Chapter 1: Introduction

I Preamble:

“If, previously, the images concerned
were in terms of jai jawan, jai kisan, …now it is more in terms of achieving
fulfilment through consumption; from Be Indian, Buy Indian, it is now,
To Buy is Indian.”

—ARVIND RAJAGOPAL
‘Thinking about the New Indian Middle Class’

References to a ‘New Indian Middle Class’ and its lifeworlds as manifest in
myriad cultural forms such as cinema, television, fashion, fiction, advertising,
architecture and a plethora of leisure industries abound in academic writing and
journalese. In this dissertation I look at one such specific site of cultural
production, contemporary Bombay cinema, and how it engages with the category
of the new Indian middle class in addressing, anticipating and representing the
norms that define it, and in catering to its habits of consumption. While I take
account of some aspects of the incipient cultural hegemony of an upwardly mobile
urban sector that has justifiably possessed film academics concerned with
‘Bollywood’ (as a convenient shorthand for popular Bombay cinema that demands
critical attention both as a formidable number of films produced every year and as
a set of emergent textual practices) as a globally marketable commodity that has
come of age in this era of globalization, my attempt here will be to unpack the
ways in which the categories of ‘new Indian middle class’ and ‘contemporary
cinema’ inform each other within the larger framework of globalization. This
dissertation thus also concerns itself with the changes within Bombay cinema
brought about by the same socio-economic changes identified as engendering the
category of the new middle class in the period following the economic

1 Arvind Rajagopal, ‘Thinking about the New Indian Middle Class: Gender, Advertising and
Politics in an Age of Globalization’ in Signposts: Gender Issues in Post-Independence India, ed.
Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, 1999, p.73
liberalization of India in 1991 and the connotations of the term ‘Bollywood’ itself as it functions within academic and popular discourse.

I arrived at my object of enquiry by a rather circuitous route. In my attempt to look at some of the crucial turns taken by popular cinema as a cultural form in the last two decades I had primarily intended to look at the emergence of the ‘crossover’ film as one of the most significant articulations by and for an elite urban cosmopolitan class. These films seemed to co-inhabit the category of ‘crossover’ films with certain other films, originating from very different sites and locatable within a very different cultural politics, for example, British or American productions that dealt with second or third generation Indians settled abroad, and were testimonies to the complexities and heterogeneity of a diasporic Asian identity. The logic behind their common grouping in India was clearly premised on a common pattern of niche consumption limited to an English speaking, upper class urban audience within India. A recent retrospective account of Indian crossover cinema by Angshukanta Chakraborty defines it as “the cinema of transnational Indian origin (either in English, or bi/multilingual with English as the major linguistic component), [that] has come to represent in the urban Indian imagination, both within the nation and in its vastly expanded diaspora [...] the filmic equivalent, though perhaps still a "poorer cousin," of Indian Writing in English.” Chakraborty emphasizes the diffuse origins and politics of the crossover film while attempting to assemble a corpus of Indian productions in English. It was in 1998, actually, that a number of English language films—*Bombay Boys* (Kaizad Gustad), *Fire* (Deepa Mehta) and *Hyderabad Blues*

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2 *Mississippi Masala* (Mira Nair, 1991) or *Bhaji on the Beach* (Gurinder Chadha, 1993) could be cited as examples of diaspora films that interrogated the monolithic construct of the Indian diaspora in America and England respectively, and threw light on the complexities of a diasporic identity politics. —For an excellent analysis of South Asian diaspora films attentive to the crosscurrents of Asian-American, feminist, postcolonial and queer studies see Jigna Desai’s *Beyond Bollywood: The Cultural politics of South Asian Diasporic Film* (2004).


(Nagesh Kukunoor)—met with box office success in the Indian metros thus inaugurating the possibility of niche films. Trade journals of this period speculate on the viability of the ‘Hinglish’ film in the light of their instant acceptance in Bombay and other metros while reporting a deluge of English titles being registered for imminent production.¹ Tejaswini Ganti describes the arrival of the crossover film as “another generic distinction that gained purchase in the industry after the global success of South Asian-themed films made by diasporic filmmakers like Mira Nair’s Monsoon Wedding [2001] and Gurinder Chadha’s Bend It Like Beckham [2002]. Although both of these films were made by diasporic South Asians living and working outside of the Bombay film-industry,” says Ganti, “their success opened up new imaginative horizons for some Hindi filmmakers in terms of thinking more specifically of a global audience, hence the label, “cross-over.””⁶ Citing the example of Jhankaar Beats (Sujoy Ghosh, 2003) and Mumbai Matinee (Anant Balani, 2003) Ganti describes Indian crossover films as efforts that “focused on the various emotional and relationship dilemmas of upper middle-class Bombayites.”⁷ The category of the ‘crossover’ film thus conveniently resonated with some of the expectations that I had set out with—the acknowledgement from within the industry of a newly found niche audience with distinctive tastes, and films that explicitly dealt with the subject of new lifestyles and practices of consumption (including film-going) facilitated by globalization. A rather unexpected corollary, however, was thrown into relief by the rhetoric common to a majority of these crossover films: the fact that they clearly seemed to be in dialogue with what was understood as the dominant conventions of Bombay cinema. A noticeable trait in films by directors like Deepa Mehta, Mira Nair, Nagesh Kukunoor and Gurinder Chadha, of course, is the simultaneous presence of a semi-apologetic frisson of pleasure arising from the incorporation of these narrative and representational elements of popular Bombay cinema on the one hand, and a developmentalist approach towards its regressive ideologies on the

¹ See Trade Guide, 9th January 1999, for example.


⁷ Ibid, p.117
other.\(^8\) The unique fascination for Western producers with these directors was premised precisely on their ability to so interpret the popular Indian cinematic idioms, even when it was in the form of parody or pastiche. This practice of citation, however, also culminated in the repeated reiteration of a set of internationally identifiable characteristics of Bombay cinema that came to be associated with the term Bollywood. Also predictably, the notion of ‘Indianness’ as mediated through these films was worked out in terms of an opulent and spectacular performance of India, which began to feed into the wider market for films along with popular music, food and other commodities themed on the subcontinent.

The impetus for interpreting Bollywood as a historically unchanging entity derives to a large extent from the existence of this global framework, within which Bollywood was said to have attained a new order of visibility and recognizability in terms of its difference. The characteristics that constituted the specificity of Bollywood can be roughly enumerated as follows—the proliferation of song and dance sequences that suspend or propel the narrative, as well as an abundance of sentiment and melodramatic excesses, episodic narratives, comic subplots, action spectacles, the operation of \textit{deux ex machina}, hyperbolic speech and performance, moral schematicism, lack of psychology, and often a direct acknowledgement of the spectator’s look—these tendencies are highlighted in comparisons of Bollywood with Hollywood and are largely associated with the yet narratively unintegrated pre-modern cinema that had its origins in the \textit{vaudeville} shows of turn of the century America. Some of these traits have been subsequently harnessed by \textit{avant garde} filmmakers in the West to interrogate and disrupt the centred representational style of Hollywood cinema that is better known as classical Hollywood realism.\(^9\)

\(^8\) As an example of a critique of such tendencies, see ‘Naive Outpourings of a Self-Hating Indian: A Review of Deepa Mehta’s ‘Fire’, by Madhu Kishwar.

\(^9\) As an example of Hollywood’s light hearted take on Bollywood one can refer to Kemp and Levi’s entry for Bollywood in \textit{The Film Snob’s Dictionary: An Essential Lexicon of Filmological Knowledge}, 2006, — “Broad term for India’s Bombay-based film industry, which, though it has produced visionaries like Raj Kapoor, more routinely pumps out soapy mass market movies that, when projected in theatres in American university towns, somehow morph into art films.”- p. 11
Within the larger framework of the global market as well, there was an emerging trend of using Bollywood as a marker of cultural difference, as evident in the much celebrated appearance of the ‘all-singing, all-dancing’ orientalized spectaculars generated in the West (like *The Guru*, 2002, Daisy von Schleyer Mayer; *Moulin Rouge*, 2001, Baz Luhrmann, among others). The space for the reception, tabulation and elaboration of ‘Bollywood’ characteristics (seen as contiguous with the mainstream Hindi film industry) was largely prepared by the recognition of Bollywood as a film form outside the national borders of India—for example, in events like the Selfridges month-long Bollywood extravaganza accompanied by the Bollywood movies tour arranged by the British Film Institute, or the Bollywood Posters Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum called ‘Cinema India’ and the BBC Channel 4 *Bollywood Women’s Season* in May 2002.

In 2004 Gurinder Chadha released her film *Bride and Prejudice* in India simultaneously with its Hindi version *Balle Balle! Amritsar to LA*, which had Aishwarya Rai playing the lead role in an apt Bollywoodization of its cast. The point of my interest was not that the crossover film was now possibly making crossroads into the terrain of Bollywood\(^\text{10}\), but the fact that Bollywood had somehow become a sufficiently expanded and fluid category to have facilitated for a director like Chadha—who came into prominence with documentaries and feature films (like *Bhaji on the Beach*, 1993, scripted by Meera Syal) which specifically interrogated an identity politics premised on the fixed notions of ‘our culture’ or ‘our homeland’—her transition into an extravagant style approximating for all practical purposes the characteristics of a resplendent Bollywood idiom within which she could now recontextualize a Jane Austen novel.

