

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/projecting-desire-media-architectures-and-moviegoing-in-urban-india-2/>

This video discusses the evolution of film exhibition and movie-going culture in India over the past 25 years, highlighting the impact of multiplex theaters, which first emerged in 1997. This video shift from single-screen cinemas, which had predominated for decades, is examined in terms of its socio-cultural effects, especially in cities like New Delhi, where the first multiplexes were established.

The author emphasizes the role of New Delhi as a testing ground for new entertainment technologies and designs due to its status as the capital. The research for the book includes ethnographic studies, interviews with industry stakeholders (like PVR cinemas), and access to archives of family-owned single-screen cinemas, providing insights into the transition from traditional cinema to the multiplex model.

Initially, single-screen cinemas retained a degree of popularity due to lower ticket prices, accessible locations, and a rich cultural history. However, as multiplexes evolved and catered to the growing middle class with increased disposable income, single screens began to decline, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of streaming services.

This video highlights the architectural significance and societal dynamics of both cinema types, noting that single screens often catered to working-class audiences and were stratified by class and gender. In contrast, multiplexes, typically located in malls, have become more socially acceptable spaces where families and women can attend films, altering the demographic of moviegoers.

The book aims to connect the fields of media studies and architecture, arguing that both play integral roles in contemporary cinema culture. It proposes that understanding multiplexes and their setting within urban contexts of India reveals deeper insights into cultural politics, gender dynamics, and historical narratives unique to the region. The author stresses the importance of understanding these changes as part of a broader media environment that has evolved since the late 20th century, influenced by technological advancements and shifting social norms.