representations of the 21st century wives, quite practical and are ready
to face the worst. These subtle changes are inculcated by the directors as they know that spectators wanted a makeover for Indian women especially ‘wives’. The representation of both the lead heroines to be practical, independent, detached from their relationships. The wives in the serials like Pavitra Rista, Kahaani Ghar Ghar ki, Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, are subservient and create sympathy for themselves in the heart of the viewers but the lead roles today win appreciation for their guts and sensible behavior.

Ideal Husband: representation of a husband is patriarchal; spectators in India do not appreciate hen pecked husbands. All women want a husband, willing to take up the responsibility of the whole family, should be dignified, value based, and honest to his wife and family. Husbands are demanding, understanding and play the role of a friend, guide and philosopher. The lead hero’s have all the traits that a woman aspires in her husband. He is from a well off family and is well settled professionally. The lead heroes are all good looking, tall, and handsome. They are the exact representations of the husband, a woman would aspire for.

Every wife wants to have a beautiful relationship with her husband and works on it, but there are scenes where the man gets into the extra marital affairs and it is only the wife opposing the whole scenario and wanting justice for her loyalty. Hence the directors in
Ekta’s serial reflect the society and its dual natured attitude. Spectators are happy with serials that show minor changes in ideologies of this world. Characters like Mihir, Bajaj, Manav, Ram Kapoor, are the best example of the role ideal husband projected to the spectators and they are pleased to see that the story line doesn’t go against the society. These characters can be easily manipulated like Lord Rama. Spectators watching these dramas are culturally and psychologically connected to the dramas as they associate themselves to the social issues that are represented in the dramas. For instance in ‘Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’, Tulsi as a mother-in-law supports her daughter-in-law and fights for her equality and dignity which is a rare spectacle to the spectators. When conspiracies are revealed with the triumph of the truth with family members acting aptly by shunning the conspirators is a spectacle as such instances do not happen in the real lives but most of the spectators wish that it happens in their real lives.

A spectator with the historical and social knowledge finds a Brahmin eating non vegetarian in the act, will know that the director is being satirical about the law makers in an Indian society. A spectator definitely will have the socio-cultural influence on his mind while; he is looking at the theatre’s product.

Political, social and cultural influence is exercised psychologically in the Indian scenario as the ancient scriptures speak
of dedication to king, nation, family and society. A child is psychologically prepared to live and die for the ruler, as it is his duty, duties of a son, husband, father, citizen, merchant, soldier, cashier, doctor, artist, minister, Brahmin, kshatreya, vyashya and shudra are instilled within a child at a very young age.

Each and every human being is a spectator, we can divide spectators into two categories as male and female and these can be further divided on the basis of age groups. Children watch cartoons, men watch movies, plays, sports, news, and music, were as women watch plays, movies, serials and audio albums. Aged people watch movies and religious events along with news. Television caters all the age groups, based on their interests, spectators at home can be children, women and the aged people; the entertainment catered also will be according to the tastes of the available audience. Spectators love gossips, thrillers, and conspiracies, soaps are a package of comedy, tragedy, humour, conspiracy, gossip and a familiar society. Most of the spectators watch these soaps to spend their free time, some of them like its social message, and some for entertainment.

Children as spectators involve in a TV show and don’t immediately respond, when they are watching ‘Chota Bhim’ on a cartoon channel, they get engrossed into it, imagining them to be Chota
Bhim. Children learn as spectators, mothers feed their kids and avoid their tantrums with the help of cartoons and music channels.

Even the cartoon shows have messages to be given to the mankind, they very easily attract the attention of the viewers, as the animated pictures are very cute and the content of the story is simplified for a child’s understanding. In the groups children are found playing ‘Spider man’ ‘Chota Bhim’ and they enact these roles with their play group. The child always compares himself/herself to their favorite character and imitate in the similar way. In the ancient days a child’s imagination was blown up by the stories narrated to the child and the imagination of the child would purely depend on the narrator’s skill. Storytelling and listening is no more an activity in 21st century, as even the stories of Ramayana and Hanuman are animated. Most of the mythological stories are animated and presented to the youngest of the generation who spend maximum time before the TV. A child is a very good spectator in his peer group while he is narrating stories or cooks up some story to escape a punishment, exams or school. A child is a spectator from day one of its birth, and the whole world round it is a spectacle.

Uses of Spectatorship: wish fulfillment soaps have been the main form of entertainment in the 21st century and they entertain maximum at a time and cater to variety of spectators, soaps cater to women. They
spend maximum time before the TV and are a favorite pass time for women at home.

The soaps that have highest TRPs are women oriented representing a culture of the society. The soaps represent, emotional, social, political, economical, cultural suffering on screen. A woman is never given a chance to design her destiny; she has always been recognized as some body’s wife, daughter, mother, sister. Identity crisis has always been a first social issue that needs to be addressed in an Indian scenario. As it is a common socio-cultural fact in India, the playwrights made use of these concepts in their plays and stories. The directors have used the same story line and have captured the attention of the spectators and present stories that touch her heart and soothe her pain. The themes used are very sensitive and will always have an impact on the viewers mind. Indian women are distinguished from the other women mainly on the cultural grounds and her struggle to lead a dignified life and her dream is showcased through the serials in India.