Thus it became imperative for me at the same time to look for a certain specificity of Bombay cinema as it was also being congealed in the same cultural area under the umbrella category of ‘Bollywood’. A closer look at productions in the recent decades revealed that Bombay cinema itself was being radically reconfigured by the same movements of global capital that allowed for its increasing visibility to

\(^{10}\) In fact Chadha’s previous film *Bend it Like Beckham* (2002) had also been released along with its Hindi version *Football-Shootball Hai Rabba!*
the outside. In adapting to the opportunities provided by a globalized market the industry was undergoing substantial shifts in terms of patterns and modes of production, and in ideological and formal realignments necessitated by its changing audience base and sites of exhibition and circulation (multiplexes, home entertainment formats, music sales, direct-to-home television, internet slots).

II Approaching Bollywood
Madhava Prasad traces the provenance of the term ‘Bollywood’ to its origin in an analogous use of the term ‘Tollywood’ used to designate the Bengali film industry. The actual use of Bollywood, as a marker for the Bombay film industry, has been located by Prasad in the pages of the Junior Statesman in what he calls a “symptom of affectionate lampooning […] that denotes the user’s distance from the object.”  

It was arguably a condescending affirmation of an industry, and an institution, that had almost singularly begun to represent the popular culture of India. Subsequently, ‘Bollywood’ in common parlance as well as in journalistic endeavours had been equated with the entire institution of Hindi cinema. The implication of this term in designating a place for the Indian film industry on the landscape of world cinema becomes suspect because of its punning reference to Hollywood, which insinuates a degree of derivativeness. It also characterizes Bombay cinema as a hollow attempt to unsuccessfully master the well-integrated system of representation that has been achieved by Hollywood classical cinema.

Recent writings in Film Studies have associated the term Bollywood with a series of generic shifts that have taken place in the space of the last two decades, which bear signs of collateral changes in the industrial economy. Changes in film form and content are often linked to the recognizability of Bollywood beyond the national borders of India. Ashish Rajadhyaksha, in his essay ‘The Bollywoodization of Indian Cinema’ identifies a newfound mobility of Hindi cinema which he distinguishes from the ways in which Hindi films have

previously circulated across the globe for the consumption of diasporic viewers as ‘home culture’. This indicates a transformation undergone by a certain section of Bombay Cinema from being a domestic product which has had comparatively fewer options for merchandizing itself to becoming a product that is able to gear itself, more successfully and self-consciously, for exploiting new marketing opportunities that the category of Bollywood had begun to present. This phase was different from the circulation of Indian films as cultural commodities in an earlier phase that Rajadhyaksha discusses elsewhere, citing a 1977 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation Report, which documents that—

“in the period 1976-77, Indian movies were exported to Africa (notably Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Somalia and Uganda), the Arab states (Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco and Sudan), some to the West Indies (Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad), to Afghanistan, Brunei, Myanmar, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Barring scanty exports to east Europe, Indian cinema virtually did not enter the European continent.” 13

The formal arrival of Bollywood as an international category is widely believed to have been inaugurated with the almost simultaneous release in the exhibition circuits of India, the United Kingdom and North America, of a series of films like Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (Aditya Chopra, 1995), Pardes (Subhas Ghai, 1997), Dil To Pagal Hai (Yash Chopra, 1997), Taal (Subhas Ghai, 1998) and Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham (Karan Johar, 2001), which spoke for the viability of their consumption above and beyond the diasporic milieu which had till then been dependent on video-stores and largely post-dated releases for Hindi cinema. This broadening of the horizon of visibility of a certain section of Bombay cinema in this sense anchors my understanding of ‘Bollywood’ within the larger shifts in global currencies, networks and exchanges of cultural commodities within wider markets.

III The Legitimacy of the Popular

One of the concerns that animate my thesis on several counts is the impetus within the film industry itself to produce ‘good meaningful cinema’—a notion which had been a persistent counterpoint posed by the Indian State in its cultural policies

around film production—especially since the gradual withdrawal of state finance from an alternative circuit of film production, distribution and exhibition that had culminated in the New Indian Cinema in the 1970s. Though the Film Finance Corporation (the predecessor of the National Film Development Corporation, or, NFDC) was set up in 1960, under the ministry of finance, its control was subsequently transferred to the Ministry of Information and broadcasting in 1964. Conceived primarily to promote and assist the mainstream industry by providing “finance or other facilities for the production of films of a good standard”\textsuperscript{14} its focus was altered in 1971 with the Information and Broadcasting Ministry laying down a directive for the FFC to “develop film in India into an effective instrument for the promotion of national culture, education and healthy entertainment by granting loans for modest but off beat films of talented and promising people in the field.”\textsuperscript{15} The FFC in the first few years of it operation extended finance for films starting with with Mrinal Sen’s \textit{Bhuvan Shome} (1969) and several other films from directors like Satyajit Ray, Mani Kaul, Basu Chatterji, Kantilal Rathod, Basu Bhattacharya, Chidananda Dasgupta, Satyadev Dubey, Girish Karnad and B.V. Karanth. In the meantime the FFC’s ambit had been broadened to include overseeing distribution and export in 1968, and as sole canalizing agent for raw stock in 1973. By 1974, following the withdrawal of the Motion Pictures Export Association of America from the Indian market, FFC started importing foreign films for local distribution somewhat marginalizing its financing and production responsibilities. The original film financing capacities of the FFC was already facing scathing criticism by 1976 for a lack of financial viability for its products in the absence of sufficient distribution outlets. The Report of the First Committee of Public Undertakings chastised the FFC for its perception of the “contradiction between artistic films of good standard and films successful at the box office” goading it to ensure that its products had “a reasonable prospect of being successful at the box office.”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{14} Rajadhyaksha and Willemen, \textit{The Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema}, 1994, p. 150
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. p.151
The mainstream film industry, however, had reacted with alarm to the evaluative framework and initiatives of the FFC. FFC’s policy had delegitimized the popular industry on two counts: first, on the grounds of aesthetic debasement, for manufacturing unreal escapist fantasies for a gullible audience, and second, by alleging illegalities in the very process of its financial operations. It would be interesting to note here that Hrishikesh Mukherjee, as the chairman of NFDC, would perpetuate this rhetoric in expressing grievance about unfair competition from “underhand dealings, particularly in big cities” in the sphere of exhibition and distribution of films in his 1984 report. Mukherjee himself was one of the proponents of the middle class cinema of the ’70s which had astutely initiated a self-critique of the popular on the very terms set down by the FFC and was marked by its retinue of character actors, its authenticity in the depiction of ordinary everyday circumstances of characters and milieus, and in its narrative integrity and plausibility.

IV Re-Orienting the Institution: Equating Respectability and Affluence

The legitimization of a certain section of finance capital gradually led to a redefining of content and form geared to a new audience profile from the early ’90s onwards. The emphasis on the production value of film had already been instilled in the ’80s in a slightly different sense when the film industry faced a crisis in the form of competition from a burgeoning video-cassette culture that was drawing middle class audiences away from the cinema halls at an alarming rate. Subsequently films, even when targeted to a lower class audience, depended on associating production values with the sheer amount of capital invested in a film, the high point of which was in the marketing of Roop ki Rani Choron ka Raja (1993, Satish Kaushik) as the most expensive film in the history of Indian cinema till date.

Additional material changes were responsible for the renewed stress on colour cinematography in the 1980s, when import restrictions on film stock were loosened. Visuality came to be constructed with what Shuddhabarata Sengupta

17 Ibid.
calls an “explosion of illumination” which translated into the spectacular mounting of the film, and especially the song sequences, with lavish costumes and exotic locales. Conventions from commercial television, most ostensibly that of music television style and editing, also came to infiltrate the Hindi cinema in the early 1990s, and greatly added to the attention given to the visual that had already been put into place borrowing from the aesthetics of advertising. Rendering the surface of the film into a mélange of effects was a strategy consciously and ubiquitously deployed by the industry as a necessary value added to the film in terms of its marketability. As cinematographer Anil Mehta admitted in an interview, the “mounting factor is a huge thing in the industry […] to an extent that it makes your film sell or not and forces everything to be more lavish and colourful. Light becomes a commodity. Volume becomes a commodity, [s]omething to be consumed almost instantaneously […] that is what makes all the films look the same now again, with varying degrees of skill, that is all.”

But the decade of the ’90s proved to be momentous for the Indian film industry in terms of certain other economic restructurings from within that were enabled by the economic liberalization programme of 1991. Zee and Star TV were launched in the same year and government requirements for film import were updated resulting in a far greater number of foreign films, mostly Hollywood, being released domestically. Attendance in cinema halls shot up from 8 million in 1992 to 47 million in 1998 and would subsequently rise to 50 million in 2000.

The return of an affluent audience to the cinema theatres was accompanied by a second infrastructural move towards redefining production values. The film industry was officially granted industry status in 1998, opening it up to more conventional sources of finance like bank loans, including those from the Industrial Development Bank of India. Production houses like Subhash Ghai’s Mukta Arts responded to the opportunity by floating its shares on the stock market.

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19 Ibid. p. 135
in the same year. The industry had earlier drawn its finance from individual private producers often at exorbitant monthly interest rates of 2% or more, the sources of which were often traced back to the underworld. Liberalization also facilitated other possibilities for cost recuperation for individual films in this phase—while films had always earned additional revenue from the sale of music rights, the proliferation of satellite channels offered a site for the circulation of films beyond their run at the box office with channels specifically geared to the airing of Hindi films, like Zee Cinema or Sony Entertainment, which paid huge sums for the rights to films. There was of course, as I have already mentioned, the ‘discovery’ of a market overseas that was gradually consolidated over the 1990s. For example, Ghai’s Mukta Arts produced *Taal* (1998) which was the first Indian film to open in the mainstream circuit of Top 20 in the USA and Top 10 in Britain and was sold to Eros Entertainment, a global distribution company for 80 million Indian rupees (“money they recovered in the first two weeks” Ghai said in an interview), bringing in revenues over and above the 30 million that Ghai had invested in the film. The excess revenues also resulted in new directions explored by the film industry where mainstream production houses like Ghai’s Mukta Arts would venture into producing in-house low-budget films like *Joggers’ Park* (Anant Balani, 2003) specifically catering to an urban niche audience.

