CHAPTER 2
Global Scopic View of Family, Nation and the Centre

The ongoing fascination of Hindi cinema with Delhi and the recent shift of the focus to this multilingual, multicultural, bougingning megalopolis have brought out newer spaces and stories in film making. The most significant reasons for the quasi-migration of Hindi cinema is the familial, historical, cultural and emotional connection of many film Directors, producers and screenwriters with the city. Historically, Delhi has always remained a site of politics and the centre of the nation, while Mumbai, since the inception of cinema, has had the privilege to host the attention of the media and the film community. The city of Bombay forged a strong post-independent identity, living and surviving on its own terms. Delhi, in contrast was turned into the administrative capital of India and its new role was to clear up the ruins of colonial legacy and forge a global identity of the nation. Delhi in the films of the 1970s and 1980s had a similar backdrop and films like Trishul (1978) and New Delhi Times (1986) stressed on the themes of corruption and power politics within the city. This division between the two cinematic cities seems neat and tidy but the recent turn towards Delhi is based on the fact that the universe of Delhi was largely unexplored or underexposed by the earlier filmmakers of the Hindi film industry. This latest turn towards north India seems to be also a search for realistic location, lifestyles and a thirst for new metropolitan culture to be portrayed on the celluloid.

Bombay cinema has undergone tremendous changes in the last decade and there have been hitherto development of newer spaces in films. These newer spaces have deconstructed the mythical imagination of Bombay and accommodated an alternative imagination that is marred by real events. These events are terrorism, natural calamities and divisive internal politics. Delhi has seen an upward growth and the development of fashion, media, and advertising industries has turned over the archaic image of Delhi. Thus globalization, multiplex phenomenon and the changing trends in Bombay Cinema has marked a shift in the representation of cinematic Delhi. Delhi is one of the first four colonial cities besides Calcutta, Bombay and Madras and yet the city occupies a peculiar space in the nationalist imagination of India. Unlike the other metropolitan cities, Delhi does not have singular roots. It has hosted multiple rulers during various ages and at present Delhi is a microcosmic space for several intersecting cultures. The city, in contrast to the other metropolitan cities, cannot be understood in isolation. It is therefore necessary to understand the cinematic city of Delhi by juxtaposing with other cinematic cities of India to be able to minutely understand their
culture, languages, landscapes and the notion of urbanity. Delhi, over the ages, has generated significant amount of literature and has reflected multiple universes located within the city. The city present in the literary texts is historical, full of mythology, rituals and traditions. There are only a few contemporary Delhi oriented novels that have worked diligently to represent the real world of the self contained Delhi. Khushwant Singh’s Delhi: A Novel (1990) is one of the fictional works that concentrates on the spectacular past, not the present. The novel is primarily, a story based on the city of Delhi from medieval till modern age. The majority of literature in English harks back to the golden era of Delhi, where Kings spent their monsoon season, hunting and writing poetry. This nostalgia for the glorious past is compellingly blended with the present day Delhi. Thus, the literature is full of despair, melancholy and vividly evoked past. William Dalrymple’s City of Djinns (1994) is an account of his itinerary in contemporary Delhi and pitted against the allure of the older Delhi.

The partition of India and its repercussion on Delhi has been the subject of many memoirs. The novels recorded the carnage, violence of the cruel times, before and after the month of August. Urvashi Butalia’s The Other Side of Silence (1998) records the marginalized voices of private lives during the partition. Anita Desai’s Clear Light of Day (1980) explores the traumatizing impact of the partition on the siblings living in a decaying bungalow in old Delhi. While the partition literature on Delhi speaks about the loss, displacement and alienation, the post independence literature celebrates the hope of a newer and better future after the pogrom. The literature of present day Delhi has a little to do with the Delhi specific identities. In these stories Delhi is represented as the microcosm of India and focuses on a generation that is ambitious and has specific goals in mind. Although there is no recent fictional work is portrayed on the political class, the bourgeoisie or the glamour world of fashion and media. The only exception is feminist novelist Manju Kapoor who analyzes the issues related to the middle class or upper class women based in Delhi. In totality, the contemporary fiction writers have chosen not to write about the urban chaos in Delhi. In fact, the visual medium of cinema and its loyal research on the narrative is supplementing that of literature and print culture in making modern and local culture popular and accessible.

Delhi has gone through several incarnations throughout the ages and has survived and preserved its unique nature, character and ambience. The metropolitan city of Delhi has been an embodiment of wealth, profound culture and since ages has captured the imaginations of Kings, travelers, scholars and historians. Despite its beauty, richness and history, the city has also had an ambivalent relationship with Bombay and has always been lesser known for its
existence as a cinematic city. Although, shooting and productions of films existed in Delhi, it lost the major share to Calcutta. However, Delhi’s first contact with the film industry can be traced back to the silent film era: 1899-1930. The Imperial capital of Calcutta was transferred to Delhi and along with the capital a number of cinema houses mushroomed around the city, which mainly screened foreign films for the British citizens. Delhi became a leading distribution centre for the foreign films and it was in 1925 that the founder of Bombay Talkies, Himanshu Rai launched his first production Light of Asia (based on the life of Gautam Buddha) for the international market in Delhi. Himanshu Rai struggled to screen the film for two years and even the kings of princely states, old temple trusts and the Government of India would not financially support the film. Finally, a group of legal advisors, lawyers, judges and few other businessmen in Delhi provided the much required financial assistance to Himanshu Rai and the film was eventually released through Bombay Talkies in Delhi.

After the advent of ‘talkie’ films, there was an early shift in Hindi cinema towards the culture of North India, which was dominated by the dispossessed nobility of Delhi. The courtesies and mannerisms were the hallmark of this sophisticated lifestyle. Young aspiring artists would come to Delhi to learn music and dance from the renowned Delhi music gharana. During the early nineteen thirties, Malika Pukhraj, who became popular for her rendition of Hafeez Jalandhari’s song, “Abhi to Main Jawan Hoon” came to Delhi to learn music and dance in Delhi from the traditional folk and music artists. The language that was dominant during this era on celluloid was Urdu and the lyrics of songs also followed the pattern of similar lingua franca. Beside the culture and landscape, Delhi also provided talented music artists to the film industry and the foremost was Naseem Bano, daughter of an eminent singer Shamshad Begum who dominated the Delhi music scene during the nineteen twenties and thirties. Naseem Bano is better known for her role of Noor jahan in Sohrab Rustam’s historical film Pukar (1939).

The first few decades of the music and dance in the Hindi film industry was heavily influenced by the north Indian style and genre. The films introduced the genre of qawali as a form of an aesthetic entertainment and this re-incarnation of qawali in film owes its allegiance to the great sufi poet Amir Khusrau. The light classical music, dadra, thumri and ghazal that were preserved by the Delhi gharana were included in Hindi film industry and was introduced in many famous films. Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan became the voice of Tansen in K. Asif’s magnum opus Mughal-e-Azam (1960). Similarly Satyajit Ray in Jalsa Ghar (1959) captured Begum Akhtar performing on “Bhar bhar aye akhiyan.” Also in Shatranj Ke Khiladi (1977) Ray used the voice of Birju Maharaj for a thumri picturised on a
Kathak dancer in the court of Nawab Vajid Ali Shah. Recently Begum Akhtar’s thumri has been revived by Vishal Bhardwaj’s latest production Dedh Ishqiya (2014).

The metropolitan city of Delhi assumed a new role after the independence. There was an influx of Punjabi refugees, artists, writers, bureaucrats and budding politicians from all the parts of the country and abroad. This deterritorialization of humans changed the culture and landscape of Delhi and in this process of transformation, the city became emblematic of microcosmic India. The older culture of tehzeeb which marked the culture of Delhi and had lingered in collective memories of ancestors slowly vanished from Delhi. The majority of upper class Muslims left the city and in the new scenario there emerged a hybrid culture in the city. The first commercial film to focus on the complex metropolitan life of Delhi was Mohan Sehgal’s New Delhi (1956). The film is based on a Punjabi boy Anand who belongs to Jalandhar and comes to Delhi. Anand is unable to find an accommodation in Delhi and everywhere he goes people would rent their home only to a person who belongs to their caste. The film becomes a satire on the metropolitan life and the city is represented as an unpleasant space ruled by the hierarchical structures. The film also marked metropolis as being rife with prejudices and divisions of past, despite newness of habitus, space and industrialization. German sociologist Georg Simmel in his work, “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (1903) views the complications of metropolitan life in similar context and states:

The deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, against the weight of historical heritage and the external culture and technique of life. (11)

Amar Kumar’s Ab Dilli Door Nahin (1957) was also based on the story of an innocent person travelling into the city and facing the brunt of capitalism in the city. The film glorified the village as an idyllic space, in contrast to the traumatic life of city. The film also marked the metropolis as being rife with prejudices and divisions of the past, despite newness of habitus, space and industrialization. Vijay Anand’s film Tere Ghar Ke Samne (1963) carried a social message and focused on the changing metropolitan lifestyle. The film was entirely shot in Delhi, and created around the theme of equilibrium between the traditional and the modern. But the film that quintessentially etched a true cinematicscape of Delhi was Ramesh Sharma’s New Delhi Times (1986). A political drama, around a controversial storyline about political corruption and its nexus with media, the film became a controversy on the urban centre. During the decade of 1970s, there were many films that focused on the ordinariness of life of the middle class residing in Delhi. Basu Chatterjee’s Rajnigandha
being a prominent one. The film made its mark during an era when romantic love films ruled the audiences. Sai Paranjpe’s Directorial debut *Chashme Baddoor* (1981) deviated a bit from the beaten track. Entirely shot in Delhi, the film captured the emerging subculture of migrant youngsters studying in the University of Delhi. Even if Delhi in both the films came with its dose of humour, these films highlighted Delhi as a city with serious problems and ambitions. The decade of 1990s saw a sudden downfall trend in the films on Delhi. The filmmakers solely focused on revamping the negative image of the nation thus the cinematic city of Delhi and Bombay worked in unison for a changed image. The reason for the cinema industry for undergoing such a tremendous change has to be traced historically but mostly it had to do with the genre of films being produced during the era of 1980s and later. This era is also marred with the rise of Hindu nationalism and later, country’s economic liberalization.

During this decade, Indian cinema suffered severe crisis due to the advent of video culture and television and only with the revamped romantic family based stories, Indian cinema made a comeback. The emergence of these new generation films glorified consumerism, Hindu cultural practices and a shift towards the expatriate culture. The target of this new big budget, romantic films was the emerging middle classes as well as the diasporic Indian communities. The joint family became the primary theme of these films and the conflicts within the family were dealt with traditional Indian methods. Further, radical economic reforms and the repercussions of globalization opened up to Western influences. The migrant that was earlier portrayed as an anti-hero in films like *An Evening in Paris* (1967) and *Purab Aur Paschim* (1967), post liberalization he became symbolic of the new Indian, globalized, modern and a nationalist at heart. The big budget films capitalized on this and opened up a new arena of consumption. The majority of films dealt with the negotiation between East and the West and the relationship of diasporic communities with the homeland. M. Madhava Prasad analyses the filmmaking in Bombay at this juncture as an “assemblage of pre-fabricated parts” (43) to get an accurate sense of heterogeneous elements, such as the story, the song, the dance, the Figure and various other minute details.

