Chapter 3

Social Issues and Hindi Parallel Cinema

Mrinal Sen’s *Bhuvan Shome* (1969)

Shot: Bhuvan Shome before the transformation in the film

About the film:

Mrinal Sen’s main protagonist in the film, *Bhuvan Shome* is a widower and a
dedicated civil servant who is a complicated, uncompromising character in the film. One day he takes a holiday for hunting in a remote village which transforms him irreparably though at the same time heightening his sense of isolation. The backdrop of the film is set in the context of a few railway ticket checkers talking about him as an uncompromising, unreasonable officer. It continues with him being described, by a narrator, as a man who is rooted to his "Bengali"-ness. Bhuvan Shome is an officer of the high rank in the Indian Railways, who is known for his arrogance and strict code of conduct in the office. Inspired by hunting, he is seen to take a "hunting holiday" to Gujarat. It is quite clear that his expedition is amateurish. He is portrayed as an inept "hunter" rather than a man who knows how to acquire a skill. The hunting trip becomes an unforgettable journey when he encounters a village young girl Gauri because it is she who takes care of him and helps "hunt" birds. Gauri and her father help him without even knowing who he is, the warm welcoming experience makes him realized the other side of the world which he had forgotten. When he is made to change his clothes because otherwise the "birds will know" and fly away is probably an important part of his transformation from a strict, conformist and aging man to one of a person more open to the stimuli of his environment. The enriching journey of Gauri and Bhuvan Shome is a lyrical exploration of Bhuvan Shome's transformation. He is not only taken back by the simple beauty of Gauri, but also enchanted by the beauty of nature that he experienced through the sojourn. Bhuvan Shome has discovered an unknown side to his personality and is deeply affected by the hospitality of Gauri, who is actually schooled more than she could expect to be in that environment. On his return to his office, he starts to do things the
opposite way and surprised his co workers with his mellowed down temperament.

The key year for Hindi Parallel cinema was 1969, sometimes regarded as the first drum-roll for the approaching New Wave. Many established critics noted that this film has remarkably set a record in its contribution in discovering a dynamic possibility in the field of Parallel Cinema making.

The Film Finance Corporation’s policy of funding the off-beat film maker, announced with a flourish by the granting of the first unsecured loan for Mrinal Sen’s Hindi film Bhuvan Shome (1969), became the main impulse behind this fresh effort to discover the essence of a new cinema for India. (B D Garga, 1996: 235).

Although far from being a masterpiece, the film had a freshness and a vigorous technique (inspired somewhat by the French nouvelle vague) and a sense of humour which enchanted the relatively wide audience.

Mrinal Sen was born (1923) and brought up in East Bengal, now Bangladesh. He came to films through his involvement in IPTA (Indian People’s Theatre Association) as an active Marxist. The center stage of Sen’s films is the city of Calcutta (Kolkata) to which he migrated while in his teen. Sen has absorbed many outside influences, both literary and cinematic. His early sources of inspiration were Eisentein and Vertov. Later he fell under the spell of Truffaut and Godard. But as British critic Derek Malcolm observes “He will beg, borrow or steal from anything to form an appropriately striking style and, for all that, still remain resolutely his own man” (Garga 1996). Sen moved from regional languages to Hindi cinema with Bhuvan Shome (1968). He applied for a loan from the government controlled Film Finance Corporation (FFC now NFDC, National Film Development Corporation) for a film to be shot entirely outdoors and on location. “Bhuvan Shome” (1969) made on an incredibly low budget of Rs 150,000 became a
landmark in Indian film history as its commercial success opened the way for what is variously termed as ‘art’ ‘parallel’ or new Indian cinema.” (Garga 235).

The film is set in Gujarat. A crusty old bureaucrat with Victorian attitudes (played with endearing eccentricity by Utpal Dutt) finds himself unequal to the situation, when, duck shooting in a remote area, he meets a sprightly village girl who refuses to take him seriously. Her naturalness and his contact with nature begin to free him from his pomposity and self-importance. The ambiguous relationship between the old disciplinarian and the uninhibited young woman is full of delightful surprises and gentle satire. The film is also remarkable for its fresh look and the hypnotic beauty of Gujarat’s unique landscape.