**V Ideological Re-Orientation**

The most crucial outcome of the dual reorientation for changed audiences was the emergence of a set of ideological precepts that came to be associated with the notion of production values, noticeable in films like Suraj Barjatya’s *Hum Aapke Hai Koun...!* [henceforth *HAHK*].

*HAHK*, released in 1994, initiated a kind of cinema subsequently marked (in Karan Johar’s films, for instance) by its technical gloss, foreign locales, a constant display of consumerables on screen, a distinct set of stars, and most importantly, as pointed out by Patricia Uberoi, in its ideological work of producing the neo-

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A much earlier precursor of Uberoi in a way is Purnima Mankekar’s participant observation study Screening Culture, Viewing Politics: Television, Womanhood and Nation in Modern India (1999)
traditional joint-family as the locus of a “a spectacle of unlimited consumption.”

Oberoi argues that HAHK becomes a film most noted for its “clean” wholesome valorization of the family by a near erasure of the inequities of Indian social and family life, and also by hiding a subtext of “a terrible excess of fecundity” in its co-optation of North Indian women’s rituals and a bawdy folk tradition, which was equated without slippages with the idea of Indian culture and tradition.

Thus, HAHK managed to smooth over the shock of India’s entry into the global by re-orienting idealized feudal notions of kinship in the global context, where earlier notions of family business and landed property were rendered contiguous with newer forms of corporate-financial capital. Additionally in HAHK, “haut bourgeois lifestyles” were melded “seamlessly with religiosity and traditionalism” (in the depiction and foregrounding of lavish rituals, for instance) “thereby legitimizing affluence as a value in itself.”

That the film industry was also materially forging its alliances with a new class of audience was evident in the fact that HAHK’s producer Rajshri Productions, who had also taken on the task of distribution, had permitted the film to be released only in those cinema theatres which had a particular kind of screen, seating comforts and optical stereo sound systems.

Ideologically, it would present a new subject sans its critical outlook towards an antecedent society while seeking sanction for globalizing initiatives from the traditional hierarchies of familial authority.

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in which Mankekar analyses the reception of state controlled television Doordarshan within several clusters of lower middle class households in Delhi. At a time when multinational corporations and their subsidiaries had just begun to gain visibility on Doordarshan as advertisers and sponsors—consumerism and an aspired for ‘standard of living’ along with “notions of respectability and sexual modesty, duty to the family, and service to the nation” constituted a “set of discursive practices perceived by these viewing families as being middle class” (p.99). Questions of identity and political agency, in Mankekar’s respondents were tied to how texts “produced or effaced differences among women” determined by the ‘positions they occup[ied] along various axes of power.”(p.29)—Shakuntala Banaji’s Reading ‘Bollywood’: The Young Audience and Hindi Films (2006) is also an extremely nuanced example of a participant observation study that focuses on the contingencies of meaning and pleasure derived from contemporary Bombay cinema by a select youth audience from London South-Asian and Bombay communities.

22 Oberoi, ‘Imagining the Family’. p. 334
23 Ibid. p.336
24 Ibid. p.320
HAHK’s family values were defined by clearly avoiding masala ingredients, “blood, gore, sex and sadism”, argues Oberoi, as well as by underplaying conjugal intimacy. Uberoi’s observations derive from her interviews with a large section of the audience who lauded the film, and compared their viewing experience to “being in one’s own living room, with all the family around” or “watching a video cassette of a marriage in your own home.”

If Uberoi’s meticulous social anthropological analysis of the reception of *Hum Aapke Hain Koun…!* provides us with a nuanced understanding of the expectations, investments and desires circulated in the audience’s interpretive use of cinema, Tejaswini Ganti illuminates the other end of the spectrum in her extensive and thorough account of the gentrification of Bombay cinema which provides an index of the changing perceptions of the film industry (as reflected in her interviews with directors, producers, art-directors and actors) about issues of aesthetics, quality, treatment and subject matter of films which are seen as integrally linked to a projected shift in the class composition of the audience. Ganti describes “Hindi cinema’s social transformation or path to “coolness” [which] began in the mid-1990s with the erasure of the signs and symbols of poverty, labor, and rural life from films, and with the decline in plots that focused on class conflict, social injustice, and youthful rebellion” and highlights the changing valence of affluence as observed from within the film industry itself, where earlier

the main villains in films were frequently moneylenders, rural landlords and wealthy businessmen, while peasants, workers or others of modest economic means were the heroes […] wealthy businessmen were frequently the symbols of exploitation, injustice and even criminality in Hindi films from the 1950s through the 1980s, by the mid 1990s they were most commonly depicted as benign, loving and indulgent fathers.

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25 Ibid. p.333
26 Ibid. p.335
27 Tejaswini Ganti, *Producing Bollywood: Inside the Contemporary Hindi Film Industry*, 2012, p.79
28 Ibid. p.98
Ganti points out the preponderance of culturalist explanations\(^{29}\) offered by her respondents for the success of films like *HAHK* and *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*\(^{30}\) (Aditya Chopra, 1995, henceforth *DDLJ*) which stress the films’ “affirmation of Indian values […] as well as traditional filial and gender roles”\(^{31}\) over possible economic explanations pertaining to structural factors “such as industry status, state policy, the advent of multiplexes, and the entry of entities with much greater capital reserve.”\(^{32}\) In spite of the premium placed by Ganti’s respondents on the intransigence of tradition and values, there are indications of an ideological reorientation that recontextualizes notions of tradition in a neoliberal context—Shahrukh Khan, in a revealing insight on *DDLJ* comments that rather than a *return* to traditional values, Khan’s character Raj was a ‘modern’ and ‘savvy’ ‘yuppie’ “in a little more, management-like way, […] he got his way done; he got married to the girl, and it didn’t pass him any hardships.”\(^{33}\)

**VI The ‘Cinema Effect’, Globalized Television and the Song and Dance segment**

The consequences of the dispersal of Bollywood within a wider media space as part of a larger culture industry can perhaps best be encapsulated in Rajadhyaksha’s concept, the ‘cinema effect’, which is “a wide spread social tendency towards evoking film mainly for the purpose of re-presenting or re-

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\(^{29}\) Anupama Chopra too takes recourse to this culturalist logic that “turned Bollywood’s NRI stereotype on its head” in *DDLJ*’s portrayal of its lead pair Raj and Simran, who “despite being born and raised in London” and despite their trendy clothes, Harley-Davidson jacket and jeans are “unfailingly moral” and “their value system is traditional Indian.” *DDLJ*, like *HAHK*, in Chopra’s view “reaffirmed the family and the importance of sacrificing individual desire for the larger good. Rebellion and romance were no longer synonymous. These films celebrated love but with family approval.” –*Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge* in the BFI Modern Classics series, 2002, p. 12

\(^{30}\) *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge* holds the record for the longest running film in Indian cinema and is responsible for having produced Raj and Simran (played by Shahrukh Khan and Kajol) as the iconic cinematic couple *par excellence* for the cinema of the post 90s Bombay cinema that can be classified as Bollywood. The couple would be cited in film after film subsequently as the ideal, albeit absurdly fantastical norm for Bollywood romance, see for instance *Bachna Ae Haseeno* (Siddharth Anand, 2008), or *Love, Sex aur Dhokha* (Dibakar Banerjee, 2010)

\(^{31}\) Tejaswini Ganti, *Producing Bollywood*, p. 288

\(^{32}\) Ibid. p.264—Ganti elaborates that for *HAHK*, “the fact that the producer/distributors released a limited number of film prints, introduced a new form of television publicity, were allowed to raise ticket prices significantly, went against the prevailing norms of the time by withholding the videocassettes, and instituted safeguards to curb video piracy, were not as relevant to the filmmakers’ explanations for the film’s success as the discourse of “Indian values and emotions.” p. 287-288.

\(^{33}\) Ganti, *Producing Bollywood*, p. 101
definition or, even, evisceration of the cinema: of reprocessing the cinema in order to make it available for varied uses outside the movie theater [...] so that [as] a film becomes Bollywood, it develops a pure evocative de-narrativised charge.” 34

One of the primary sites of dispersal for the extra-filmic presence of Bollywood in India had always been television—in the form of interviews, talk shows, programmes that form the televiual counterpart of tabloids—and most importantly as compilations of Hindi film songs. These programmes had a pre-eminent presence even on Doordarshan, in programmes like ‘Phool Khile hai Gulshan Gulshan.’

The circulation of programme slots dedicated to film proliferated under the aegis of commercialized television in India in the post liberalization 1990s within which the specific segment of the song and dance spectacular went on to produce the ‘cinema effect’ outside the institution of cinema more than any other component.