With the emergence of strong diasporic audiences in the late 1990s, Hindi film cinema got more and more recognized in the Western countries. Although Hindi films have been popular in Asia, Africa, former Soviet Union, but Hindi films received significant viewership in European countries and North America due to an increase in the population of South Asian descent. The extravagant romantic films engaged the diasporic audiences with a complete mixture of desi and the global. Aditya Chopra’s *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge* (1995), Subhash Ghai’s *Pardes* (1997), Rakesh Roshan’s *Kaho Na Pyar Hai* (2000) and
Karan Johar’s *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham* (2001) created an immense market for the Hindi film cinema in the foreign circuit. Mani Ratnam’s *Dil Se* (1998) starring Shahrukh Khan failed to create an impact on the Indian audiences, but was a watershed film overseas; it was received remarkably well in Great Britain. The other shifting trend in the ever drifting film culture was the changing taste of the Indian audiences. Audiences in India are very diverse and can be differentiated according to genre, region and lingua franca. The large production houses target middle class and diasporic audiences. On the hindsight the working class audiences are targeted by different genre of film production houses. This could generally be termed as the regional cinema that caters to the taste of region specific lower class of India. Rachel Dwyer calls this kind of Hindi cinema that is present in everyday life as an “all pervasive visual culture” (8).

Delhi, over the years, has received large attention from the Hindi film industry and has emerged as the largest market for the commercial Hindi cinema. It is not only the language of the new generation of the people living in the Delhi that speak a hybrid combination of Hindi, Panjabi with a sprinkling of English but also the themes that represent the diverse colors of the social milieu of Delhi. The dynamic culture of Delhi continues to evolve and re-invents itself artificially and naturally to suit its composite culture. Recently, there is a resurgence of interest in the city and major films harp on the depiction of middle class metropolitan lifestyle of the capital. Film Director Shoojit Sircar in an interview to The Times of India compares the metropolitan city of Delhi and Bombay and mentions that Delhi is one of the fastest growing cities in the world and Bombay unfortunately is a dying city that has nothing more to offer. In the present times, there is only chaos in Bombay and the development within the city is moving at a slow pace. This statement by an eminent Director highlights the exhaustion of inspiration within the first cinematic city of India and the emergence of rising interests within the newly established cinematic cities throughout India.

Delhi’s recent rise as a new superpower of Hindi films can also be attributed to the disloyalty towards singular language, culture and identity. As a historical city of migrants, Delhi is apparently the newest, loudest and invariably a land of opportunities. Besides the humanscape and a booming IT hub, the discreet landscape of Delhi is still being explored within the urban films on the capital city. A single street manifests a hundred varied landscapes and this special characteristic is covered in films like *Vicky Donor* (2012), *Khosla Ka Ghosla* (2006), *Do Dunde Chaar* (2011) and *Band Baaja Bazaar* (2010). The *mise en scene* of these films is the streets and the entire narrative unfolds on the contrasting outer spaces of Delhi. The majority of films that are based on Delhi centre on the multicultural lifestyle of
contemporary times, but it is difficult to negate the rich and glorious history of Delhi. The allure of its historical and cultural landscape has influenced a gamut of Directors to capture the past on the celluloid and recently Ashutosh Gowarikar successfully represented a romantic, political and administrative life of Mughal King Akbar in a commercial historical drama *Jodha Akbar* (2008).

The regional, class based, professional, colony based and other identities within Delhi intersect, diverge and are often unpredictable. These multi-faceted lives of Delhi are yet to be explored and the trend of shifting towards north is only a recent phenomenon. The contemporary chronicles about the city seems to be just a ferocious outcry towards the change in the mentalscapes of script writers and the desire to explore the palpable capital city of India. The emerging cinematic city of Delhi is the forerunner and the new binary opposition towards the traditional cinematic city of Bombay. Similarly, the films selected to study capture the existing physical space of a city in such a manner that it closely represents the real and imagined city of Delhi in its truest form. These films portray the battle between nation-state, of detrerritorialized communities and the progress of electronic media. The films explore the cinematicscapes of Delhi to understand the changing dimensions and equations with its traditional roots and the modern world.

*Rang De Basanti* Directed by Rakeysh Om Prakash Mehra produces a fantasy based on the narrative of Indian revolutionaries and juxtaposes the story with the youth of contemporary Delhi. The political structures of the city of Delhi are questioned by the young generation and the film concentrates on the broader issues of masculinity, national identity, modernity and colonial fantasy. The film caught the imagination of people when it was released in 2006 because of the simple question it dares to raise and attempts to provide a sound solution to a major problem of corruption. The phrase *Rang De Basanti*, which means “color me saffron” has been a popular phrase in the older generation films on independence struggle. Therefore, *Rang De Basanti* is a post-independence film of the mild contemporary times that anachronistically deal with self martyrdom and sacrifice. The film is basically a critique of actions of a group of individuals in the context of framing national policies and social injustice. In this context, the film portrays acts of sacrifice by the denizens of the countries in two different historical epochs of Indian nation and reiterates that the nation still requires sacrifice. The main plot of the film addresses the political-corporate nexus and justifies the act of violence and sacrifice. Although violence is an unconstitutional act within the internal boundaries of the state, the only way out to bail from the appalling situation seems to be physical aggression. The solution of violence and sacrifice is brutal and the sub-
plot attempts to justify this by redefining the meaning of citizenship through the young college students. In recent times a film that is typical of the rise of leftist consciousness amongst the students of Delhi is Sudhir Mishra’s *Hazaaron Khwaahishein Aisi* (2005). The film explores the dark power structures of the city that most metropolitan people avoid and find intimidating. It also highlights the hunger for power, corruption that runs riot in capital city of Delhi. *Rang De Basanti* introduces five Indian youngsters; Daljit Singh popularly called DJ, a Panjabi boy who is an alumnus of the University of Delhi. He is disinterested in the life outside the university and fears the whirlpool of anonymity in the world outside the campus gates. Aslam, the poet, philosopher is a rational middle class Muslim. Sukhi, a jovial and vulnerable boy from Haryana who is primarily interested in women, Karan a rich boy who dreams of settling abroad and shares an estranged relationship with his wealthy father and Sonia, a youth activist who is engaged to Figurehiter pilot Ajay and the only girl in the group.

The diversity of friends is deliberately designed to represent at a microcosmic level, the unity of India within a small campus of the University of Delhi. The entire group does not seem to care about the world and they spend their time drinking, fast driving and partying. Underneath these carefree and cheerful faces lies disenchantment with the present political order and this turns into the desperation and anger that embodied the Indian revolutionaries in the first half of 20th century. Later, they are joined by Laxman Pandey, a Hindu fundamentalist with political aspirations. He believes that politics can make the world a better place to live. But his indoctrination into communal distrust by the senior fundamentalist leaders of his party makes him the object of hatred amongst the group. This group is compared to working of the Shiv Sena, as their priorities are to oppose the prevalent Western culture and the presence of Muslims in India. Although, he wants to be the part of the documentary because of his belief in the traditions, values and the glorious freedom struggle, but his presence creates a tension within the group. Eventually, Sue’s desperate efforts provide him lateral entry in the documentary. The authentic cinematicsapes of Delhi comes into the fore during their excursion from the solid and material Delhi towards the outskirts.

In contrast to the bright lights, narrow roads and concrete structures of Delhi, these youngsters escape away to a wretched area that provides them physical and mental space. This space at the outskirts of Delhi is an open area where they refute the rules created by the society and in a rebellious tone enjoy their existence outside the structural codes of the society. There are three distinct spaces that emerge strongly in the film and finally culminate into creating contemporary cinematicsapes of Delhi. These diverse, yet closely related
spaces intermingle and generate the ever changing scapes of modern Delhi. First, is the space of tradition and old values, embodied by the families of the main characters. These families represent the moral issues, traditions and fears of great Indian families customarily living together. Second, the film concentrates on the space of the youth of Delhi. This youth is jovial at heart and carefree romances life against the scenic backgrounds of the historically rich monuments. Third, the fresh experience of the India’s past reinvigorates political awareness and finally materializes into a social movement.

*Rang De Basanti* opens with a young and Hindi speaking, British filmmaker, Sue Mckinley, arriving in India with a desire to make a documentary “The Young Guns of India” about the struggles of famous Indian revolutionaries Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad, Ramprasad Bismil, Rajguru and Ashfaqullah Khan. The primary source of her story is the diary of her grandfather, James Mckinley of the early 1930s, who had also served as a British officer during the colonial rule of India. Her Indian project is not approved by the senior officials at the workplace. As a result, this rejection motivates her to move forward and complete the documentary independently. Her superiors reject the proposal on the basis of disinterestedness and due to the fact that these revolutionaries were not so famous globally. According to them, only the principles of Mahatma Gandhi sell from India but not revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad. The firm decision of Sue lands her in Delhi and she with the help of local contact Sonia, a Delhi University student begins to put together a cast and crew for the documentary. Initially, an array people audition inside the cosmopolitan campus of Delhi University. Rakeysh Mehra early in the film clearly establishes that Sue is well versed in Hindi. This trait makes her character more authentic and believable. In other words this also helps Sue to connect with Indian audiences as Sue is one of the central protagonists in the film.

In a larger context, Sue’s character is symbolic of the Westermer’s perspective on the socio-political problems in contemporary India. Sue looks for passionate fervor in the students but is disappointed with the quality of people who come for the auditions as most of them are inspired by the contemporary popular culture. As Sue auditions actors for her documentary she receives stilted response and finds out most actors cannot even pronounce “Vande Mataram” (National song of India). The audition replicates the problem of excessive melodramatic acting style that are influenced by popular Hindi cinema; against the more natural and realist method of acting. The entire sequence of audition is shot on the format of Indian reality shows as editing techniques such as montage, juxtaposition and spontaneous camera actions are used to provide natural quality of images and realism. Perhaps, the whole
sequence of audition reflects the absence of intellect and engagement in the present generation and the efficient use of editing technique gives a hilarious glimpse on the cosmopolitan youth of modern Delhi. This perspective on Delhi was recently explored in Abhinay Deo’s *Delhi Belly* (2011). The film is an Indian black comedy that captures the ensemble lifestyle of three Delhi based youths. Unlike other films, *Delhi Belly* follows a different methodology of representing Delhi and in the process concentrates more on the pace of narrative. The film does not capture any symbolic architectural marvels which are emblematic of the city. In contrast, *Delhi Belly* breaks the monotony by capturing the other part of the city. This other part of the city is the narrow and Dirty alleyways, brothels and the ever present underworld. The film also follows the trend of speaking *Hinglish* which is the new cool amongst the urban teenagers.

As the narrative of *Rang De Basanti* unfolds, Sue comes across a group of young men, who belong to various parts of India and whose joie de vivre and camaraderie intrigues her. These students from the University of Delhi must be retrained for casting in this periodic documentary of Indian revolutionary history. The characters in the documentary never audition for their parts; instead Sue finds their camaraderie and nature a legitimate characteristic for the docudrama and slowly the group of friends begins to morph into the revolutionary characters in sepia. Sue reveals her plan on the dinner table of Daljit’s road side *dhaha*, where for the first time we meet his mother. Sue initially has a grueling task in making the group of friends take her story seriously because it has nothing to do with their
present times and reality. This scene is also pre-eminent because it echoes the angst, disillusionment of the urban middle class in post independent young generation of India. The effort of Sue in trying to re-create the authentic cinematics of India’s glorious history seems impractical and plain entertainment for the present generation.

The youth of Delhi in the film represent a section of youngster’s who have forgotten the history of India. The situation seems ironic within Delhi as there are plenty of monuments that make a person connected to the glorious past of the nation. The idea of “Indianness” within the contemporary youth of Delhi seems elusive because at the present moment they are living several generations after the independence. The aftermath of globalization has produced such an intense alienation and disaffection within the modern nation-state that it takes a British woman, Sue Mckinley to relive the fantasy of India’s pre-independent times. She juxtaposes the past with the present and transforms the regular into a glorious cinematics for the present day youngsters in the film. In the process of recreating India’s cinematic past; the youngsters realize promises and objectives for which the young revolutionaries sacrificed their lives. These traits of India’s glorious past do not exist in the present day society. Delhi has transformed into a materialistically governed cosmopolitan space and this characteristic dominates the physical and mental scapes of Rang De Basnati.

