

Editorial Note

We should begin with a word of apology for the delay in the publication of this number. A humbler reckoning of our means and abilities also prompts us to offer a corrective to the announcement in Number 1 that the journal would come out twice a year. For the next few issues one would have to stick to the practice followed by the university departments here and bring out a single annual volume. However, gauging the enthusiasm that the first issue generated among film scholars and students in India and abroad, and keeping in view the fact that JMI can fill the void in serious academic publication in film and media studies in the country we would be searching for necessary support to turn this soon into a periodical.

This number presents the papers from the second conference organised by the Department. The title the conference was *Satyajit Ray and the Legacy of Realism*. The essays are, of course, substantially revised and extended versions of the papers. Considering the fact that there is not much scope for publication of serious studies in the field, we have chosen not to stick to the usual format of the essay, Sibaji Bandyopadhyay's and Mihir Bhattacharya's contributions, for example, could be read as parts of larger dissertations. The critique of realism signposts the launching of coteremporary film theory, while the debate looks more or less settled in western film studies the character and function of realism continue to demand critical attention in our context. The specific nature of our modernity, the complex relationship that Indian cinema has with modern paradigms like realism, and the persistence of the category of realism in production and reception of the moving image almost globally would lead us to revisit the question of realism from time to time. 'Satyajit Ray's cinema, representing the aesthetic triumph of realism in the Indian context, has, moreover, not received the sustained theoretical reflection that can match the volume of auteuristic studies. We hope to present here a fairly comprehensive spectrum of positions on Ray and realism. That a project like this calls for a combination of ideas and techniques borrowed from cultural theory, philosophy and social sciences in the best tradition of film studies was understood; the conference invited papers from two economists and a literary critic besides film scholars. And we continued the practice of inviting shorter papers from postgraduate students.

Madhava Prasad and Biren Das Sharma contribute theoretical and historical surveys; the former tries to locate a dynamics of change in popular cinema in terms of a city-cinema thematics, the latter tries to re-create the context of reception for a period and a genre grossly under-researched in Indian film history.

We would like to invite responses from the readers. The journal is also open to contributions from scholars, specially from those engaged in the study of film and media in South Asia.