Interestingly, the adaptation of the format and content for a region specific address for MTV, when it began to be telecast as late night and early morning shots on Doordarshan itself (on DD2 which the government had conceived of purely as an entertainment channel), exploited a substantial viewership already in existence for song and dance clips from Hindi films. It was merely harnessing televiual audiences already familiar with watching popular song and dance numbers extracted from films, as in the case of one of the first entertainment slots on Doordarshan, Chitrahaar, which strung together Hindi film song clips. Thus on MTV catering to this preformed market, a marked prominence was given in terms of airplay time to slots like ‘Non-Stop Hits’ to telecast precisely these song and dance segments. The ubiquity of this particular practice made it possible to blur the notion of authorship in musical production (contrary to the programming logic of MTv in the United States, for example) so that ‘music videos’ (film-clips really) could be clustered around film stars that the songs had been picturized upon rather than the artist. For instance, in May 2001, Aishwarya Rai occupied the monthly ‘Hot Seat’ usually reserved for an artist, or band, who got maximum airplay throughout the month in programme slots featuring career sketch

34 Ashish Rajadhyaksha, ‘Rethinking the State after Bollywood’, 2004, p. 53
documentaries, a selection of their favorite music videos (or film clips) and interactive programmes like ‘MTV Most Wanted’ where they responded to fan-mail and requests. Unlike soundtrack videos from foreign artists these clips came accredited with the film’s name in the place usually designated for the artist. Film personalities appeared alongside artists (often playback singers from the film industry) who had the same or other programmes created for them (for example, Udbharta Sitara which showcased upcoming musical talents). Thus ‘MTv India’ simultaneously provided a space for indigenous music videos for album oriented (i.e. non-film) music.35

This particular dispersal of the Hindi film in the burgeoning new spaces of circulation provoked some other interesting responses from the industry manifested in the production and reception aspects of the Hindi film. Television offered a space where forms of visuality would enter interesting exchanges between the cinematic and the televisual mode.

Song and dance sequences in most cases had been considered a protruding segment that suspended the flow of the narrative and entailed the direct staging of a spectacle for the viewer. In terms of a temporary, though explicit, objectification of the heroine or vamp in this manner that directly invited the look of the viewer no longer harnessed by narrative compulsion had created an anxiety around the erotic complicity of the viewer to this act of unabashed staging. This had earlier given rise to a latent imperative to causally envelop or accommodate the song sequence within the narrative that gave a notion of vicariousness to this look. Films devised various strategies to alleviate the guilt by anchoring the segment within the narrative—as a fantasy, as a performance yielded by circumstances generated in the story, as a performance put on by the ‘vamp’ (who could be a

35 Vamsee Juluri’s Becoming a Global Audience: Longing and Belonging in Indian Music Television, 2003, looks at the reception of images and songs and how they shape identities and social relations after the advent of satellite television and touch upon changes in “a number of areas of life that range from the imagined (such as the national and the global) to the immediate and the intense (such as the family and interpersonal relationships)[…] under the deeply political project that is globalization.” p.25
member of the villain’s posse, or in extreme cases the heroine’s twin sister who has gone astray).\textsuperscript{36}

On television though, the frontality of address of the song segment detached from the narrative not only became commensurate with the frontal mode of address of television as an apparatus but also contributed towards the increasing valorization of this mode of direct address with the cinema and was one of the means through which it became possible on the part of Bombay cinema to celebrate its status as a heterogeneous ensemble of parts. This facilitated the crystallization of a greater dispersability of the cinema into discrete constituent parts, of more acutely segregated elements (like the item number), while at the same time flagrantly recognizing the extraneousness of their existence for the narrative.

As a site of cinema effect, television also helped assuage the guilt for spectacular excesses of this kind by promoting a certain kind of consumption in which Bollywood, not the Hindi film \textit{per se}, became not the commodity, but a referent that kept generating a plethora of subsidiary practices of consumption. The extra-filmic presence of Bollywood on television helped inscribe this non-narrative mode of viewership directly into an overarching and celebratory narrative of the familial, a narrative where the rhetoric of personal aspiration and skill, overseen by familial authority, was realized in the act of \textit{performing} Bollywood. This could be illustrated in the countless talent cum reality shows like Sahara Manoranjan’s \textit{Mr And Miss Bollywood}, ZEE Tv’s \textit{Cinestars ki Khonj}, or Channel V’s \textit{Samsung Super Singers}.

While this pervasiveness of Bollywood through the cinema effect and its capacity to produce certain symbolic effects outside the institution of the cinema extended to constitute a culture industry covering fashion, tourism, music, television, the internet, and various lifestyle products, the film industry itself responded with a

\textsuperscript{36} Asha Kasbekar argues in ‘Hidden Pleasures: Negotiating the Myth of the Female Ideal in Popular Hindi Cinema’ in \textit{Pleasure and the Nation: The History, Politics and Consumption of Public Culture in India}, eds. Rachel Dwyer and Christopher Pinney, 2001, that these strategies enabled the conveyance of transgressive pleasures without antagonizing state instruments like the Censor Board, without alienating female consumers, and without disrupting the official status quo which claims chastity, modesty, submissiveness and self-sacrifice for the ideal Indian woman.
re-gathering of these effects and practices within the body of the film itself, which would now incorporate an object world, a consumer sensorium of sorts, even when it did not directly endorse any brand through onscreen product placement within the film. As an example, let me cite a passage from the official internet site of Devdas (2002, Sanjay Leela Bhansali) which describes in detail the film’s attention to “creating a look that would be a blend of the magical period and a look that today’s audience could relate to. Traditional Bengali fabrics like Mull, Dhakai and Tangail were used in the costumes [...] pivotal characters in the film also had to have distinctive looks. It was imperative that there be no repetition of style and look. Thus there was the varied use of Chinese brocade, Dhakai nets, Muslins, Banarasi tissues, Organzas, Jamevars, Lukhnowi Chikankari, antique embossed brocades, all of which were inspired from the look of 1930's-pre-independence era when these fabrics were popular and used by royalty and higher class of people.” [Italics mine].

It is important to note here that the investment of corporate capital was also translated into the visibility of consumer items on screen. This has been pointed out by Rajadhyaksha as well as by Sudahnva Deshpande regarding the visible presence of Stroh’s beer in Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, Coca Cola in Taal, Swatch kiosks and Santro cars in Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani as well as in the digitalized camerawork enabled by the collaboration with software giants like Pentafour and Silicon graphics in Jeans (1998, Shankar, Tamil). The tendency of rendering the screen as a repository of commodities was thus also symptomatic of the nature of funding that Bollywood had increasingly depended upon from the 1990s onwards.

A significant outcome of the spread of popular discourse around Bollywood was the consolidation of a certain order of cinephilia that generated a popular canon for Bombay cinema. For instance, the ‘Directors’ Poll’ conducted by Outlook in 2003 for its ‘Bollywood Special Issue’ included in a list of ‘10 best Bollywood

37 http://devdas.indiatimes.com/costumes.htm
films’ *Mother India* (1957, Mehboob Khan), *Mughal-e-Aazam* (1960, K. Asif), *Pyaasa* (1957, Guru Dutt), *Kaagaz Ke Phool* (1959, Guru Dutt), *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam* (1962, Guru Dutt) *Awara* (1951, Raj Kapoor), *Do Beegha Zameen* (1953, Bimal Roy), *Deewar* (1975, Yash Chopra), *Sholay* (1975, Ramesh Sippy) and *Lagaan* (2000, Ashutosh Gowarikar). This was an outlook, indeed, that manifested itself in real terms in the alignment, excavation and internalization of a canon in the form of intertextual references and the invocation and deployment of certain passé but nonetheless recognizable modes of representations and forms of narrative within Bombay cinema—for example, in the imageries reproduced from *Mother India* or *Do Beegha Zameen* in *Lagaan*, and more recently in the re-release of *Mughal-e-Azam* in colour, or in Farhan Akhtar and Ramgopal Varma’s remakes of *Don* and *Sholay* respectively.

One of the implications of resuscitating narrative forms or modes of representation that were in themselves articulations of a specific time and age, historically produced, is of course that Bollywood would not engage with the various contexts of their coming into being. These elements would be compiled together synchronically, to form a readily accessible vocabulary, a repertoire of looks sounds and feels. But in the final instances of their deployment, the existence of a canon in popular discourse would also make it possible for these films to a certain extent to borrow affect from the past forms that would give them an extra edge over mere pastiche.

If I may return to the origins of the word Bollywood once more, one of Prasad’s chief complaints against the use of the term Bollywood, not for a specific segment of Bombay cinema that is under discussion in this thesis but as an all-encompassing umbrella term for the industry as a whole, is that it would cause Indian cinema to be “completely stripped of any possible historicity [as any] hint of change would turn Hindi cinema into something without an innate Indian essence.” [italicized in the original].” 39 One could argue that this form of popular cinephilia enabled the film industry to construct an ersatz historicity for itself.

39 “This Thing called Bollywood’ in Seminar-Unsettling Cinema, May 25, 2003
I take as my departure points these features that are ascribed to Bombay cinema redefined as Bollywood in the post-liberalization period. Several of these features are recast in my analysis in terms of the perceptual categories which I argue become instrumental in anticipating and accommodating the new middle class within the representational and narrative economies of Bombay cinema.

VII Object of Enquiry
Let me start by qualifying the title of my thesis. The ‘other’ is a slippery category to conceptualize. It lends itself to transmutations and reconfigurations at every turn—unlike, say, borders, which may provide at least a cartographic tangibility to the territory of a nation state, across which global economic and cultural movements take place. ‘Othering’ as a verb is not necessarily a deliberate act, though political expediencies might require its activation as a category for purposes of exclusion, or as a constitutive step towards self-definition. Its relevance is thrown into sharper relief in the context of globalization if we concede to Fredric Jameson’s definition of globalization as “an untotalizable totality which intensifies binary relations between its parts—mostly nations, but also regions and groups” in “binary or point-to-point relations” in such a way that these relations “are first and foremost ones of tension or antagonism, when not outright exclusion: in them each term struggles to define itself against the binary other.”