In the context of colonial fantasy, national identity, the rhetoric of martyrdom and terrorism, it seems appropriate to refer to Arjun Appadurai’s coinage, “high globalization” (2). “High globalization” allows us to consider colonial narratives as a form of fantasy, fascination and trauma that are not over but are rather in high gear within the shifting global economy. In Fear of Small Numbers, Appadurai suggests that the traditional concept of nation and state is outmoded by the new global economy. The flow of capital, goods, people, and technology allows more affiliations with across the demarcated borders. Homi Bhabha in The Location of Culture mentions that the “ambivalent temporalities of nation state” (142) in the contemporary times persists solely in the Hindi film industry. However, Sue Mckinley is not figureured as the Other in the film. She requires little introduction to the Indian lifestyle and culture and has no trouble fitting in with the University students of Delhi that she meets through Sonia, whose sensibilities and attire resemble her own.

Delhi is an urban megalopolis, very much similar to London, therefore Sue Mckinley meets the entire group of friends at outskirts of Delhi, which they call classroom. In this space the youngsters enjoy bohemian lifestyle and have developed a non-conformist culture and lifestyle. This space for these youngsters has multiple connotations and for most of the youngsters this area turns into a space of performance, entertainment, hypocrisy and equality.
In contrast to the dominant, ordinary Delhi, every individual is creating and narrating his/her story for a short time, without the peer pressure of the repressive structures. This unintended cinematics of Delhi reflects the raw energy and the misdirected verve of the contemporary generation.

The camera, through a long shot, captures the city of congested Delhi. Following the similar shot, a group of youngsters are showcased moving at high speeds on their expensive superbikes and cars, towards a remote place on the outskirts of Delhi. Sonia first introduces Sue to Aslam, who at that moment is busy painting the wall with palette of colors. The second long shot within the scene is of Daljit (DJ) and Sukhi, who at the top of a high elevated roof are playing a high risk drinking game. The carefree attitude of these two characters highly impresses Sue and other girls present in the scene. Unlike other characters, Karan is not established or introduced formally to Sue as well as the audiences. Karan is established in relation to the other characters as he enters the screen lighting a cigarette and comments on Daljit and Sukhi’s daredevilry as “damn exhibitionists”. Although, these young men that Sue encounters through Sonia complain about lack of opportunities, communalism, corruption, nowhere is the lack reflected in the mise en scene of the film. The attire, lingua franca and the lifestyle of the University students is leisurely and nebulous. They celebrate their lifestyle with beer swilling parties and fast bike rides. Daljit, Sukhi, Karan, Aslam and Sonia belong to different religious and economic sections of society.

This diversity at microcosmic level of the university represents the entire character and fervor of cosmopolitan Delhi. Therefore, the graffiti painted walls; the hip-hop style of musical score is an adaptation of American style. Hence, Sue meets a bunch of locals who have no connection and fascination with the colonial history of India. The earlier scene in its final sequence also introduces the Hindu fundamentalist worker Laxman Pandey, who disrupts the romping drinking festival and is against the emulation of the Western culture by the present day generation. Laxman Pandey is the only serious character in the entire cast who despite the awkwardness with the entire group is instinctively interested in joining the documentary. He possesses a genuine knowledge of India’s history and when Sue’s asks him to read Ram Prasad Bismil’s urdu poem “Sarfaroshi Ki Tammana”, he spontaneously recites the entire poem from his memory.

Rakeysh Mehra represents these Indian youth as global elite who follow the definition of cool lifestyle from the West and have developed a critical urbanized perspective on the indigenous country. But their views on India completely change during the acting out of Indian revolutionaries for the documentary. Their accidental dive into the past reinvigorates
colonial nostalgia and dissenter political energies. Mehra’s aesthetic interplay of colonial history with scenes of increasing dissident youth in contemporary India, envisions a brand of protestors who work as catalyst during the modern era. The city of Delhi during the pre-independent India represented the crown of British queen and was also symbolic of arbitrary violence, colonial rule and modern nation-state. *Rang De Basanti* stages this encounter of arbitrary violence and underscores the ongoing perversions and relationship between the nation-state of India and its citizens. The rehearsals for documentary starts and during this process Sue realizes that her cast is unable to relate to the revolutionaries. The concept of shooting film within a film actually justifies the power that the visual culture ordains upon the spectators. As the rehearsal progresses their nonchalant attitude turns into serious, thoughtful nature and steadily they start respecting the characters of the revolutionaries. Mark Shiel in *The Cinema and the City* (2012) mentions that Jean Baudrillard believes that the city imitates the cinema and crucially adds that the life in the city starts from the screen and moves outward towards the city, a conceptualization of “cityscape as screenscape” (Clarke 1).

Despite the cinematic qualities that the cities possess there has been little interest in understanding the relationship of the city with cinema. In the context of film, the cinematicscapes created by Sue has a deep effect upon the entire team of youngsters. The shooting exerts such a life changing impact on their lives that their notion about the nation changes forever. This transformation is a direct cause-effect of their changing mentalscapes by relocating to a place of historical importance during shooting. The cinematic space of the film powers the way for creation of the cinematicscapes of the authentic past. The Director provides the actual glimpse of shooting the docudrama through the song “Rang De Basanti”; that is shot in Punjab and towards the last section of the musical song; the Director incorporates the shots of the characters rehearsing their dialogues in actual costumes. In the context of Indian history, the northern landscape of Punjab becomes important and the film ensures to highlight the traumatic events of Punjab that changed the course of history forever. The landscape of the past events is generally picturized in revolutionary Punjab that was represented by the popular face of Bhagat Singh in reality as well as in the film.

In the process of filming the documentary, he incorporates medium and close up shots. This cinematographic technique creates a bridge for the audience to emotionally identify with the revolutionary characters and empathize with their point of view. This style of filmmaking helps to depict realism at the level of emotions and also bonds the audience with the characters of the narrative. Another important intersection towards the main plot of
the narrative is the issue of Hindu and Muslims in India. Aslam belongs to a conservative Muslim family and to their discomfort Aslam has a pro-India outlook which his family does not endorse. Laxman Pandey, constantly taunts Aslam by calling him Pakistani. This term is perceived derogatory in India and is considered as a threat to the Hindus and the entire nation of India.

Figure 2. (a), (b), (c), (d) Initial physical impression of the revolutionaries for the documentary.

Rakeysh Mehra depiction of this young Delhi based Muslim youngster draws attention to the tensions between fundamentalists of both religions. In order to integrate both the communities, the historical example of Muslim revolutionary Asfaqullah Khan and his Hindu friend, Ram Prasad Bismil’s camaraderie is cited. Aslam’s home is in a densely populated area of Chandni Chowk and an overview shot of the main street of the colony clearly represents the true colors of Delhi. The car of the protagonist cannot move further inside the congested alleyway so they stop on the main road. As Sukhi and Karan walk
further in an inebriated condition to drop Aslam, the camera pans on Daljit and Sue. The energetic and frolicsome Daljit opens his heart to Sue and reveals:

DALJIT. Someday all this will end, everybody will move on their individual paths. Search for job, earn money and get married.

Inside the gates of the university, we are the master of our destinies.

Outside the gate we have to dance to fate’s tune.

You know, I have passed out five years ago from the University, But I am here. I just want to stay in the campus, Here, I am someone, People know me. But outside, I will just be like the rest of the slobs in this country.

Figure 3. (a), (b) Daljit’s mental apprehension about the city.

Daljit’s opinion about life outside the campus of Delhi University is a fear of getting lost in a strange city. This fear of being left alone converts the city into an apocalyptic space in the perspective of a migrant like Daljit. For him, the institution of marriage and family is just an apparatus to suppress the wild flight of an individual and at the same time these institutions play the role of filling the left over relations. Later, Mehra also studied Delhi from the populous area of Chandni Chowk in Delhi 6 (2009). The film is set up in the Chandni Chowk area of old Delhi and is reputedly based on Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra’s authentic experience of life within this populated space. The number 6 in the film refers to the PIN code of the Chandni Chowk. The film speaks about Delhi as a concept of miniature India and definitely hints at the multiple ideas of Indianness. Thus the microscopic space of Chandni Chowk becomes a model of understanding the intersection of local and global. Kevin Lynch in The Image of the City (1960) forwards the concept of imageability that highlights certain important markers of the city that become useful mental images for evoking the recognition...
of the city. Chandni Chowk in the case of Delhi is an image that evokes a painful, traditional and a traumatic past of Indian history. *Delhi 6* also unravels the repercussion of globalization and world economies on the isolated culture of Chandni Chowk.

Figure 4. (a), (b), (c), (d) Aerial and the territorial view of the landscape of Chandni Chowk and Aslam’s home.

The historical flashback in the narrative begins with the sequence of the Kakori train robbery of 1925, where audiences see Chandrasekhar Azad, Ramprasad Bismil and Asfaqullah Khan looting the British officers travelling in the train to Kakori. This sequence also incorporates the historic tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh massacre and informs the reasons about why young revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev joined the war against the British administration. This powerfully shot scene accompanied with haunting background score, highlights the importance of this historical incident that led to the emergence of the revolutionary quit India movement. The young characters, who once mocked at the concept of nationalism, sacrifice and were unable to relate to the ideology of the revolutionaries now find themselves in a questioning their contribution towards the nation. At this point, Rakeysh Mehra informs the audience about the capture of Ashfaq and Bismil by the British police. Both the revolutionaries are tortured and finally executed to death by the British government. After the disturbing flashback of the execution of Bismil
and Ashfaq, Mehra returns to the present times in which the entire group of friends is giving a farewell party to Ajay. This scene turned out to be an iconic and pivotal for the film because of the discussion between Ajay, Daljit, Aslam and Karan on the topic of corruption, bureaucracy and unworthy patriotic allegiance. Ajay who is disturbed by the perspective of the entire group tries to reason with them by telling that “it is easy to criticize the political system but it is difficult to take the responsibility and change the society”.

Another major incident that transforms the life of the young men is the death of the elderly freedom fighter Lala Lajpat Rai. The sequence begins with the arrival of John Simon in India. A group of revolutionaries led by Lala Lajpat Rai are protesting against this arrival at the railway platform. In a flash the mob runs out of control and the British forces start using violent measures against the revolutionaries. In the background, the Director uses Hindi poetry “Sarfaroshi ki Tamanna” for the audiences to identify the jingoism within the revolutionaries. This tragic incident leads Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev into detonating a non-fatal bomb on the central assembly of Delhi and thereafter surrendering to the British police. As Rang De Basanti depicts the scenes of Kakori train robbery, the assassination of Colonel Saunders and the non-lethal bomb detonation at the assembly, Sue’s film with his grandfather’s voiceover also becomes an account of an encounter of the British officer’s relationship with the revolutionaries as a jailer and rebel. His admiring voiceover about the prisoners is accompanied with the sepia images of past and the colorful present of Sue reading his diary. The turning point in Rang De Basanti comes, when the audiences are informed through the news channel NDTV (New Delhi Television Limited) about the death of their pilot friend Ajay, in a MiG plane crash, near the city of Ambala.

Ajay’s death becomes controversial, when the India’s defense minister accuses Ajay of being reckless and novice in front of national media. He refuses to accept any kind of blame on the faulty parts bought by the government. This statement by the minister infuriates the mourning friends of deceased Ajay and they retaliate by holding a candle light vigil at the historic India gate. However, their peaceful candlelight march is violently crushed by the police, at the behest of the politicians involved in the deal. At this juncture, the entire group realizes the need to draw public attention to the heroic death of Ajay and reveal the corrupt politicians and businessmen involved in the MiG deal. There is a major contrast between the lush and colorful mise en scene of the first half and the gloomy, stark mise en scene of the second half. The second part is full of sepia tones, low color saturations and historic locations. Rakeysh Mehra is trying to recreate history in a convincing manner. The cinematic technique in the film, such as news format; handy cam footage, highlights the aesthetic
realism within the film. The *lathi* charge scene outside the India gate is used by Rakeysh Mehra to comment on the political corruption and authoritarianism of the political leaders. The candlelight vigil incident showcases the attempt to suppress the power common man by brutal force. This present incident is at the same time juxtaposed with the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. India gate is a symbol of visceral moments that has and will remain in the hearts of Indians eternally. The gate epitomizes the valor and resilience of Indian soldier’s martyrdom who lost their loves in World War I and Indo-Pakistan war of 1971. The *Amar Jawan Jyoti* reflects the love for motherland and jingoism in the heart of the soldiers of the country. In the film this historical monument remains no more a symbol of India’s patriotic past. This cinematics of martyrs converts into a space of authority, oppression, corruption and a battlefield for the powerless educated rebels. Rakeysh Om Prakaash Mehra blends the cinematics of past with the cinematics of present and turns the peaceful, harmony, and leisure spaces into a ruined wasteland.

