

UNPACKING STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND LIMINALITY IN CONTEMPORARY SELECT MALAYALAM POLICE PROCEDURAL DRAMA

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ABSTRACT

*This article examines the representation of lower-ranked police officers in the Malayalam film *Nayattu* ("The Hunt," 2021), directed by Martin Prakkat and written by Shahi Kabir. Situating the film within the contemporary socio-political context of Kerala, the study explores how *Nayattu*'s visual and discursive strategies construct cultural meanings around police work and institutional power. In contrast to conventional Malayalam police procedurals that often glorify the police force, *Nayattu* presents an unadorned portrayal of the precarious conditions faced by lower-ranking police officers, revealing their marginal position within the hierarchical structure of law enforcement. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of structural violence and liminality, the article argues that the officers' vulnerability stems primarily from two interrelated forces: institutionalized structural violence and their liminal status within the system. Through a close textual and narrative analysis, the study illuminates the fraught lived realities of the police force in Kerala.*

KEYWORDS: Malayalam Cinema; Police Procedural; Structural Violence; Liminality.