Jameson’s provisional definition of globalization as a concept is in response to the scale of world communication as well as the expanding horizon of a global market in more immediate and tangible ways than in earlier stages of modernity. While Jameson himself calls for a more critical structural account of the form globalization takes in realms of the political, economic or cultural, his own elaboration of the problem in the same volume is shot through with anxieties about the destruction of national cultural production in the face of the mutually implicated forces of economics and culture (instances of such mutual implications

40 From the ‘Preface’ to The Cultures of Globalization, eds. Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi 1998, p xii
of economics and culture can be illustrated by clauses to facilitate the export of American cinema in the fine print of GATT negotiations for financial investments across national borders). This anxiety is reinforced by the slippages through which ‘free enterprise’ and ‘political democracy’, in Jameson’s reading, tend to posit each other as necessary conditions for each other, as much as it is by the conflation of the euphoria over rapidly proliferating and often unpredictable circuits of distribution in the “the extraordinary and heterogeneous varieties of market exchange” 42 and the defence of capitalist production as one and the same. Jameson’s discomfort with the moralizing deployment of phrases like “corrosive individualism” and “consumerist materialism” is premised here on the pervasive presence of consumerism per se as a mode of life “in which all our mass culture and entertainment industries train us ceaselessly day after day, in an image and media barrage quite unparalleled in history.” 43

Arjun Appadurai’s account of globalization on the other hand engages with precisely this excess of visuality in an attempt to impose some notion of intelligibility and causality to the global movement of “persons, technologies, finance, information and ideology” that drive “global cultural systems”. 44 Appadurai draws our attention to the unavoidable ubiquity of “the image, the imagined, the imaginary” to argue in favour of an understanding of “the imagination as a social practice.” 45

These “imagined worlds” in Appadurai’s formulation, classified into ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes according to their content are characterized by a relationship of disjunction because “each of these landscapes is subject to its own constraints and incentives.” 46 However they allow for more nuanced and contextual readings of the micro-effects of globalization in contradistinction to the older centre-periphery model where, a mediascape or

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42 Ibid. p.69
43 Ibid. p.64. Jameson’s anxiety in fact extends to Indian Cinema, more specifically the “traditional Hindi comedy” despite its “extraordinary size and popularity” (p.62). This does however gravitate somewhat towards the larger framework of homogenization and standardization that permeates the critique of globalization (a framework that Jameson emphatically does not subscribe to in this essay) and also attributes in the same move an immediacy and aura to contestations over national culture which dominated critical engagements with modernity earlier.
45 Ibid.p.31
46 Ibid.p.35
ideoscape can be mobilized, for instance, “by nation states in relation to their own minorities, by posing global commoditization (or capitalism, or some such external enemy) as more real than the threat of its own hegemonic strategies.”47 It is within these politically charged frames of visuality that accompany globalization that I locate popular Bombay cinema of this period. It figures as an optic through which I approach the middle class. It also informs the modalities of differentiation or ‘othering’ that I argue makes possible its imagination onscreen.

Globalization thus forms the larger, indeed global, context of my enquiry—representing a field of cultural production reinforced by socio-economic transformations that followed the economic liberalization in 1991. The moment of liberalization provides the specific spatial and temporal grounding of my object of enquiry which itself is this new Indian middle class, but only in so far as it is addressed and represented by contemporary, post-liberalization Bombay cinema—taken here as a site of cultural production. In this the new Indian middle class becomes the subject of contemporary Bombay cinema in a double sense. It constitutes the collective visibly populating and dominating the narratives of Bombay cinema of this period as its central protagonists. At a more pragmatic level, it also constitutes the consumer base for cinematic production and begins to be acknowledged as such from within the industry itself.

Let me point out at the outset that the new Indian middle class in spite of its increasing visibility has remained a rather contentious category caught in the cross hairs of discursive speculation in disciplines ranging from anthropology, sociology, economics and the more site specific concerns and rhetoric of urban studies, reception theory and studies on identity politics. The insistence on the fact of consumption providing a base for self-definition for this new Indian middle class however pervades their different concerns and approaches focused on categories as varied as aspiration, self-improvement, social mobility, patriotism and political commitment.

47 Ibid.p.32
To cite some examples:
Pavan Varma in *The Great Indian Middle Class* (1998) defines the class as a segment which suddenly shot to prominence with the activation of the “‘liberalization’ package” in 1991” tailored to make India a player in the ‘globalized’ economy” for its “ability to consume.” Varma’s identifies a *nouveau riche* created by the increasing quotients of disposable income produced from the expanding service sectors of a liberalized economy as the prime beneficiaries of the socio-economic transformations of this era. Varma’s harsh critique is directed to what he reads as the rapid dissociation of this middle class, guided by self-interest and the pursuit of material well-being, from the vast majority of Indians who live in extreme poverty; the gradual disinclination of this class to take part in the electoral processes of democracy, and the pervasive social insensitivity that it seems afflicted by.

William Mazzarella’s work in *Shovelling Smoke: Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India* (2004), which he describes as an “ethnographic study of globalizing consumerism” shows how the Indian middle class as a 250 million strong consumer base was suddenly reformulated as a category ‘merchandised’ by advertising corporates to foreign multinationals seeking to invest in the liberalized Indian economy. The mediation of advertising firms as interpreters of local needs to the outside world thus not only flattened the economic gulf within this acutely polarized middle class but “it was only with the invention of their own counter-commodity, ‘the Indian consumer’, that they were able to gain real leverage vis-à-vis their global clients.” However ‘globalized consumerism’ also presented an “opportunity for a comprehensive revitalization of ‘Indianness’,” but one that forwarded “a new vision of citizenship based on aspirational consumption,” arguably providing “a dimension of sensuous embodiment to an otherwise abstract ideal of citizenship.”

49 William Mazzarella, ‘Close Distance: Constructing ‘the Indian Consumer’ in *The Indian Public Sphere: Readings in Media History*, ed. Arvind Rajagopal, 2009, p. 253
50 Ibid. p. 247
52 Ibid. p.100.
The new middle class also gained visibility in a deluge of mediatic images as the beneficiaries of official state policies instituted after liberalization. Leela Fernandes observes that “while earlier state socialist imaginaries tended to depict workers or rural villagers as the archetypal objects of development, such ideologies now compete with mainstream national political discourses that increasingly portray urban middle-class consumers as the representative citizens of liberalizing India.”

Lawrence Liang, on the other hand, points to the “creation of the global city” such as “Mumbai, Hyderabad, Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata and Chennai” as they are “reconfigured, dislocated from their national location and inserted into the grid of the global economy” even as “large sections of their middle classes begin to live in a present that is far removed from a majority of the people who live and work in these cities.” “The relationship of these cities to their national location” Lawrence argues, “which once made them hospitable sites for the poorer sections that came in search of livelihoods, has now been completely transformed “ in alignment with “global fantasies [which] share peculiarly uniform spatial strategies.”

Especially in the light of the diffusion of such a globalized urbanism discursively associated with the rise of the new middle class, Fernandes emphasizes that “accounts of the new middle class often entail “a slippage between a particular segment of the urban (metropolitan) middle class and the middle class in general, which is a much wider group that includes the rural middle class and urban middle class in small towns” which is, furthermore, internally differentiated along social hierarchies of caste, region, religion, and language and is “not identical with a generalized sociological description of the middle class.” “Its newness” Fernandes contends, “refers to a process of production of a distinctive social and political identity that represents

53 Leela Fernandes, India’s New Middle Class: Democratic Politics in an Era of Economic Reform, 2006, p.xv
55 Ibid. —Lawrence points out that “this urbanism in India has become a significant theater of elite engagement with claims of globalization. Consumption, “information” society, and the new economy, spatialized imprints of the media industry such as multiplexes and malls, and lifestyle and suburbia, go hand in hand with the cries of urban decay and pollution, and managing populations that are increasingly restless in the new arrangements.”
56 Leela Fernandes, India’s New Middle Class, p. xvii
57 Ibid. p. xviii
and lays claim to the benefits of globalization.”

Any attempt to impose some kind of “singularity of identity that is implied in a phrase such as “the rise of the new middle class”” becomes “politically significant precisely because of the variation it seeks to manage.”

The representative domain of Bombay cinema, in my reading, becomes one such site for managing the discrepancies within the idea of the middle class in which the city tendentially becomes its symbolic locus.—Bombay cinema in this period, as a strategy for survival and expansion, was self-consciously positing a new addressee for itself in the new middle class that was also emerging as a prominent discursive category in the light of the opportunities created by liberalization (chiefly through the escalated volume of disposable income now available to a certain section of the populace engaged in the emergent service economies.) There are multiple aspects to the impact that the changing audience had on cinema and the categories of distinction, classification and demarcation it engendered. First: it points to the emergence of new middle class tastes in terms of a cinematic aesthetics in contradistinction to existing tastes attributed to the earlier audience of Bombay cinema. Secondly: the new middle class is also defined by habits of consumption extending to other sites of production (entertainment and news television, advertising, fiction, internet blogs) which feed back into the textual practices of cinema. Thirdly: milieus are demarcated not only according to social status but also on the basis of their capacity or propensity to partake of culture, whereby a new audience is considered conducive to the inculcation of new themes, technical finesse, and formal experimentations. Fourthly: within film texts, while the notion of the ‘other’ may take on concrete shape in the form of a poorer section of the populace or the underclass (leading to their excision or erasure from cinematic spaces, for example, in Karan Johar’s films) the management and reformation of rogue segments as well as testaments to the tortuous process of upward mobility motivated by aspiration attest to the promise of potential inclusivity within the new middle class, subject to the acquisition of material signs of affluence as well as of symbolic capital.