Figure 5. (a), (b) Candlelight vigil at the India Gate

The audiences observe the Defense Minister taking place of General Dyer and ordering the troops to execute the innocent people; out of them one is Ajay. This second Jallianwala Bagh sequence is shot in black and white; except for the color red that depicts the splashing and spillage of human blood. This social movement depicted in the film later on influenced the candle light vigil of the Jessica Lal murder and the culprit Manu Sharma was incarcerated. This reality story was recently taken up by Rajkumar Gupta in *No One Killed Jessica* (2011). The film is set in Delhi and is inspired by the true story of the Jessica Lal
murder case. The film combined fictive as well as documentary elements in order to showcase the Jessica Lal murder case from a perspective of corporate media houses. The film also highlighted the power of disenchanted Delhi youth as they counter power of the corrupt political structures and the biased judiciary. The film also followed the real life incidents of SMS activism, candle lit protests and created an active meaningful public sphere in the film. Rakeysh Mehra uses montage style of editing to compare the ruthless British Soldiers and the merciless Indian politicians of two different generations. The revolutionaries of the past draw parallels with the youngsters of today’s generation. The incident of Jallianwala Bagh and the brutal lathi charge outside the India gate, turned common citizens into revolutionaries. In the past, this was followed by Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad. During the contemporary times, these college going students tread the similar path. Walter Benjamin in The Arcades Project (2000) concentrates on the city as a site of ruin and has promoted the idea of an allegorical gaze that seeks to understand the ruin in contrast to the illusion or the fantastical version of the city. The frontal face of the modern city is that of a spectacular world but when the ruin is excavated through an allegorical gaze, one deals with alienation and displacement within the city. In this context, Rang De Basanti, selects India gate for candlelight vigil because the historical monument is symbolic of faith on the democratic system of India. The sequence of lathi charge is shot in slow motion and the agitation is aerially captured through a long shot on the entire landscape of India gate.

Tired with the system of justice delayed and denied, Sonia and the young men are propelled into taking extreme action against the corrupt system. The entire group hatches a plot to shoot the defense minister when he goes out for morning walk. This scene is cleverly juxtaposed with the assassination of British officer Saunders by the revolutionaries; in an attempt to avenge the death of socialist leader, Lala Lajpat Rai. In this sequence, Rakeysh Mehra uses continuity editing to make his story appear seamless. The cinematographic techniques, such as shot-reverse-shot, eye in eye matches and adherence to the 180 degree rule ensures the flawlessness of the sequence. When the assassination of the defense minister turns him into a political martyr and their actions are mistaken for terrorist attacks, the group decides to occupy All-India radio by force and confess their crime to the entire country. The individual scene of Karan’s confession on the radio is intermingled with shots of ordinary citizens in the country.

During his confession on the radio, Karan straightaway mentions that they might have committed a crime in killing the defense minister; some requisite action had to be taken to transform the current scenario. There is a dire need to change the political and judicial system
in India. While it is easy to criticize those in power, it is not easy to change the structures of democracy. At this point various listeners call the radio station, and they receive a mixed response from the listeners. Some curse them for killing the minister, few support their action, niche provides pessimistic opinions that it is all worthless and nothing can transform this country. At this Karan equates to the belief of Bhagat Singh that “no country is perfect but it has to be made perfect by us. We will join the army, be IAS officers, join politics. This country will change and we will change it.” As Karan is prepared to go off-air and join his friends before surrendering to the police, the students are shot down by the NSG commandos of the state police. Despite leaving the entire Air-India radio staff unharmed, the arbitrary violence from the Indian nation-state does not seem justified. Antonio Gramsci terms this resistance “passive revolution”. This revolution has two main characteristics. First, the revolution is without mass participation and primarily involves niche or socially informed or educated people. Second, this revolution tries to mass mobilize the ideas to the national-popular base. For Gramsci, media plays an important role in disseminating the values, morals and information throughout the society. The media controls the opinion of people, and utilizes them to formulate their ideas about the society. The revolutionaries in the film use the platform of radio to reach out to the popular masses. They clarify their motive of killing through the medium of radio and encourage the masses to rise and transform social atmosphere of the country. The action of these youngsters is the inability of the elderly politicians, bureaucrats, police, lawyers and businessmen will to perform their natural duties.

Gramsci mentions these fissures in the society as:

The fact that progress occurs as the reaction of the dominant classes to the sporadic and incoherent rebelliousness of popular masses—a reaction consisting of ‘restorations’ that agree to some part of the popular demands and are therefore ‘progressive restorations’, or ‘revolutions-restorations’, or even ‘passive revolutions’. (118)

This entire sequence is presented in split screen. The sequence parallels the events of British violence on the revolutionaries and the current day violence by the contemporary administration. In this context, Garcia Canclini mentions that with the help of globalization people have become engaged citizens not just through democratic process of voting but also through the consumption of commodities, images and services. The consumption of media generates social bonds and influences perception of people and influences their actions. Thus, in Rang De Basanti, protagonists use the power of media in the form of radio to reach out to the masses to impact the opinion and actions of the citizens. In the work, Citizens and Consumers (2001) he argues that “disillusioned with state, party, and the union
bureaucracies, the public turns to radio and television to receive what citizen institutions could not deliver: services, justice, reparations or just attention” (21).

The film clearly makes an attempt to distinguish their actions, completely, from the terrorists and fundamentalists. Sue, just like her grandfather, cannot participate in the drama and is not able to save her friends from their spectacular deaths. In an era of globalization, the film supports extreme and rational notion of anti-authoritarianism. Rakeysh Mehra heightens the realism effect of Rang de Basanti in the final sequence and showcases the college students all over India revolting against the brutal deaths of the youngsters. He shoots the entire sequence on the lines of documentary and follows the format of breaking news style. The sequence further records the interviews from real life college students in India. The entire student fraternity lauds the exceptional stance taken by the protagonists. The film also comments upon the relationship between media and public as the medium creates a space for rational debate and dialogue for the public. This further empowers the citizens and creates awareness for the revival of the public sphere. In the context of the film, the medium provides an impetus for the revival of the corrupt political and democratic structures. This innovative use of media and technology parallels with McLuhan’s thought of “Medium is the Message”. Marshall McLuhan mentions that a “message” is, “the change of scale or pace or pattern” (8) that a new invention “introduces into human affairs” (8). Thus, it is not the use of the innovation, but the changes in the society that technology brings over a long period of time. Therefore he mentions that:

In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium- that is, of any extension of ourselves- result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves-result from, or by any new technology. (7)

Although, the film does not offer any democratic solutions nor does it concentrate on singular method to change the present scenario. The film concentrates on a situation where the nation at perpetual state of uncertainty, threat and the creator of violence.

The second film under analysis, explores an aspect of Delhi that is completely in contrast to the revolutionary zeal of Rang De Basanti. Although the film is marred with conflicts and emotions, yet these conflicts are internal, personal and situated within the walls of the chaotic wedding bungalow. Monsoon Wedding directed by Mira Nair is set in Delhi
and concentrates on English, Hindi and Punjabi speaking middle class family. The film represents a burgeoning cinematicscapes of New Delhi’s sub-urban area and uses an opulent Punjabi wedding as an occasion for the reunion of family members who are settled across the world. The film is a journey into the panorama of contemporary Delhi and invites us to view the extended family of an emergent middle class. The major characters of the film represent the large number of Indians living in the diaspora. Mira Nair with her roots in Delhi also concentrates on the post-liberalization era of India. The term diaspora not only signifies the movement of people known as NRIs but in a larger context also connotes to the social and cultural transformation of India since the economic reforms of 1991. In the case of Delhi, in the era of post-liberalization, the city has been taken over by the people of Punjab. Ashis Nandy in “Death of an Empire” (2002) writes about the importance of Punjabi community to create a spirited and flamboyant identity for them to overcome the trauma of partition that had deeply shattered the entire community. Historically, Delhi is a city of trauma and the coming together of the family for the wedding implies their larger connectedness with the community, culture and traditional lifestyle. The repercussions of globalization on the city of Delhi are minutely captured in the film through details such as, the consumer goods, designer labels, and transformation of Indian television channel through cable in particular urban areas. The film also comments on the clash of modernity and tradition through a sequence of debate on pornography on the Indian television channel where Aditi works.

Monsoon Wedding deconstructs the myths of the Indian nation mired in some pre-modern space with ancient beliefs and customs. Mira Nair reveals a postmodern world in the capital which uses the latest technology such as mobile phones, internet. The wedding home is a microcosmic representation of tradition and modernity that coexists peacefully or with tensions within the society of Delhi. The film introduces the cinematic city of Delhi with the cinematographic technique of hand-held camera. In general hand-held camera technique is used for intimate filmmaking. This cinematographic technique suits the film because the film deals with the emotionscape of wedding and multiple private spaces of the individuals in the family. The tightly structured claustrophobic streets of Delhi are full of bicycle rickshaws, pushcarts, motorcars. The personalized space of golf course is beautifully landscaped and golf carts are impeccably driven through the golf course, while few women labourers carry sand in the baskets for the sand pits. In examining Monsoon Wedding one can clearly see these disjunctures between economy, culture and politics especially in relation of an individual to the city. Arjun Appadurai in his essay “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” mentions that the global cultural economy is a complex, disjunctive order
that cannot be understood in terms of the existing center-periphery structures. Rather he proposes that there are “certain fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture and politics” (33) that have barely been explored and theorized. These five dimensions of the global cultural flows are termed as “a) ethnoscapes; b) mediascapes; c) technoscapes; d) finanscapes; and e) ideoscapes” (33). These five scapes can very well be applied to examine the film.

_Monsoon Wedding_, as the title makes it clear, belongs to the genre of “wedding pictures” such as _A Wedding_ (Dir. Robert Altman, 1978), _Father of a Bride_ (Dir. Charles Shyer, 1991) _The Wedding Banquet_ (Dir. Ang Lee, 1993) and _My Best Friend’s Wedding_ (Dir. P.J Hogan, 1997). This successful formula of “wedding pictures” dominated the screen of Hindi films industry in early 1990s. These melodramatic films centered on wealthy Indian families and were often shot in the picturesque locales of United States and Europe. These films presented beach dances, wedding celebrations, festive occasions and an all around feeling of happiness, comfort and safety. Films such as _Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge_ (Dir. Yash Chopra, 1994) _Hum Aapke Hai Kaun_ (Dir. Suraj Barjatiya, 1995) _Pardes_ (Dir. Subhash Ghai, 1997) by and _Kuch Kuch Hota Hai_ (Dir. Karan Johar, 1998) have provided a glimpse into the extravagant lifestyles of the elite Indian classes. The _mise en scene_ of the films was a hybrid form of traditional castles with designer Western style mansions. Mira Nair in her film departs from the grand representation and uses cinema verite style for the presentation of wedding in Punjabi style. Cinema Verite, is a French film movement of the 1960s that showcased everyday situation with authentic dialogue and action. At its simplest, cinema verite is defined as filming method employing hand held cameras and live, synchronous sound. Although _Monsoon Wedding_ is indebted to the Hindi cinema for incorporating the song and dance sequence into the narrative, but the film departs from the popular genre films by incorporating Punjabi folk songs that are specially sung at Punjabi weddings. The film also departs from performative aesthetic, instead tries to enter into intimate lived spaces and experience by deviating away from the regular cinematographic technique of frontal imagery. Instead of just making a wedding picture album, Mira Nair wants to enter into wedding picture family. She explores the family, individual, private life, private emotions, implicit/explicit feelings, the spoken as well as silenced spaces that family members inhabit. This is the reason for shooting the film in cinema verite style.