The director is not just directing the story of a women or family in an artificial set but he makes a thorough study of the society, their practices, beliefs, lifestyles etc and creates an atmosphere that represents the same society and its psyche on screen. There are slight revolutionary changes in the sober and good characters which act as a wish fulfillment of the audiences; even though it is deceptive the
spectators enjoy the scene quite unaware of the screen politics. A woman who has borne a hard life feels stress free after watching such episodes.

The characters in the serials raise their voice against the domestic humiliation and torture which is over looked in the name of culture and sacrifice. The tension that is often created by the in-laws for the daughter’s-in-law is reflected on screen but in reality many women succumb to the dominance as they are a minority. Their tensions are relieved and a wish to fight back is successfully achieved as they subconsciously associate themselves to the humiliated daughter-in-law. Such scenes rejuvenate them and help them of load their stress.

In reality every woman dreams of a good husband; who is well settled financially and culturally. She also secretly desires for a good looking, well built personality which is not a priority in reality because she is hardly given an option to decide. A husband in reality in most of the cases is egoistic, hence maintains distance with the bride’s parents and customarily behaves superiorly and expects them to be submissive. She prays to her lord and wishes that her husband treats her parents equal to his and this unsaid dream of a woman is materialized on screen.
Serials relayed a woman’s imaginary flawless world in which she is the main lead fighting against domestic violence and seeking justice and dignity in this male dominated society. Such scenes give her pleasure and fulfill her wish to be independent financially. The serials also reflect the love between a couple which every woman is not bestowed with in reality because their husband hardly has any time for them. Hence such scenes relieve them from loneliness and at times help them to confess their feelings to their life partners.

A woman’s dream to be educated, independent, confident and dominating is telecasted in the soaps, a perfect combination of a woman’s need is reflected on screen hence she enjoys watching these serials without fail and for few it’s an addiction, the lead role is the combination of the East and the West and every woman watching the episode and the serial associate herself to the character and fulfill her wish.

The directors focus on the critical social changes in a society, Changes are eternal, but its acceptance is very slow, for instance, woman’s education, people believe that, she will be married hence investing on a woman’s education would be a complete waste.

The directors come up with a theme where a village girl wants to study and be independent in her future hence struggles and toils the odds of the harsh life, unfortunately, even in the 21st century, people in
Indian villages still believe that, investing on a girl's education is a complete waste of money and time. The directors encash her dream to be educated.

Till date, India is infected with the dowry deaths and women are held responsible for a man’s failure, the directors highlight such problems and educate people to reform themselves. Directors come up with themes and plots that give a glimpse of relief to all the viewers, the themes of the serials, will be women oriented, women in India lead a backward life, the directors of the serials make additions and subtractions to the unwanted from the script.

Few common dreams of women in India are to look beautiful, being ideal daughter, wife, mother and a best care taker. Their common dream; of a life partner who will come in search of her in a luxury car, relieving her from the cinders of her life, a rich, handsome, cultured, good human being as her life partner, who will more be a friend then a male chauvinistic pig. The women of the day also have similar dreams with little variations like they must be equally respected and not underestimated and should never allow any body to play the blame game based on the identity politics.

Directors of the soaps have encashed these issues and dreams as their main themes and these naturally draw the attention of both the genders of the society. Thus the show wins appreciation from the
viewers end. Soaps produced by Balaji Telefilms has been about the Indian society, women, rituals, traditions, superstitions, beliefs, faiths, stereotypes and the gender bias of the society.

Spectators gaze: Spectators have lots of reasons to view a serial or a soap for example the characters chosen are handsome and beautiful, the characters ‘looks’ first attract the attention of the viewers a beautiful girl, with a perfect figure, fair in complexion, thin with the standard size of “36-24-36” who is strong, bold, and principled. The makeup and the costumes used for both men and women draw half the attention of the viewers, as the artists wear beautiful designer wear costumes, viewers would love to wear. Their costumes and accessories set a new trend and fashion in the textile industry.

The first reason to watch a Tele-soap is to glance at the heroine or the masculine hero, the luxurious homes, the attractive sofa sets, dinning sets, and the other new furniture launched in the market, is first used in the soaps as the marketing strategy. The trailers of the show are very catchy as the characters are appealing and attractive and the dialogues used are controversial in our society. Every Indian man does this job of gazing at something beautiful could be a new car, bike, cycle, sari, chudidar, makeup set, bangles etc, the introduction of the soaps on the TV itself drags attention because of the repeated bang that it does with frequent glimpses of the trailers.
Spectators tend to evaluate the show and decide either to view it or ignore it; they would love to look at the eyelashes, nose ring, colored lips, a beautiful smile and hairdo of an ordinary girl as a main lead of the show. The lead hero is introduced with the same factor; he has an appealing torso and a royal gait with leadership qualities, fair in complexion and a big shot. A melodious romantic song is played behind the scene that reflects the attitude of the leading character or any other character of the show. For instance in the serial “Karam Apna Apna” Gowri is introduced in a simple pista green chudidhar on her cycle, her eyes, nose, lips, etc are shown with special effect one after the other which creates a lot of excitement in the gazer similarly the hero is introduced with a background music that signifies his attitude and character.