58 Ibid. p. xviii
59 Ibid. p. 176
This dissertation focuses on films produced from the mid-1990s (i.e. in the period following the economic liberalization of India in 1991) to roughly the present day. The films I have chosen cohere around this category of the new middle class and the process of its consolidation within Bombay cinema. However the films are not arranged to demonstrate a strictly linear or teleological movement towards greater consolidation but show how the understanding of the category of the new middle class constantly shifts and pulls in different directions as do the projections of its ‘others’. This dissertation thus collates close textual readings of clusters of films in order to unravel the nature of the interface between socio-economic transformations and the narrative and representational transformations within Bombay cinema of this period as they relate to the new middle class. In this, my primary objective is to trace the processes through which the new Indian middle class is accorded primacy in the political and cultural domains within the narrative and representational economy of contemporary Bombay cinema.

It is however not a tautological circuit that I make: by starting out from a larger field of cultural production and consumption (of cinema among other things) to arrive at its abstracted patrons as a class (the new Indian middle class in the title of my thesis), ascertaining its tastes and concerns from textual traces and evidences in the next step, and then by a rhetorical sleight of hand returning to a now circumscribed body of texts that could perhaps collectively termed Bollywood in this exercise. Rather, I posit two objects of enquiry: the new middle class and contemporary cinema, not as separate categories juxtaposed with each other along this third determining temporal axis of globalization, but as one (the new Indian middle class) inextricably implicating the other (contemporary cinema) at this precise moment in history.

I consider the various descriptions and analyses of the middle class as and when they intersect with, inform or problematize the representation of the middle class on screen. In this, I have tried to be attentive to the shifting characterizations that gather or disperse around the category of the new middle class in the films that I have organized in thematic clusters in the following chapters.
VIII  Chapter Outline:
In the Second Chapter entitled ‘Inhabitations of the Middle Class’ I focus on the changing characteristics of the middle class as represented in Bombay cinema. In the first section of the chapter I look at the institution of a new aesthetic standard based on affluence that results in the foregrounding of new habits of consumption and the production of sanitized and gentrified spaces, primarily introduced in a set of films that followed the discovery of an overseas market, but which subsequently becomes naturalized in successive films. In another set of films released over exactly the same time frame I show how the rhetoric of aspirational consumption is acutely problematized and the ways in which possibilities are opened up for readjustments and realignments. This overlaps with the next section where I pick out two films as representative of new film making practices facilitated by the multiplex. Of these, the first one, *Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year* (Shimit Amin, 2009) uses elements of a televisual aesthetic to create a detailed texture of ordinary everyday middle class life but reconstitutes its moral universe within a neo-liberal frame of equal opportunities. I consider the other film, *Let’s Talk* (Ram Madhvani, 2002), as an instance of formal experimentation in distinct opposition to the conventional modes of Bombay cinema, and specifically addressed to an elite, urban, niche audience, in which the performative tradition of Thumri is used to produce an affective charge comparable to the use of songs in Bombay cinema to produce emotive spaces that supersede the limitations of the narrative.
I evoke comparisons with earlier films to underscore the nature and extent of transformations in the understanding of the middle class in a neoliberal context. The comparison with the middle class cinema of the ’70s is not only necessitated by continuities consciously mobilized by directors like Madhur Bhandarkar (whose films I discuss in the next section), but also because critical reception and appraisal of films (like that of *Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year*, for instance) persist in activating such comparisons.
In the last section of this chapter I enumerate three different approaches to the consolidation of the middle class in cinema through three different clusters of films. The first cluster produces a framework for reading urban space by actually and unambiguously verbalizing the anxieties of a middle class under siege. The
second cluster points to anxieties about the impregnability of the gated communities of the upwardly mobile section of the populace, which insinuate themselves into the body of the film, even when the films do not narratively address these anxieties. A third tendency proposes resolutions to the crises manifest in the first and second clusters of films above by apprehending and interpreting deviant spaces in a way that I argue, makes its proposed interventions and resolutions thinkable.

In the Third Chapter entitled ‘Violent Juxtapositions’ I present a space categorically opposed to the spaces of middle class inhabitation discussed in the second chapter. This city of violence conjures up another notion/register of violence altogether—not in the resistance that it constantly presents to the individual inhabiting it, nor merely in thwarting the mobility or aspirations of the protagonists or the collective posited, but also as an irrepressible contradiction and perpetual confrontation between positions from which the city can be made sense of. The violent vista of the city here offers up more than a merely obvious, literal counterfoil to the ordered, productive city aspired to, if not attained, in the films discussed in the preceding chapter.

However, as this framework that tends to place the disenfranchised masses at its helm has a long lineage dating back to the ‘angry young man’ films of the 1970s centred around the image of Amitabh Bachchan, this is the only chapter in my dissertation where I trace a genealogy of the films of urban violence to arrive at the ways in which it can possibly segue into the former framework that privileges the new middle class. Starting with Deewar (Yash Chopra, 1975), the representative film of ’70s populist discontent with the state, I show how these films point to the dissolution of the erstwhile country-city binary in favour of opposed spaces within the city itself. I argue that spaces so demarcated attest to the inequities of development in a decolonized nation state where the disenfranchised articulate their demands in a nascent formation slowly anticipating something akin to a spatially demarcated ‘political society’, while bypassing the path of reform that had demarcated them in the temporal scheme earlier, and that was necessary to qualify them as befitting recipients of the largesse of the state. The city of Bombay accrues a particular
valence in these films as a site of crime that attains critical mass in the gangland films of the ’90s, of which Satya (Ram Gopal Varma, 1998), I argue, becomes the seminal film, in its severance of the past altogether.

In the intervening period, within the last run of films that recirculate Bachchan’s underclass vigilante figure, populist investiture begins to be inflected by the complexities of local urban politics as the viscerally chaotic space of the city coheres around the figure of the hero and the country-city binary is gradually abandoned altogether with the obsolescence of the rural as a temporally segregated community. The ’80s meanwhile were also marked by films that addressed socio political upheavals specific to Bombay in a succession of events. The textile strikes of the early 1980s, the subsequent demise of trade unions, riots following the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the bomb blasts of 1993, the ascent of the Shiv Sena and its aggressively identarian politics in this period were coupled with drives for urban reorganization that further segregated the city along class and communal lines.

The trope of the opposed brothers in Deewar, over this period, is mapped in the confrontation between the reform minded, foreign educated citizen and insurmountable community networks represented by another brother (for example, in Parinda, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, 1989) but result in a bifurcation of the two as the same framework can no longer contain both brothers. The two brothers, caught in the impasse of what I have called a ‘terminal irreconcilability’, must now pursue their destinies in separate frameworks: one that privileges the intervention of a middle class citizen towards reform (for example, in Nayak: The Real Hero, S. Shankar, 2001), and narratively allows for the conceptualization of a different future with representatives of the middle class at its helm, thus aligning itself with the films geared towards a middle class politics in the next chapter.

The other framework leads to the consolidation of the gangland genre, which relies on the viability and the narrative incorporation of a very different political praxis, one of spatial (rather than temporal) enclaves demanding democratic entitlements. The political centre of authority lies in figures outside the government, but not necessarily in opposition to the government. My reference to the remake of Agneepath (Karan Malhotra, 2012), trace narrative manoeuvres and historical elisions necessary to reintroduce the feudal enclave back into the story.
and demonstrates the impossibility of sustaining the temporal break which can only be accommodated in a framework that privileges the civil society and reform oriented interventions.

In the Fourth Chapter entitled ‘Possibilities of Political Mobilization’ I look at the narrative and representational reorganization of space for the express purpose of inscribing the middle class as a subject of politics within popular cinema. If the city embedded in a dense network of alternate hierarchies of power was refracted through a perceptual framework of the haptic and the violent in the preceding chapter, here the perceptual framework reorganizes those same elements and energies to produce spaces as amenable to middle class habitation. The future appears as one that can be brought about solely by the mediation of this middle class. Permissible resolutions are thus premised on the reclamation of space and time for the middle class.

In the second section I show how the violent and contestatory impulses of alternative networks of power are contained within this framework by a strategy of hierarchizing spaces and milieus in Yuva (Mani Ratnam, 2004). The pressure of the political is also allayed by its displacement onto the conjugal domain.

The third section dealing with strategies of reclamation of time is further divided into two parts. The first looks at the construction of a revisionist history in Lagaan (Ashutosh Gowariker, 2001) in which contemporary concerns about national integration are mapped onto a reconstructed past so as to ease their resolutions. In the second part contemporary crises are refracted through a similarly reconstructed history in Rang De Basanti (Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, 2006). Exact correspondences established between colonial repression in the past and the corrupt state machinery of the present day help to recast the contemporary youth as revolutionaries and martyrs, thus also legitimizing their execution of a corrupt minister as a necessary step for cleansing politics. The film’s depiction of candle light demonstrations produced a rhetoric of civic protest for the youth, witnessed in the anti-reservation protests in IITs and medical schools in 2006.