_Monsoon Wedding_ endorses the idea of traditional Indian values through staging an elaborate Punjabi wedding and by making the joint family as the locus of the film. The theme
of joint family seems important at a juncture, when nuclear families are replacing the age old tradition of extended families, among the rising middle class of India. Mira Nair, critically analyses the tradition of joint family, as she presents a balanced view about the family dramas. She delves into the basic lifestyle of happy family reunion and fluidly moves towards the sexually intimate scenes. This is further intertwined with the theme of wedding and disturbingly controversial topic of sexual molestation. There are several layers in the film, besides the extensive preparation for the wedding of Aditi and Hemant. One sub-plot being of Rahul, a young man studying in Australia and falls for Aisha, one of the cousins in the vast Verma family. Their love story is an innocent one as compared to that of the clumsy wedding planner P.K Dubey, who falls in love with Alice, the maid of Verma family. Besides the newly emerging love stories, Mira Nair also celebrates the marital bond of the elderly couples. The bride’s parents Lalit and Pimmi Verma has had an arranged marriage for twenty five years and they rely and love each other, while accepting and ignoring their flaws. Although Mira Nair investigates and instructs the audiences on the deep psychological matter, she never seems to neglect her approach towards the primary plot of Punjabi wedding. Ranjana Sengupta in her work Delhi Metropolitan: The Making of an Unlikely City (2007) critically views Punjabi culture as a vulgar display of status and wealth and mentions “The frequent assertion made to those who are mapping Delhi’s recent past. The term Punjabi no longer refers to regional origins. It indicates a compendium of traits pertaining to behavior, lifestyle and aspirations” (187).

The film opens with a harried father, Lalit Verma hysterically yelling at the workers and making last minute preparations for his daughter’s wedding. He is exasperated and constantly in conflict with the event manager P.K Dubey, who expertly exploits his clients anxiety and requirements about doing the right thing for this important occasion of wedding. The language of the film is a delightful mixture of English, Hindi and Punjabi, sometimes using the three languages within the same sentences. The miscegenation of language is a typical character of modern middle class Indians and the film reflects the mixture of characters that return from America, Australia, Middle East. The event manager P.K Dubey himself uses words such as “exactly and approximately” to reassure Lalit about the proceedings in his work. The primary objective of cost conscious Lalit is to assure that his daughter’s marriage to Hemant, a Houston based engineer, is celebrated properly. The wedding is in the month of June and the erratic monsoon can downpour at any point of time. The glocal cinematicscape of the entire wedding home represents the diversity of Delhi at a very basic level. The colloquial language of local migrated workers in the wedding home is
completely in contrast to the sophisticated, metaphorical conversation of the upper middle class family. Another feature that presents the transformed cinematicscape of Delhi is the smoking and drinking women in the film. Although a symbol of liberation and openness, but mostly this social habit seems to be borrowed from the west. The culture of drinking wine and smoking cigar belongs to the culture of west and post-globalization this social ritual has been inherited by the emerging upper class of India. The film concentrates on the minute changes in the social and cultural practices of the families. This altered practices in a larger context ushered a major transformation in the cinematicscape of Delhi and Mira Nair in *Monsoon Wedding* stresses on these remodeled contours of the city.

The film comes to an extent when family traditions were going awry, however this kind of wedding management has gone completely out of scene, as depicted in *Band Baja Barat* (2010). The film becomes a record of distinct spaces of wedding management through the hybrid culture of Delhi. It crisply captures the moods, moments and life of the earthy and emotional people of Delhi. The film, quintessentially, traces the street talk of unabashed
college girls and boys travelling in DTC buses and making future plans on bread pakoras. The film through the institution of marriage vivisects the various layers of class distinction within contemporary Delhi. Besides these issues, Band Baja Barat also showcases the ideological clash of professional imagination of subalterns and the conservative personal dreams of their parents. The cinematic city of Delhi provides newer landscapes, architecture and multiple localities that integrate well with the changing dynamics of filmmaking. Thus, the setting of Monsoon Wedding in Delhi itself gives a new dimension to family films. As mentioned earlier, the film represents a very traditional Indian setting and the morality of the entire Verma family is not traditional. Aditi Verma, the bride, is not a receptacle of traditional Indian values. Rather, she is an upper middle class Delhi woman who reads Cosmopolitan magazine and is having an affair with a married man at her workplace. Mira Nair immediately establishes intimacy between the characters with an extreme close-up shot, over the shoulder of Vikram. Aditi self-consciously moves the face towards her lover and kisses him for the first time on screen. The sexual frankness of Aditi and her agonizing liaison with Vikram is the reason for the agreement to marry Hemant. She is tired of waiting for Vikram to divorce his wife. In this process, Aditi challenges the symbolic status of Indian womanhood by deconstructing the dominant notion of Indian woman as a metaphor of purity and chastity. This symbolic status has led to oppression and colonization by patriarchal nationalism.

Mira Nair in constructing the character of Aditi also moves away from the traditional popular representation of woman in films. Hindi cinema has perpetuated the idea of the virtuous, dutiful, sexually pure woman. Aditi, in contrast, rebels against the oppression through the exploration of her sexuality by reclaiming her body. The cultural politics of globalization brings out the notion that globalizing forces of media and migration have constituted in an imagination. This imagination coherently enters the nationalist discourse and reterritorializes with the traditional nation state. This further delineates the former meaning of global-national and creates a situation of fluidity within the passing cultures. In this context Arjun Appadurai discusses films as vehicle of ideological bearing, where “micronarratives of film, television, music and other expressive forms, [which] allow modernity to be written more as vernacular globalization and less as a concession to large-scale national and international policies” (10).

He further mentions that:

The diasporic public spheres that such encounters create are no longer small, marginal, or exceptional. They are part of the cultural dynamic of urban life in most countries and continents, in which migration and mass mediation
The character of Aditi in the film largely represents the massive change in the culture of Delhi and this new hybridity of global culture is generally explained as a post-national phenomena. Although Aditi through her arranged marriage does not negate the traditionalism within her but through her forward thinking builds a space for modernity in her actions. This transformation in a metropolitan personality is due to the consumption of hybrid cultures. This lure of hybridity is in itself a space of impurity. Thus, Monsoon Wedding celebrates the heteronormative sexual desire of the heroine and introduces this with melodramatic formula in order to explode. Another instance of transformation of the cinematiscapes of traditional Delhi towards global village is the sequence of television programme; hosted by Vikram at Delhi.com. The theme of the debate is “The Impact of Globalization in India” and Mira Nair briefly comments on the influence of media since the advent of technology. The debate takes a serious turn when the fundamentalist Hindu speaker invites, a drab middle aged dubbist, Shivani Talakia. She asks her to emulate and record the sighs and moans of a woman in orgasm, for an adult film. Rather than improving communication and using technology through a proper channel, Mira Nair portrays the advent of technology as another way of losing ourselves in the land of illusion. The characters in the film are local as well as global and the film presents us with the dual aspect of their lives. These metropolitan people are a curious blend of tradition and modernity. They are well versed in computers, cell phones and at the same time continue to value traditions, customs and family above individuality.

P.K Dubey, the event manager uses his cell phone to dupe his employer and mother. Vikram, when caught red handed by the Delhi police along with Aditi, uses his mobile phone to deceive his wife by telling her that, he is still busy at the studio. The entire escapade from the claustrophobic family and public space reveals the liberation and freedom that Aditi desires. The sequence captures the duo travelling late night to an unknown space outside the hullabaloo of the city. The camera gazes into the passionate lovers lost into each other’s arms. The close shot of Aditi reveals her enjoyment of losing her body and self with a married man. This unknown space is her escape from the authority and regular space of the family and social structures. The private space of the car becomes her home and her love towards Vikram at this hour is sacred. This excursion with Vikram turns out to be an escape from the major social authorities of the space. In this context Lefebvre argues that the social production of space is commanded by hegemonic class as a tool to reproduce its dominance. Thus, “(Social) space is a (social) product[…] the space thus produced also serves as a tool
of thought and of action[…] in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power” (22).

Mira Nair constantly focuses on dual stories, in the larger as well as the secondary plots. The camera plunges into the chattering commotion of the family gathering, where the entire globe has converged into a single family home in New Delhi. At this family gathering everyone seems to speak at once and too loudly. At the background of this narrative, there is a scene of luxurious golf course, where businessmen discuss their shipments to first world countries and Lalit reveals his cash flow problem to his colleague. The world of women in saris and dress constitute another space as they walk through the riotous streets of Delhi to make purchases for the wedding. The film in multiple shots, strings the confidential lives of many characters. Lily’s smoking and drinking, Aditi’s sex life and Ria’s molestation are few instances that Mira Nair concentrates in the film.

The secondary love story that parallels to the major plot, but acquires much larger significance is the relationship of P.K Dubey and Alice. Both the characters have migrated from different parts of the country and although being the central characters of the film, they bring in the perspective of an outsider. P.K Dubey represents the majority of lower middle class of India that aspires to move above its designated status in the society and to participate in earning wealth that is being generated by the new policies of economic liberalization. P.K Dubey’s escalation in life is evident through the conversations with his mother about the stock market. He also claims of running an event management company, YK2 dot com that decorates marriages with latest high tech designs.

P.K Dubey is a resourceful as well as a slippery event planner and his face is a picture of fast developing India. He continuously speaks on his cell phone, constantly receives messages on pager and uses gadget such as wristwatch to calculate fees of his clients. He assures his employer Lalit that his working patterns are observed in strict “foreign style”. Ironically, he is one of the millions who is still unfamiliar with the foreign world. Underneath his quick talk, deceiving words and gestures lays a sweet and innocent person who is passionate and yearning for love. Alice catches the eye of Dubey when she offers him water thrice and in the next sequence P.K Dubey reaches to court her in the kitchen. Deeply in love with Alice, he approaches her in person by handing over his business card to her, while she is working in the kitchen. He tries to explain Alice about the latest technology of electronic transmission of letters to which she responds with a knowing word “e-mail.” The discourse largely suggests the changing image of Delhi. The new technology has extended itself from the upper classes to the servant class of the society. This technological awareness of Alice
serves as an example of transforming society; touched by the commodity culture of post-liberalization era.

The character of Alice is based on the traditional values of Indian society and her personality is an alter-ego of Aditi. She belongs to the poorest state of India, Bihar and typically characterizes the changelessness of Indian village girl. Alice is a pure and virginal object of desire for P.K Dubey. During the decoration of the house, he peers Alice through the window and watches her surreptitiously trying the wedding jewellery, clothes of Aditi and transforming into a princess. Mira Nair with a medium shot captures the reflection of Alice in the mirror while cleaning the room. She notices the jewellery lying on the dressing table and the camera pans towards Dubey and his workers standing outside the house. The camera changes its position and converts into a voyeuristic male gaze from outside the house. Through the angle of camera, we see the image of Alice posing in the mirror and awestruck in love, P.K Dubey’s perspective from outside the window. At this juncture, Alice is unaware of the male gaze and is too engaged in the process of ornamenting and admiring herself in the mirror. Alice puts on earrings, bindi, ankle bracelets, lets down her hair and strikes the pose of a seductive coy lady by wrapping the sari around her head. Laura Mulvey in her essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1975) calls this pleasure of looking or the fascination with human form as “scopophilia” (7). Alice here does not embody the upper caste Hindu female, but she represents the virtuous Figureure of working class woman. Mira Nair designs her to represent a figure that perpetually emits an aura of beauty, through her simplicity.

