



The Pleasures of the Spectacle

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37 / Queerdom and Pleasure in Contemporary Malayalam Cinema

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Spectacle and Representation

As we know, in any instance of film-making, there is no such thing as a 'real' presence, only a representation or 're-representation'. Every form of filmic image, as it purports to reflect reality, in fact perpetuates the seemingly innocent yet codified, apparently simple, and yet problematic tropes of dominant (and subordinate) ideologies. We unconsciously internalise the spectacle of visual culture which, it can be argued following Marcuse, indirectly constructs one-dimensional identity. As Shohat proposes, films should therefore be examined "*not only in terms of who represents but also in terms of who is being represented for what purpose, at which historical moment, for which location, using which strategies, and in what tone of address*".¹