The last section looks at the problem of film language in the depiction of the rural reconvened in Shyam Benegal’s Welcome to Sajjanpur (2008) and Well Done Abba (2010). The reformist impulse of the developmental aesthetic evident in
Benegal’s earliest films is problematized in the first film in the stark discrepancy between resolutions proposed by writer/narrator Mahadev and the actual turn of events. The second film deals with the corrupt bureaucratic system for the disbursement of loans for rural development, where the language of bribes, compromises and manufactured evidence is literally replaced with the language of transparency of information which enables a mass mobilization towards reform.

In the Fifth Chapter entitled ‘The Pressing Question of Disabilities’ I look at the ‘other’ as something implicit in the very idea of the new Indian middle class. In the films considered in this chapter I read the occurrence of disabilities in their central protagonists as signalling a crisis of legitimacy of the dominant film form as well as a problem inherent to the consolidation of a cosmopolitan subject posited as the subject of cinema in this period. I propose the concept of the ‘untimely bildungsroman’ to account for the appearance in a succession of films of deliberately regressed characters such that they must trace a path to normalcy.

In the next section I place Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s Black (2005) within his filmography to unpack it as an attempt to legitimize the form specific to popular Bombay cinema which is also intimately tied with the notion of ‘good meaningful cinema’ in FFC discourse. The last section considers Ghajini (A.R. Murugadoss, 2008) as an acquisitory drive that fleshes out both the popular film form and the new subject at its heart.

A brief caveat delineating the location of my work within existing scholarship in Film Studies is in order—the bulwark of my understanding of the cinema of discontent and the middle class cinema of the 1970s rests on Madhava Prasad’s seminal volume Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction (1998). My understanding of the contemporary phase of Bombay cinema since the early 1990s, as I have already indicated earlier, is similarly indebted to Ashish Rajadhyaksha’s essay ‘The ‘Bollywoodization’ of the Indian Cinema: Cultural Nationalism in a Global Arena’ (2004), ‘Rethinking the State after Bollywood’ (2004) and his subsequent book Indian Cinema in the Time of Celluloid: From Bollywood to the Emergency (2009). Prasad envisages Hindi film as an ongoing struggle over the
state form whereas Rajadhyaksha’s arguments relate to the contest over cultural legitimacy between the institution of cinema and the Indian state. The analytical framework through which I read the ideological and formal shifts in contemporary Bombay cinema is informed by their reflections on the relationship between film form and social and political power.

*Making Meaning in Indian Cinema* (2000), edited by Ravi Vasudevan, as the first compendium of academic writing on popular cinema, directed at understanding “the political implications of Indian cinema” has also been invaluable for its delineation of existing and emerging paradigms for reading the role of censorship and state policies in determining film language and cultural legitimacy, modes of address specific to the popular Indian film form, the recurrence of the state as “the imaginary authority involved in the organization of narrative,” the work of fan cultures in democratizing the field of reception and the production of meaning, and changes in narrative strategies and formal solutions adapted by films under new socio-economic configurations.

The debates and discussions that ensued in the pages of *Economic and Political Weekly*, following the publication of Tejaswini Niranjana’s ‘Integrating Whose Nation? Tourists and Terrorists in ‘Roja’’ (1994), helped me conceptualize the question of rightful claim to politics in the context of representational strategies in contemporary Bombay cinema. Niranjana situates Mani Ratnam’s *Roja* (1993) which won the National Integration Award, in the wake of the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992, and focuses on the “‘nationalistic’ fervour” it managed to generate by striking a chord with the “newly articulate, assertive and self-confident middle class that [was] also claiming for itself the spaces of nation and secularism premised on Hindutva.” Niranjana’s claim that the film creates “convergences between the human, the secular, and the nationalist” especially in

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60 Ravi Vasudevan, ‘Introduction’ in *Making Meaning in Indian Cinema*, 2000, p.2
61 Ibid. p.14
the context of the “upper caste/class anti-Mandal agitators in 1990” 63 is borne through in my reading of the construction of revisionist histories.

The persistence of cinematic memory that, I argue, allows for the citability of the ’70s cinema of discontent in gangland films, for example, as well as the neutralized parenthesization of past styles resonates with Ravi Vasudevan’s concept of ‘the parallax view’ referring to the influence of world cinema upon film style in ‘The Exhilaration of Dread: Genre, Narrative Form and Film Style in Contemporary Urban Action Films’ (2004) 64 and his earlier observations in ‘Selves Made Strange: Violent and Performative Bodies in the Cities of Indian Cinema’ (2003) 65 on the layering of disaggregated codes of representation and narration within films. In my reading, cinematic memory also opens up possibilities of enframing urban constituencies such as the underclass and the underworld, as well as possibilities of configuring revisionist histories, within the containing framework constructed from the vantage point of the new middle class.

Vasudevan’s essays above and Ranjani Mazumdar’s Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City (2007) also extensively analyze the increasing visibility, within cinema, of new urban subjectivities (such as the tapori, the psychopath, the refugee, the terrorist, the yuppie, female labourers, neighbourhood homosocial enclaves) by placing as their respective frames of reference the architecture of the city and its pace, corruption, crime and euphoria as they are negotiated by different subjects on the one hand, and the multifarious city that functions as “a symbolic organizer of a set of contradictory impulses that generate intense performances” on the other. 66 In this dissertation, by positing the representations of the new middle class within Bombay cinema as my focal point, I recast these figures in the context of appropriation and management of rogue spaces, peoples and of contrary drives within the middle class itself. In this, my dissertation also potentially provides a connection between Mazumdar’s Bombay Cinema and the

63 Ibid. p. 81
65 In body.city: citing contemporary culture in India edited by Indira Chandrasekhar and Peter C. Seel, 2003.
city that appears in her subsequent engagement with films of surveillance and control in ‘Friction, Collision and the Grotesque: The Dystopic Fragments of Bombay Cinema’ (2010), by the intervening presence of what I have conceptualized as the impasse of ‘terminal irreconcilability’ between two frameworks of perception.

Bollywood has emerged as a rapidly proliferating field of study in recent years: including a substantial number of publications ranging from journalistic accounts, collected reviews and interviews with practitioners from the industry, ready reckoners or guides to films classified by genre or chronology, to coffee table books, biographies of directors, musicians and stars coexisting with creative archival interventions into Bombay cinema as an institution.

67 In Gyan Prakash (Ed.) Noir Urbanisms: Dystopic images of the Modern City, 2010.
69 Nasreen Munni Kabir, a UK based film producer responsible for conceiving the annual season of Indian films for British Television’s Channel 4 has produced several volumes of interviews with composers from Bombay cinema including Talking Films: Conversations on Hindi Cinema with Javed Akhtar (1999), Talking Songs: Javed Akhtar in Conversation with Nasreen Munni Kabir (2005) and In the Company of a Poet: Gulzar in Conversation with Nasreen Munni Kabir (2012). Books like Baradwaj Rangan’s Conversations with Mani Ratnam (2012) also fall under this category.
71 See for instance, dates.sites: Project Cinema City: Bombay/Mumbai compiled as a Majlis project edited by Madhusree Dutta, Kaushik Bhaumik and Rohan Shivkumar.
Academic work on Bollywood has opened up space for new approaches to reading Bombay cinema and Bollywood in volumes like Amit Rai’s *Untimely Bollywood: Globalization and India’s New Media Assemblage* (2009) which uses Deleuze’s notion of assemblage along with Massumi’s concept of transitive power to read embodied sensations (which in Rai is collectively gathered under a much expanded category of sexuality) operative in practices in, around and generated by cinema. Rai’s inventive methodology allows for the in-depth analysis of various elements like art deco (not only as an architectural element but as a template affecting cinematic elements like publicity visuals), bazaar culture, film narratives, loitering and modalities of crowd control as constituting a constantly shifting terrain of bodily sensations, for example—“the unpredictable experience of the visual, gastric, tactile, and aural pleasure[s]” where “[s]amosas and Lata Mangeshkar, Aishwarya and paan, Pepsi and power outages are all part of this bodily experience.”  

Anustup Basu’s *Bollywood in the Age of New Media: The Geo-televisual Aesthetic* (2012) also works with contingent assemblages within Bombay cinema bearing signs of a process of ‘informatic modernization’. Basu’s assemblages that connect the globalizing media ecology of post liberalization India to a new metropolitan Hinduness are capable of absorbing “matters from disparate avenues of global life, like transnational advertising, MTV, video games, pop Hindutva, high fashion, international travel, consumer goods, gadgetry, computers, spiritualism, and dogmas of neoliberal development” and “provide contingent solutions without leaving enduring bridges in their wake.”

There have been several anthologies which address specific elements of Bollywood crucial to its constitution, like *Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi* 

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72 Rai, *Untimely Bollywood*, p. 54
73 Basu, *Bollywood in the Age of New Media*, p. 6
74 Ibid., p.19

Academics interventions that seek to translate the extremely heterogeneous impulses of Bombay cinema within the framework of theories of postmodernism also include publications like Ajay Gehlawat’s *Reframing Bollywood: Theories of Popular Hindi Cinema* (2010) where Gehlawat takes recourse to Baudrillard’s notions of ecstasy and the hyperreal at the expense of informed engagements with existing work on Bombay cinema by Madhava Prasad, Ashish Rajadhyaksha or Ravi Vasudevan whose analysis of the *darsanic* in structures of representation and spectatorship, for instance, is read by Gehlawat as driven by a ‘Hindu’ ‘religious’ essentialism.
Song and Dance (2008) edited by Sangita Gopal and Sujata Moorti which unpacks in three consecutive sections the cultural and political implications of the song and dance segment and ‘filmigit’ in Bombay cinema, its reception and interpretation within ‘foreign’ locales in Indonesia, Egypt and Israel, and its currencies and uses within Indian diasporic cultures. Global Bollywood (also 2008) edited by Anandam P. Kavoori and Aswin Punathambekar on the other hand compiles several insightful reflections on the specificity of Bollywood as a historical category, the circulation and distribution of Hindi films and the financial hype around it, the conflict between the celebration of Bollywood and Marathi identarianism, indices of marginalization and questions of sexuality within film texts and subsidiary practices around the institution of cinema as instantiated in film magazines or the internet and star and fan cultures.