Figure 7. (a), (b) P.K Dubey courting Alice in the kitchen.
P.K Dubey in the course of film transforms from a slippery deceiving clown into a lonely person full of anxiety. He is subject to fits of sympathy and eventually his courage and determination to win him the love of Alice. When P.K Dubey leaves the wedding space for his home in the Old Delhi, he reminiscences the vision of Alice beautifully dressed in the mirror. Mira Nair provides an authentic flavor of Delhi as the hand held camera captures the shops, crowd, narrow alleyways, congested homes and finally the destination of Mr. Dubey. Mira Nair juxtaposes the image of Delhi street scenes with the picture of Alice in Dubey’s mind. The entire cinema verite sequence symbolizes the perplexed mind of a lover and represents his consummate love from a lesser materialistic perspective. After tracing the city at the eye level, and journeying through the exhausting streets of Delhi, Mira Nair using a long shot captures the concrete beauty of Delhi. This sequence is captured from the balcony of P.K Dubey’s flat and remarkably provides a space to breathe.

![Terrestrial and aerial view of Delhi.](image)

At the wedding house, just a few days before the marriage, the camera sweeps through the streets of Delhi and captures the minute details of city life. The small shops, bright lights, large statue of Shiva, defensive glares of people drenching in the monsoon. In totality, Mira Nair captures a distant celebration of life. Inside the confused wedding home, the camera pans on bewildered Lalit, wandering around the home amongst the sleeping relatives and children, watching them sleep. Lalit is emotionally troubled by the recent argument with his adolescent son Varun, who is struggling to find his own identity. Lalit’s wife Pimmi is more intuitive than his spouse and plays the role of fulcrum between the father
and son. Pimmi is patient and accepting with younger people and rather than yelling at children, she soothes and comforts them. Besides his own children, Lalit is also worried for his dead brother’s daughters Ria who is unmarried and wants to pursue a career in writing. Inside the complex emotional universe, a third subplot is hatching in darkness as their third niece Ayesha is secretly flirting with Rahul, a distant relative who has come from Australia for the wedding.

In the midst of all the preparation, Aditi life is fraying and is doubtful about her arranged bridegroom. His bad suit and awkwardness in their first meeting is contrary to the radiant cosmopolitan personality of her lover. During the prenuptial celebration of Mehndi ceremony, the female guests sing, dance, talk Dirty and draw intricate designs on bride’s hands. Struggling to cope with her emotions, Aditi decides to meet Vikram once more. When the lovers are caught at an abandoned place by the Delhi police, their intimate meeting under the monsoon showers turns into a disaster. The police interrogate the hennaed Aditi and afraid of the repercussions of the meeting and the reaction of Vikram towards her, she takes his car and makes him stranded in the rain with the sarcastic policemen laughing down upon
him. At this juncture Aditi’s resistance towards the arranged marriage is through the language of her body. Aditi is struggling with her Indian identity and her role towards the family as daughter, wife and mother. Aditi’s physical and mental journey is significant for her transition as the meeting makes her realize about the true personality of Vikram. Mira Nair throughout the film represents Aditi as an obedient, dutiful woman who steps outside the tradition to become empowered. Aditi’s act of leaving him stranded with the police comes through reclaiming her body and sexuality. These are the traditional norms of governing Indian women’s acceptance in the society. In the context of film, this marginal site of radicalness becomes a space of resistance and provides a counter-hegemonic discourse that is found in words and action of Aditi.

Aditi’s resistance towards the dominant structures of society reveals the age old battle between tradition and modernity. These structures still exist in the modern city of New Delhi and her domestic space (home) still upholds these principles. The question Aditi raises is not through her body or her clandestine affair with Vikram. The question Aditi raises is about different sets of rules upheld for men and women in the society. The Monsoon rain that provides relief to the thousands from the summer heat serves as a symbol for Aditi’s liberation from the patriarchal structures. After the resistance, Aditi emerges to become an empowered individual and rather than going forward with the marriage, she decides to confess and receive forgiveness from Hemant. Mira Nair with a close up shot captures her face as she embraces Hemant. Within a spur of moment the passion kindles between them and surprisingly they stabilize and comfort each other.

Their union is celebrated by the relatives and it is here that the film changes abruptly towards an untouched subplot. The focus of the film changes from Aditi to Ria and Lalit still has more terrible decisions to make besides his recent financial crisis. Lalit’s major concern is funding Ria’s education in America and his younger son, who is not manly enough for his taste. Mira Nair earlier had introduced Tej Puri, whom Lalit is indebted for their help in the early days when his family had moved to Delhi after partition. He feels obligated to the family friend as he continues to be a faithful benefactor of the family. Ria’s alienation from the festivity of wedding is for two reasons. Firstly, her unresolved grief for the death of her father that makes her uncomfortable at her uncle’s place. Secondly, Ria’s tension is specifically based on the arrival of the family benefactor Tej Puri. As the family praises him for his gratitude and generosity towards the family, Ria’s anger turns mercurial. When she realizes that another child is on the target of Tej and is at risk, Ria exposes Tej in the middle of the party and we learn that he is a pedophile. The entire family gives mixed reactions and
some of the family members react with denial. Tej Puri represents an older generation of men who have migrated to United States after the independence during the 1960s and are now considered as NRI’s located in alternative modernities. He is less considered as an Indian and more as a foreigner and certainly he has not kept track of the progression of women in the globalized India.

Mira Nair constructs a populist stereotype in Tej Puri which means he is blinded by the arrogant and patriarchal attitude. He is confident of escaping unscathed even after molesting Ria and in the process to hide his reptilian colors, he offers to sponsor Ria’s education in the USA. Interestingly, Ria raises her voice aloud and reveals about his heinous criminal act. Lalit is devastated by her revelation as a victim of child abuse and the choices that are suddenly thrust upon him. Lalit is in a predicament whether to support his niece or to reject the person who supported him during hard times? The familiar social world tears him apart and finally he salvages Ria’s pride by turning Tej away in an unusual manner. Tej’s eviction from the wedding involves a symbolic dethroning from being the head and well wisher of the tradition family structure. In the emotional sequence the camera pans across the female members of the family to empathize that the daunting decision of ejection is in favor of Ria. Lalit is the protector of the entire family and his choice is out of respect towards the family members over his commitment towards the elder member of the family. The sequence highlights turban as a symbol of pride, honour, respect and the holder of traditional Indian values. The dethroning of Tej, before the family also highlights the explicit superficiality in situating traditions in outwards appearances.

Lalit reinscribes his authority by being attentive to women’s concern and he solely takes action against the benefactor. By expelling Tej Puri from his home, Lalit emerges as a new father figure whose authority emanates through change and awareness in the material and institutional structures of society. In this context, the monsoon rain not only symbolizes women’s sexual openness, or articulating about the molestation of the past. The cinematicscape of torrential rain even liberates Lalit by acting authoritatively and by dismissing the traditional notion of sacrificing women in the name of family honor.

Mira Nair through the entire sequence provides a brief glimpse of the metropolitan sensibilities of men who live in New Delhi. Arjun Appadurai theorizes the construction of masculinities through creative artists such as Mira Nair under the neologism of mediascapes which are closely related to “landscape of images” (35). The creative artist transforms these narrative based strips of reality into celluloid and forms imagined lives of people living in other places. He further explains mediascapes as:
The distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information (newspapers, magazines, television stations and film production studios), which are now available to a growing number of private and public interests throughout the world and to the images of world created by the media. (35)

The film moves out of extraordinary emotional territory and despite the intervening drama the film moves back towards the main plot of wedding. The courtship of Dubey reaches new heights as his love is not determined by class, money and religion. Alice by religion is a Christian and in Monsoon Wedding, she occupies the position of pure Indian woman. Alice metaphorically serves as a face of an entire Christian minority in the Hindu dominated nation. Her deterritorilization from the state of an impoverished Bihar to the city of Delhi, highlights the mobility of people out of their homes to participate in the avenues that economic liberalization has provided. Unlike the marriage of Hemant and Aditi, P.K Dubey’s relationship with her is not for any material gain. In the context of India, Dubey is marrying below his class and outside of his caste. Alice does not have the sexual frankness of Aditi and the characteristics which Aditi desires in a man. Dubey declares his love by presenting a heart made out of marigold flowers and Alice coyly nods by accepting his proposal.

Mira Nair distinguishes the love stories of both the couples in a similar sequence of shots. The camera with a middle shot captures the sexual passion of Aditi and Hemant. In the similar sequence, the camera cuts into the scene of Alice accepting Dubey’s innocent declaration of love. The extraordinarily uncomplicated love story is in contrast to the love story of Delhi’s wealthy cosmopolitan class. Through the parallel story of pure and innocent love, Monsoon Wedding expresses the changes in social and cultural milieu of the privileged class post-globalization. The virginal love story highlights that India is still a land of common people. These common people choose to marry for love, without giving up their chastity, honor and traditional values. The secondary aspect that the cinematicscapes of the film reveals is the universalizing of the class experience and exploration of internal contradictions within the personal space of the rich and the poor class in emerging India. The film highlights this by contrasting love stories of the couples in the film. Aditi with greater exposure and education transcends the social structures of the society. Her deliberate promiscuity represents the corruption of the moral order of the society. Mira Nair’s cinematicscapes efficiently picturizes these cracks within the family and within these cracks the family members act in a licentious manner. In a turnaround of events or the Director’s perspective of
the lower working class is completely different from the popular notion of poor, loose, morally corrupt and exploited. Mira Nair counters this by representing the simple and uncomplicated personalities of Alice and Dubey and their virginal love experience with no prior relationships and family obligations.

Nair provides a conventional popular Hindi film ending to *Monsoon Wedding*. The entire families along with wedding guests are drenched in rain and dancing exuberantly to a Punjabi disco song. As the monsoon hits heavily, P.K Dubey’s tent turns out to be inadequate. But without any further bother, the guests continue to dance in the soaking mud as Lalit hugs Dubey in a jovial manner. In the last shot of the film, Lalit reaches out for Alice and invites her to join the family for a dance. Mira Nair through her last sequence in the film endorses the idea of pan-India under the homogenous roof of Lalit’s home in Delhi. The vision of Dubey, Alice dancing along with Lalit and family during the closing scene suggests Mira Nair’s vision of a classless society. *Monsoon Wedding* not only centers on the journey of cosmopolitan and wealthy Delhi based Punjabi family. At large, it also highlights the contrasting lifestyle of two different classes belonging to rural and urban area of India and indirectly alludes to the ever increasing gap between rich and poor residing under India’s economic liberalization policy. The cinematicscapes of the film highlights the idea of global India and the city of New Delhi along with the Punjabi community have rightly generated the ability to participate in the transnationalization of Indian culture around the globe. Under the rubrics of the expensive wedding, Mira Nair highlights the diminishing space of traditional values and the vanishing connection with the rural roots of the families.