Spectators gaze at Gowri’s beauty: and draw their assumptions of her, they admire and evaluate her to be a simple girl with small dreams, simple living, and high thinking and principled in life. In the same serial a politician is introduced with a black sari and a backless blouse with heavy jewellery which is also a sight of pleasure to all the viewers, all the artists chosen in the serials are with good looks and looks do work as every human being admires anything that looks beautiful in the show.
From youngsters to the most elderly all the artists chosen to play these roles have photogenic face, for instance in the mega drama ‘Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’ ‘Ba’ is very pleasant to look at, and ‘Savita Virani’ and her co-sisters in the serial are also spectacular. Not only the women but the men also are spectacular in the show.

Tall, handsome, either fair or wheatish in color, muscular, smart, witty strong men are presented to the viewers, the looks matter a lot. As they catch attention of the spectator, the pairing of the couple, in the soaps are even more appealing than the real pairing that happens in heaven as per the faith of the people. Both men and women are made for each other, at times; they are an awkward pair which is converted into a best pair with the cameras special effects and the makeup. All the leading pairs draw attention in the serials; most of the spectators admire their looks than anything else in the show.

After looks, it is the costume and makeup, spectators concentrate on and they adapt the costumes as well makeup in the real lives. Next are the spectacular places in which the shooting takes place, scenic beauty has been captured in the soaps which give a lot of pleasure to the viewers. The special effects of the camera have a great impact on the minds of the spectators. The viewers go in search of these spots to spend their leisure.
Spectators watch these serials as it a fancy to be a part of the joint family system and the eldest being the head of the family ruled the family as everyone in the family would report to him and the eldest man of the family would be the decision maker of the family. Not just the decision maker but also the law maker of the family and the family is subjected to this. The same scenes are seen on screen and the hierarchy of the family is spectacular on screen. All the serials produced by Balaji Telefilms revolves around the joint families and the problems existing in the joint families and the ladies of the family would try their level best to find a solution to the problem and re-establish peace and happiness in their families.

Spectators love to compare the day today life style with the plot of the story, as they do not find the same love and affection that existed in the families, joint families have broken into nuclear families and people are not happy living together as their views differ from each other and each one wants some space in life. People watch a plot that involves happiness in brotherhood and respect for each other in the family.

Reality is entirely different from the mythology as true brotherhood is rarely found but there are a few people; who wish to have a joint family with love and affection for each other in life. Such wishes are fulfilled on screen by the directors as it gives a higher status
to each and every member of the family. Spectators always fulfill their wishes passively by viewing the soaps, wishes may be several. Hence the reason to watch the soaps may differ from person to person, for instance youngsters love to have a lover, both a young boy and a girl have an imagined picture of their dream girl or boy, every college going girl wishes to have a boy friend who would respect her, understand her, and do the craziest things for her happiness in life. A boy also wants a dream girl, who is very beautiful and cares for him and his family, must be an honest girl and must remain faithful to him, should be a beauty with brains and must support him in all his ventures, she must be slim and trim, must be educated and a combination of west and east, should obey his order and also be his best friend. Such unique pieces are usually not found in real life but for sure are seen in the reel life. A girl keeps dreaming but in reality it is very difficult to get a lover as her husband or dream boy as her husband or the macho man of her life.

This chapter has focused on how a camera captures a spectacle and spectator feels the emotions because of the special effects and the sound system, the chapter also proves that serials are a spectacle and people love being spectators because they unconsciously turn into pseudo characters and fulfill their wishes and rejuvenate themselves. It also defines a spectacle and a spectator. The spectator ignores the
politics of the camera and the directors marketing skills but enjoys the show. In this chapter it is proved that both women and culture in the serials of Ekta Kapoor are a spectacle for the spectators. This chapter also reflects how serials are mass deceptive, it also glorifies the ideological spectatorship and the history of Indian spectatorship, the chapter discusses of variety of spectators and how the serials cater to all the age groups because these serial can be viewed with several perspectives. It also proves Aristotle’s definition that soaps are a manifestation of emotions like pain and agony

This chapter also highlights on how the innocent spectators are educated by bringing in partial reforms in the plots, the best example is the election of Smriti Irani as the member of the parliament, these spectacular shows have influenced the masses to such an extent that, many night schools are opened for a woman’s education, girl babies are given importance in this society.

End Note

2. Michele Aaron. ‘The power of looking on’ pg 8,