The temporal span and global scope of my enquiry overlaps squarely with two recently published books, Tejaswini Ganti’s Producing Bollywood: Inside the Contemporary Hindi Film Industry (2012) and Sangita Gopal’s Conjugations: Marriage and Form in New Bollywood Cinema (2011). Ganti, notably, has extensively dealt with the rapid distanitation of the film industry (between the mid-90s and 2000) from a mass based audience (who were left as the sole patrons of the movie theatres following the video cassette boom of the ’80s) in favour of the ‘classes’ with the gentrification of Bombay cinema. This was also the period in which the structure of revenues was radically overhauled, with the largest proportion of returns accruing from multiplexes, overseas territories and other streams of revenue such as music, television and internet rights. The transparency and accountability of returns was also far more amenable to the production of reports that could attract investments in a corporatized structure of finance. The internal logistics of the economics of the film industry thus adds a material dimension to the urban turn in which films are predominantly made for A centres of exhibition (limited to the cities and suburbs, as against the B and C centres which cater to the interiors of distribution territories).
But this turning away of filmmakers from “vulgar, prurient, violent and profane” films that appeased the mass audience to favour a ‘class’ audience, Ganti observes, was equally driven by a “tremendous concern for acceptance by individuals who filmmakers regard as their social peers but not as their typical audience.” While the structure of film exhibition ensured that the audience no longer had to share physical space with rickshaw-wallahs (a recurrent concern in many of Ganti’s respondents) inside the auditorium, the content of film oriented to an audience with whom the filmmakers claim they could now identify in terms of social status, also necessarily entailed a set of assumptions regarding mass and class tastes in which class accrued the added connotation of quality. It necessitated the construction of a sense of identity for the ‘class’, the imagination and depiction of spaces apposite to its habitation and the incorporation of characters, milieus, topics and circumstances that will appeal to the taste of an urban gentry. It was also reflected in the disappearance of spaces and milieus as well as representational and narrative elements that were no longer considered appropriate for its new audience. I have argued that the putting together of permissible narratives, as its precondition, also demands the organization of spaces and milieus in ways that would facilitate their unhindered progression and fruition.

The necessary links between the audience imaginaries projected by the film industry, the A centre audience, the visibility of the new middle class and its representation onscreen can perhaps be found, as I argue, in the discursive accumulation around the new middle class and its attributes. This is supported by Ganti’s account of the gentrification of cinema which is characterized as “part of a broader socio-historical conjuncture where urban middle-classes are celebrated in state and media discourses as the main agents, as well as the markers of modernity and development in India.” As Ganti observes—“Just as the urban middle-class consumer represents the idealized citizen in a neoliberal and globalizing India, the

75 Tejaswini Ganti, *Producing Bollywood: Inside the Contemporary Hindi Film Industry*, 2012, p. 87. The decline in cinematic quality from mid to late 80s is also demonstrated by “clichéd plots and dialogues, excessive violence, garish sets, and vulgar choreography” (p.81)
76 Ibid. p.78
77 Ibid, p.17
urban middle-class film-viewer represents the ideal audience member for an industry concerned with issues of prestige, respect and global circulation.”

While Ganti’s extremely meticulous analysis of the projection of audience imaginaries have been very illuminating in substantiating my claims about distinctions of class (relating to both affluence and taste) I differ with Sangita Gopal’s central claim about the ubiquity of the *masala* film in the ’70s even within the circumscribed space of mainstream commercial Hindi films; though I concede that it may well be mapped on to the bleaker ’80s, described as the period of decline also in Ganti’s account, when the formula film, and ‘masala’ components, purportedly became the foremost concern of the film industry. The decade of the ’70s, on the other hand, was of no lesser complexity for the Bombay film industry than it was for the political destinies of India in the face of political upheavals and insurgencies that led up to the national Emergency in’75. While the emergence of the films of popular unrest that heralded Bachchan’s rise as superstar indicated a politics of the disenfranchised being enacted within the rubric of popular Bombay cinema, the middle class cinema developed its own codes of narration, characterization and representation in seeking to address the political crisis of the time. The development of the latter was also a compensatory measure from within the industry to counter the effects of the FFC funded cinema that threatened to supplant the mainstream. The FFC funded films addressed:

- The travails of the urban middle class, questions of women’s agency and sexuality, social satire, agit prop, critiques of feudal power structures, conflicts of modernity and tradition, realism and formal experimentation: a multiplicity of directions were being explored.  

The scenario was further complicated by the persistence of this momentum in the ‘New Indian Cinema’ inaugurated by Shyam Benegal’s *Ankur* in 1974, which is often placed in the teleological trajectory of “an evolutionary history culminating in the emergence of the ‘good film’.” In this dissertation, I look at contemporary Bombay cinema also in terms of its continuities with some of the impulses that

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78 Ibid.
79 Madhava Prasad, *Ideology of the Hindi Film*, p. 188
80 Ibid. p.189
crystallized in ’70s, and the realignments that they undergo (for example, in the problem of film language in two recent films by Shyam Benegal which I take up for analysis.)

At a micro-level, Gopal argues that the multi-protagonist film emerged as a something-for-everyone model to appeal to the different segments of the already segregated multiplex audience. Though the depiction of these couples take a far more democratized form than the convention of including comedians, sidekicks or subsidiary characters to provide a conduit allowing for staggered identification with the larger-than-life hero, I would like to propose, that they might still allow for some degree of hierarchization (I’ve analyzed the more pronounced use of such a strategy of hierarchization in Yuva, Mani Ratnam, 2004). Furthermore, questions of couple formation remain deeply inscribed with the necessity of class endogamy which is now premised also on the compatibility of lifestyles, and parity of social and cultural capital (shared tastes and propensities in habits of consumption, which of necessity extend to cultural forms, in films like Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi, Aditya Chopra, 2008; Wake Up Sid, Ayan Mukerji, 2009; Band Baajaa Baaraat, Maneesh Sharma, 2010; Karthik Calling Karthik, Vijay Lalwani, 2010, for instance.) My framework can also be potentially extended to Gopal’s analysis of the gentrification of the horror film, in which the nucleated couple’s misfortunes, according to Gopal, are occasioned solely by their separation from traditional familial milieus under contemporary urban living conditions.

A brief clarification of the terminology that I have used in this dissertation also becomes relevant in this context. I have used the phrase contemporary cinema in a limited sense to refer to Bombay cinema of the 1990s onwards. This is also to distinguish the larger corpus of the Bombay film industry from ‘Bollywood’ which I reserve for a smaller segment of films. However, I consciously refrain from using either ‘Bollywood’ or ‘New Bollywood’ as exhaustive categories contrary to other scholars working on the contemporary phase of Bombay cinema. Sangita Gopal, for instance, uses the term Bollywood to refer to a set of changes that were being put into place as early as the 1970s when Bombay cinema, “becomes more susceptible to the logic of capital, renounces its nation-building
role, aspires to become mere “entertainment,” and promiscuously embraces a range of foreign styles as it moves from a “nativist” to a globalized art form.”

New Bollywood for Gopal represents a set of relatively new practices and forms separate from ‘Bollywood’ as its predecessor, but is nonetheless another fairly exhaustive category referring to “the entire world of cinema—industrial practices, financing, exhibition, audience, tie-ins, and of course the films themselves—of the post liberalization period (1991-present).” Her reading extends to several other elements “integral to the staging of New Bollywood: fan letters, camera technology, interiors, concession stands, Ram Gopal Varma, urbanization, jewelry, exhibition chains, middle-class demographics, Dolby sound, the Bollywood B circuit, nonresident Indians, third-rate monsters.” While I have also looked at these indices, enumerated by Gopal, of Bombay cinema’s purchase within a globalized economy in this dissertation, my own classifications deviate from Gopal’s not only for the reasons specified above but also because, pace Rajadhyaksha, I would like to emphasize the phenomenon of Bollywoodization, to conceptualize my understanding of this specific historical juncture following the liberalization of India when socio-economic changes impinge on industrial practices such that they, in turn, are re-oriented to newer markets and forms of enterprise. This is also to emphatically separate the academic connotation of the term Bollywood from its wider industrial, journalistic or popular uses.

81 Sangita Gopal, Conjugations: Marriage and Form in New Bollywood Cinema, 2011, p.12. In fact, Gopal’s invocation of the term ‘Bollywood’ is in acknowledgement of its function within the film industry and popular parlance as “a catch-all moniker, variously used to signify contemporary cinema, masala, classic Hindi Film, and even products from the colonial period.”

82 Ibid. p.14

83 Ibid. p.21— ‘New Bollywood’ as a category might refer to, as cited by Ganti as well, as an evaluative category, rather than a temporal one, used by one of her respondents, pointing to “greater organization, professionalism, and rationality in the production process.” (Producing Bollywood, p. 366)