Dibakar Banerjee’s, *Khosla Ka Ghosla* carries the baton from *Monsoon Wedding* and shifts its focus from the upper class Delhi to the struggling middle class. Unlike, the former class, life of the middle class is that of saving, thinking and building. *Khosla Ka Ghosla*, encapsulates Delhi as a modern city post-globalization that has turned into a playfield of urban crisis and since then has caught in a vortex of infrastructural confusion. The city in the film now has a reconfigured ethnicity, a hybrid invasion of new culture of migrants from the adjoining states. The conglomeration of migrants has subverted the concept of the planned city by residing in the newly developing peripheries. The film documents an authentic glimpse into the lives of middle class Khosla family. The Director specially concentrates on the well researched character of middle class man, Kamal Kishore Khosla who is a decent man with simple tastes. The film is a battle for space between the new corrupt elite and the hard working middle class man, trying to make a mark in the flashy world of the manipulating nouveau riche. In this context, David Harvey analyses space from the
perspective of space, time and money in the age of globalization. Delhi, post-globalization has turned into a commodity, where the property market capitalizes on the needs of the emerging middle class to maximize profits. David Harvey in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990) historically traces the reasons for the transformation of space into a commodity in a capitalist economy. He mentions that town planning, division of labour, household and domestic layout, residential differentiation provide technical framework for capitalism to work on space. He believes in the compression of time and space through effective transformation and efficient circulation of goods in the market. Harvey further views that:

> The incentive to create the world market, to reduce spatial barriers, and to annihilate space through time is omnipresent, as is the incentive to rationalize spatial organization into efficient configurations of production, circulation of networks, and consumption. (232)

The cinematicscapes of the film is based on the middle class aspirations of Kamal Kishore Khosla, who is on the verge of retirement. He has a lifelong dream to invest his savings in a dream house for his family in the spacious and posh South Delhi. The story further takes a turn when property mafia Kishan Khurana usurps the land that belongs to innocent Khosla family and shatters the dream of this ageing old man. Dibakar Banerjee through his characters presents a slice of everyday life and brings out a comic but powerful satire on the increasing land mafia scams in Delhi. Kamal Kishore Khosla and Kishan Khurana epitomize Delhi’s contrary classes. The former has slogged out his entire life to earn respect and money and the latter is a person trying to earn gallons of money through any means. The characterization and nature of Kamal Kishore Khosla needs a special mention. He is a person who loses out his temper at home, but in the outside world, he is a powerless old man. There are certain incidents in the film when Kamal Kishore Khosla, acts crabby and is under lots of stress. This under the stress gesture of Mr. Khosla, is efficiently captured by the Director through simple clothes, his wayward looking hair, standing from both the sides of his head. At the heart of film, there also lies the clash of tradition and modernity within the family. This insecurity of losing control over the family and living in isolation for the entire life makes Kamal Kishore Khosla invest his entire life earnings on a piece of land. He dreams of building a three storey house with a floor that belongs to every member of the family. This high insecurity and tension is the inception point of the film. He has nightmares about his death and feels betrayed by his family.

The sequence opens with a long shot of a mob standing outside a house and criticizing the acts of an abnormal person. The Director slowly establishes the cinematicscapes and
principal characters of the film. The camera first pans on a niggling, dense Panjabi wife, Sudha Khosla worried about the finances of the family and preparation of lunch. The camera further introduces the daughter of the family Nikki Khosla, a tomboyish, teenage girl worried more about her clothes rather than the funeral of her father. The film also introduces the elder son Bunty who is a disappointment to Mr. Khosla and generally passes his time idealizing and investing in the share market. The younger son Cherry is a typical workaholic software engineer in a MNC and is always in a rush to reach office on time. The innermost fear of Mr. Khosla resurfaces; he finds the members of his family much interested in the materialistic world. The neighborhood of Khosla family is also occupied in banal conversation. This ignorance by the family and neighbors is symbolic of the inner fear of being lonely and isolated in the city.

Figure.10. (a), (b), (c), (d) Mr. Khosla’s nightmare dreamscape.

The cinematicscape of the establishing shots of the film also concentrates on certain entities that are symbolic of a middle class family living in an era of post-globalization. On the deathbed of Mr. Khosla, his wife and other female discuss the Sanjeev Kapoor’s famous cookery television show, a juice bottle at the centre of the dining table, an old bajaj scooter and finally a hatchback car without air-conditioning. This practice of consumption and associated lifestyle changes distinguish the new urban middle class from the traditional urban
middle class that had inherited the principles of Nehruvian state and Gandhian idealism. The camera after capturing the expressions and discourses of the people in the crowd moves toward Mr. Khosla lying on the death bed. The Director with a close up shot of the face captures the dead face of Mr. Khosla and within a split second the sequence ends. The camera moves inside the house where Kamal Kishore Khosla suddenly awakes after watching this bad dream. Dibakar Banerjee here provides the first glimpse inside the claustrophobic home which has unequal division of rooms amongst the parents and their children. The elder son Bunty sleeps on the sofa of drawing room. The entire home has a single bathroom and Mr. Khosla’s early rising disturbs the other members of his family. The Director deliberately uses close up shots and middle shots to capture the congestion within Khosla family’s contemporary middle class lifestyle. The interior view of the home justifies Mr. Khosla’s aspiration to transcend his age old lifestyle.

The cinematic scapes of Delhi completely differs from the city that earlier films in this chapter focus upon. There are certain citadels and monuments captured in the film that makes a cinematic city alive on the celluloid. These monuments are emblematic of the city and are important from perspective of the history of a nation. The films on Delhi repeatedly capture historical icons such India gate, Parliament house, Qutub Minar, Red Fort, to justify the existence of a true cinematic scapes within the cinematic city. In contrast, the cinematic scapes of Khosla Ka Ghosla represents a middle class that has forgotten its national struggle. This middle class is unaware about the history, and is constantly working hard to improve its lifestyle. To capture the ordinary everyday life of the city, Dibakar Banerjee uses bottom to top camera angle to capture the essential shots within the film. In a larger perspective, this camera angle is deliberately used to provide subaltern point of view to capture the city on the celluloid. The city captured in the film is a city of common man who is reeling under the stress of everyday life and is lost within the whirlpool of this powerful political centre of Delhi.

The sole purpose of Kamal Kishore Khosla of building a dream home starts with the first step of purchasing a land from a local land property dealer Vijender. Earlier, during the morning walk discourse along with Mr. Sawhaney, the Director reveals that Mr. Khosla is planning to purchase a plot in the south Delhi. Southern Delhi epitomises the lives of city’s rich, who organize astonishing parties, have large car collections in their fantastic estates. Unlike any other metropolitan city, south of Delhi offers the urban elite with pastoral tranquility and these metropolitan set of people seize swathes of land to build their farm houses. The catastrophe that followed India’s partition brought immense pressure on the
northern part of Delhi. The city turned into an infrastructural maze surrounded by apartments, private corporations and fences. The current landscape of Mr. Khosla’s residence seems to belong to the old Delhi as the colony consists of small working class homes, compact community park, tight roads and haphazard parking. In this enigmatic condition, a middle class person’s dream of following the isolationist ethos of the elite class seems justified. Kamal Kishore Khosla, purchases a piece of land in south of Delhi. This plot is far away from the glittering archipelago of restaurants, cafes, bars and lies in the peaceful countryside. During the first few minutes of the film, the Director captures the cinematicscapees of Khosla family visiting their plot. The family head, Kamal Kishore Khosla is over excited. Dibakar Banerjee uses a long shot to capture Mr. Khosla; artistically trying to explain the idea of dream home settled in his mind. The other Khosla family members are shot with low angle camera of bottom to top. The elder Khosla ignores their tiring expressions and zealously explains of the dream project. The innocence of the old man seems to flow out during the sequence as he tries to involve the family members within the discussion. His wife does not speak a word as she feels the harsh heat of the sun and his disinterested children are trying to comprehend his emotions associated with the barren land. The sentiments of this outgoing old man and the leader of the family is the fear of being left alone in the unforgiving city of Delhi. The failure of his elder son and the success of younger have created a sense of imbalance in his life. He attributes their success and failure to the life he has given them and in order to maintain the balance, he wants to provide his entire family the luxuries through the newly acquired physical space.
At another level, Kamal Kishore Khosla represents the rising middle class of India at a microcosmic level. This new middle class is distinctive from the older, their practices are centered around specific characteristics such as consumption, style and social distinction. The significant change in the lifestyle of the middle class post-globalization; significantly changed the socio-economic structures of Indian nation. The decision of Mr. Khosla, to migrate from the claustrophobic lower middle class colony, to elite suburban area is associated with the changing public social identity of rising middle class. This changing taste, at a deeper level also restructures the identity, lifestyle and shapes the social space. The reorganization of this social space can be analyzed in terms of economic policies of liberalization that further led to the restructuring of urban space. In contrast to the modern urban metropolitan cities of the West, metropolitan cities in India have not followed the strict class segregation spatial pattern. The distinction in Indian metropolitan cities has always been disrupted by the presence of street entrepreneurs, pavement dwellers, washer men, and tailors, to provide services to their middle and upper class residents.

Kamal Kishore Khosla immensely relies on his sensible computer engineer son, Chironjilal Khosla, to architect a dream house on his newly purchased plot. Chironjilal, is a self centered man and rather privileges his own needs above his father’s. He has issues with his traditional name and is indifferent towards his father’s ambitions. Although Cherry is a source of pride for his father, he finds his current life style lackluster. Cherry without discussing his future plans with his girl friend Meghna and his family applies for a job in USA and receives an interview call from the company. The only person Cherry discusses his
plans with his visa application agent named Asif Iqbal, the agent who helps him with passport, visa. Later, this meeting turns out to be a blessing in disguise for the Khosla family. Kamal Kishore and Chironjilal have strained relationship with each other and they donot look into each other eyes. Although, the elder Khosla on the suggestion of Mr.Sawhaney makes some awkward attempts to reconcile with his son before elder Khosla’s typical middle class ego obstructs the conversation.

The discussion between Mr. Khosla and Mr. Sawhney during their journey in the local bus reflects deep insecurities of the older generation willing to compromise according to the will of younger generation. Mr. Khosla’s attempt to construct a home is deeply symbolic of his fear of keeping his household from disintegrating. Mr.Khosla tries to bridge connections with his younger son by celebrating and asks Bunty to prepare the name plates for their new residence in South Delhi’s posh locality. When Mr. Khosla starts asking his opinion, Chironjilal reveals his plans of migration to the USA and disturbs the already falling apart family.

Amidst the chaos within the fragmenting Khosla family, Kamal Kishore Khosla realizes that the dream home is in danger of being usurped. During the Bhumi poojan ceremony, the family realizes that the plot has been encroached upon by the corrupt and powerful Kishan Khurana, who heads the usurping nexus mafia of Khurana Properties. The earlier property dealer Mr. Vijender, arranges their meeting with Mr. Khurana and from this juncture the narrative captures the irony, humour and unadulterated propulsion of every character in the film. The foregrounded theme of real estate takes a back seat and the Director ventures into Khosla family’s journey from loss to redemption. The reason for usurping is clearly stated by the property dealer. A journey from the north to south Delhi, clearly demarcates the differences between the two cinematic spaces. Northern Delhi is clearly overpopulated and the southern part is still developing. The social life of South Delhi is peaceful and composed; to the crowded and vibrant culture of the northern city. This difference in attitude can also be seen in the nature and lifestyle of characters Kishen Khurana and Kamal Kishore Khosla.

Dibakar Banerjee introduces the sequence with Bunty and Mr. Khosla travelling in a posh colony where everything is planned and beautiful. On this marked difference in the lifestyle of the elite upper class and the middle class, Bunty remarks that “everything looks the same over here.” The modern architectural structures of Delhi emulate the pattern of similarity and style in spatial terms as well as design. The royal architecture of Delhi during the colonial rule exclusively focused and represented the social stratification of the society in
terms of hierarchy and status. The Viceroy house, today popularly known as the Rashtrapati Bhavan was situated at the centre of the city and the distance from this center defined the position and status of an individual during the colonial period. The address of the plot “Sector 30, Plot no.32, New Sapna Vihar” is constantly reiterated in the film. This plot is not just a piece of land but at large is symbolic of the social status of an individual. The plot not only reflects the growing economic power of the ever increasing middle class, rather it also alludes to the increasing industrial and IT presence at the areas adjoining south Delhi. Saskia Sassen in *The Global City* (1991) calls these projects of urban spatial restructuring in metropolitan cities as “strategic geography of globalization that is partly embedded national territories, i.e. global cities and Silicon valleys” (96).

This urban restructuring of Delhi is clearly mentioned in the sequence at the property dealer Vijender’s office. Mr. Khosla mentions that the multinational companies capture the hard working men for their profits and this south facing plot is also close to the his son’s multinational company. The statement of Mr. Khosla highlights the shift from the traditional center towards newer places. The city in Mr. Khosla’s words is an ever evolving space that continuously reinvents and mutates alongside the widely disparate lifestyles and controversial centre of Delhi. The traditional citadels of the city have been transcended and are constantly being challenged by the newer emerging centers.

Dibakar Banerjee introduces the sequence of the cinematicscapes with a wide angle shot of the luxurious bungalow of Kishen Khurana. He captures the entire outdoor space of the bungalow and creates a rich and powerful image of Kishen Khurana, the property encroacher. Mr. Khosla and Bunty enter the house and are astonished to see the interiors and grandeur of the palatial bungalow. This entire sequence is captured through a low angle shot, from the perspective of Khosla’s. The camera captures the well decorated ceiling, designer fountain and decked up workers. Mr. Khosla and his son are sitting on a throne like sofa, near an indoor fountain. During this sequence, there is a perpetual anxiety and tension on the faces of Kamal and Bunty Khosla. The *mise en scene* of Khurana’s office is presented in a very dark manner. The interior of the office is as slimy as his slimier exterior. The portrait of a tiger preying on a deer and dim lighting within the office is symbolic of his demonic stature. Here again, the Director follows the low angle shot from the perspective of Mr. Khosla and through a rising close up shot, Dibakar Banerjee maintains the upper class status of Kishen Khurana. During the one sided conversation, there is a notable difference in the family life of Mr. Khosla and Mr. Khurana. This difference can also be compared to the landscapes of north and south Delhi. In conversation with Mr. Khosla, Kishen Khurana mentions that “it is
your good luck that your kids live with you, they are backing you at this moment.” Dibakar Banerjee through this discourse hints at the loneliness of a rich man, living in isolation. He completes this picture at the end of the film, when Kishen Khurana is alone with his house guard, after the completion of deal.

Figure 12. (a), (b), (c), (d) Kamal Kishore Khosla’s first meeting at the bungalow of Kishen Khurana.

The cinematicscapes of Kishen Khurana’s bungalow can be juxtaposed with the cinematic technique used in capturing Kamal Kishore’s Khosla’s home. The Director uses majority of close up shots to magnify the details of action taking place within the Khosla home. The smaller area of Khosla’s home, delivers the impact of an individual’s interconnectedness with the rest of the space. Their physical lives intersect with each other at every step and the family seems undivided to the outer world. Mr. Khosla and Mr. Khurana, reflect two different universes, simultaneously existing within the city. Michel Foucault
mentions these parallel universes in his essay “Of Other Spaces” (1967) as the “Epoch of Simultaneity” and views that:

The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side by side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein. (27)

By this time, all the characters have been introduced in the film. Everybody seems to be an average person with different wavelength, ridden with multiple faults. Chirojilal seems to be insensitive but is nothing more than someone whose mentality has digressed from his family towards achieving a prosperous career. Bunty is someone restricted by his options and experience, practical but not bright enough to succeed. Kamal Kishore Khosla is a powerless middle class man, who reigns in his familiar world but is unable to handle the new order exiting outside his periphery. Finally, the religious and ruthless Kishen Khurana, who with his shrewd tactics and mannerisms makes the estate mafia’s existence believable in the film.

The encroachment of a land is a serious issue in Delhi and this widespread problem would break the homes of many middle class families. Struggling to keep his family from breaking up, the land turns into an integral entity that binds the Khosla family together. But after the encroachment, the land slowly loses its material and superficial value. From this juncture the film takes a turn and the entire Khosla family answers the usurper by broking a fake deal through the visa agent Asif Iqbal, once an accomplice of Kishen Khurana, provides a logical solution to the ailing family. At this stage, the patriarch, Kamal Kishore Khosla seeks help from, police, lawyers, local leaders and self help groups.

In the process, Dibakar Banerjee is unable to restrain himself from making an often repeated social commentary on the impotency of the legal and non performing administrative structures functioning within the country. These legal administrative structures have also become a part of the unlawful practices and are jointly running the system with the felonious individuals of the society. Kamal Kishore Khosla appears to be a vulnerable man standing alone in front of the mighty, powerful and influential institutions. Corruption has strongly been a strong characteristic of the city of Delhi. The revoked theme of corruption in the film is juxtaposed with Delhi’s glorious past, its vivid romantic history, the courtly intrigues, the fall of empires and the romantic decay of civilizations. The middle class man, Kamal Kishore Khosla is going through a contrasting phase in his life with confusion, mental trauma and
irritated conscience. The emotionally reserved father is shocked by the fate’s cruelty and gives all hope of spending his retirement in luxury. The elder son, Bunty through his earthy accent and fast talking attitude convinces his parents to use illegal method of snatching back the lost land. The realistic humour in the situation and the repercussion of Bunty’s muscle power, lands Mr. Khosla behind the bars and his short lived happiness seems to be lost forever. When arm twisting attempts and polite requests failed to produce the desired results, the younger son Chironjilal aided by visa agent Asif Iqbal, hatch a clever scheme to dupe Kishen Khurana through his own methods. The film here enters a new domain and the entire scheming and plotting changes the course of Khosla family’s future forever.

During the discussion with Chironjilal, Asif Iqbal reveals that Kishen Khurana had also encroached upon his ancestral land and in order to take revenge he offers help to the Khosla family. Meghna with the help of her drama club decide to recreate a scheme and turn the tables on Kishen Khurana. This local drama club is headed by Bapu who also plays the role of Mr. Sethi and helps the Khosla family in the conclusion the entire deal. But for a middle class family, reputation, social status and moral values is much more important than materialistic commodity. This moral dilemma is faced by Kamal Kishore Khosla and Bapu before the inception of the duping plan. Both the characters have grown up on socialism and Gandhian ideals of austerity. Mr. Khosla bluntly refuses to contribute or be a part of the plan. He subtly controls the strong emotions and is unconsciously always involved in the action. Throughout the duping plan, the film does not lose its humourous take on the Khosla life. There are certain situations that clearly differentiate the younger generation from the older one on what Pierre Bourdieu terms as ‘taste’. Mr. Khosla asking for chutney while having Pizza and his awkwardness in holding this foreign food item is symbolic of his disinterestedness in consumption. Mr. Khosla’s aesthetic taste is different from the modern generation and his cultural practice of eating is in opposition to the taste of the newer generation.

Chironjilal and Asif Iqbal prepare the false papers of the land for handling it over to Kishen Khurana. The fraud papers are lying on the dining table and the entire family and the members of drama club are present in the room. At this moment, there is an electricity cut and Dibakar Banerjee juxtaposes this sequence with the mise en scene of Kishen Khurana’s office. The only lighting effect at this moment is the emergency lamp that is disseminating light at the Khosla home. This entire sequence is captured with a medium shot. Both the sequences in the film are dominated by the loss of light and low amount of light. The repetitive shot of Khurana’s office is symbolic of darkness, fear, corruption, sin and betrayal.
Thus, Kamal Kishore Khosla is not comfortable with the illegitimate methodology of duping Khurana by his own style. Besides, the life like characters and the inoculation of humour at regular intervals keeps the interest alive. The dilemma of a middle class family is honestly captured on the celluloid with utmost honesty. The question of morality is left unanswered by the Director as in the following scene; the younger generation is ready to sacrifice their morality in order to reclaim the property.

The transition of film from the familiar duping plot to the revenge of Khosla family on Khurana seems more like a fable. The director subtly portrays the essence of Delhi’s complicated colors and lends credibility to the fabricated events at the climax of the film. Finally, with the help of Meghna’s drama group and Asif Iqbal’s thoughtful and adroit strategies brings home the lost plot and the renegotiated amount of fifteen lakh is paid to Kishen Khurana. The turmoil undergone by the family in this lengthy process brings drastic changes in the relationship of father and son and Chironjilal scraps his plan of migration to USA. The film ends up by showcasing desperation in the characters to move beyond their current social and economic status. Even the character of Kishen Khurana wants to venture with Mr. Sethi in the international markets. Asif Iqbal still reminisces the betrayal of Kishen Khurana and now is an owner of an auto rickshaw and a small shop. This subaltern perspective in Khosla Ka Ghosla converts into a chain, where every character wants to step into the shoes of others. Bunty Khosla wants to become Asif Iqbal, Asif Iqbal wants to usurp Kishen Khurana’s throne, Kishen Khurana is influenced by the business and lifestyle of the fictitious character of Mr. Sethi. Dibakar Banerjee’s cinematicscapes of Delhi is a social commentary on the middle class family of this largely unloved city. The unceasing influx of migrants has unleashed the city into a concrete jungle. The new urban architecture and opulence, proliferates the modern middle class lives of families like Khosla’s. Khosla ka Ghosla also manages to highlight the different universes that co-exist with each other. The film largely negates the categories of good-bad humans, moral- amoral deeds. The film rather concentrates on the theme of the survival of the fittest and adequately justifies the role played by individuals to survive in this unforgiving city.

The three films in this chapter focused on the cinematicscapes of Delhi from the perspective of family, home, class, nation and humanitarian values. The spaces in transition in these films present the age old belief of “unity in diversity”. Rang De Basanti represents the true cosmopolitan lifestyle that exists in Delhi. The diversity in characters represents the multicultural lifestyle of Delhi and the cinematicscapes of the film efficiently upholds the characters belonging to various states, class, religion and even nationality. Although these
youngsters study in the University of Delhi, the influx of people from bordering states of Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh is the root cause of Delhi’s changing demography and cosmopolitanism. Family for these migrants are the people around which they are dealing or surrounded. Similarly for the youngsters their family is their friendship and the city of Delhi for them is a space of enjoyment, night parties and popular western fashion. The institution of family in Monsoon Wedding is presented from the perspective of Delhi based upper class Punjabi family with global connections. Their home is built in a posh sub urban area of Delhi and the cinemascapes of the film represents the home as spacious enough to hold a wedding within its premises. Their interiors are decorated with latest colours, couches, furniture and designer lamps and paintings and lamps hanging on the walls and ceiling. The conversation of these family members is glocal (Hindi, English, Punjabi) and they have a taste of craving for foreign things. The family members have independent space and their isolation and lack of communication have led them to cultivate their individual spaces. This space finally culminates into fissures, liaisons and lack of mutual understanding within the family members. The closest they interact with the congested and emerging city of Delhi is through their event manager P.K Dubey. Another important space of Delhi is the working place and the film presents young women embracing private sector job for a simple reason of security and growth. The film also vividly describes the lives of poor migrant living in Delhi and through the character of Alice the filmmaker also concentrates on the underclass of Delhi. These deterritorialized individuals generally serve the privileged families for meager salary and their vision of life in Delhi is completely different from the nouveau riche class.

Unlike the earlier films, Khosla Ka Ghosla represents contrasting cinemascapes of Delhi. The film has a closely built family structure and their individual spaces merge with the collective space of other family members. The emerging middle class has a patriarchal mind set and the women of the house are relegated to the boundaries of the home. In the earlier films, the family members work for exposure or leisure, here working, saving and dreaming of better lifestyle is the sole purpose of life. Therefore, the family members within the film work in private or public sector and for this transition they are even willing to move abroad. The cinemascapes of the film also highlights the bonhomie with the neighbors of the colony. Their colonies are constructed across the streets and in antithesis to the individual space of upper class they share public parks, transport and community services. Their experience of the city of Delhi is first hand and their entire day is spent on work, roads and planning for the future. The practical space of their life is in variance from the spatial
representation of the young student’s traveling and enjoying life in *Rang De Basanti* and the idealistic space of the upper middle class family of *Monsoon Wedding*. Although the films concentrate on the hustle, bustle and clamor of contemporary Delhi, the people of the city have lost the touch with the history of India’s glorious past. The historical sites and the crumbling structures of Delhi have given way to the congested lanes and hordes of immigrants settling illegally within these structures. The closest these films come to highlight the remains of the past is through the transformed lingua franca and this advanced miscegenation of English, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu is well represented through the diverse cinematicscales of the film.