Shot: The scene where Shome is enchanted by the beauty and innocence of Gauri
The story is about an elderly man, Bhuvan Shome (Utpal Dutt), a senior employee in the railways department, heading off on a hunting trip and undergoing a dynamic transformation after meeting a village girl (Suhasini Mulay).

Shome gradually changes from being an arrogant man to a more recognizably human presence. There is also an incremental physical transformation, he goes from wearing an office suit to a safari suit to a village garb complete with turban.

_Bhuvan Shome_, with its austere style, sardonic humor, and expressionist exploration of the politics of class, is a landmark in modern Indian cinema, and became highly influential for what used to be called the “New Indian Cinema.” Sen's work itself shows a fusion of myriad influences ranging from Bresson to Premchand.

Mrinal Sen said, Bhuvan Shome was about the humanizing of a hard-hearted man were mistaken: “On the contrary, our intention was to ‘corrupt’ a bureaucrat suffering from Victorian morality.” But perhaps one can suggest that in this case, humanizing is synonymous with “corrupting” in a desirable sense of the word – in the sense of becoming less rigid, accepting the importance of compromise (Garga 236).

Shome’s transformation makes the world, or his own life better. At the end, we see that his act of grace allows one of his bribe-taking subordinates a transfer to a setting that is even more conducive to unearned profit. It’s a bittersweet conclusion, and perhaps one that points the way to the more barbed, more overtly political films that Mrinal Sen made in the 1970s. The social commentary that the film induces is worth complimenting. On the one hand, our society demands for a transparent system that must be disciplined and strict but on the other side of the
wall, it is the individuals in the same society that expect unreasonable lineancy and flexibility from the system – an expectation that naturally invites the birth of corruption.

Shot: Gauri teases Shome with her wit

The film generates two points of critical views – one from the filmmaker’s point of view and the other, from the audiences’ point of view. The perspective that the filmmaker intends to stir up the observers’ mind through projection of the social evil that is there owing to our irresponsibilities. The audience of the film reads the lines, scenes and facts highlighted and respond to the intense effect such a film creates. On due course of time, one would observe that even though the percentage of Hindi Parallel film lovers were not that high in the initial phase, it will change with a remarkable speed.
M.S. (Mysore Shrivinas) Sathyu’s *Garam Hawa* (1973)

**Shot:** A significant scene where Mirza is denied by the bank for taking loan

There is little abstraction in MS Sathyu’s extraordinary, sensitive debut film, *Garam Hawa* (Hot Winds, 1975), which centres around a Muslim family in Agra swept up in the vortex of communal frenzy that followed the partition of India. Sathyu who came to films after several years’ work with IPTA, where he designed sets and directed plays, drew most of his cast from the theatre. Much of *Garam Hawa’s* narrative coherence, dramatic punch and fine acting is the result of Sathyu’s experience in theatre, yet the film is not in the least theatrical. Salim Mirza (played by Balraj Sahni), the head of a muslim family, finds his shoe business collapsing because of communal hostilities. His conniving elder brother has migrated to Pakistan, and their ancestral house has been declared the evacuee property and been allotted to a Sindhi refugee businessman. The younger son who has just graduated, cannot find a job.

And to compound all this, Mirza’s daughter Amina, who has been jilted, commits suicide.

MS Sathyu (1999) explains:
What I really wanted to expose in *Garam Hawa* was the games these politicians play. Actually there are no human considerations at all. I am not talking only about India, but even in Vietnam, Biafra, Germany... it is all the same. How many of us in India really want the partition? Look at all the suffering it caused.

*Shot: Important scene where the grandmother refuses to leave the ancestral home*

Garam Hawa is a vivid glimpse into the life of the problems of the large Muslim minority (India has the second largest Muslim population in the world). A sensitive and courageous work on a highly controversial subject; compassionate and realistic, but nonpartisan, it left large sections of both Muslims and Hindus dissatisfied, but more perspective were showcased upon
the subject matter and the audiences responded to it warmly. The fears and frustrations of the Muslims who had ruled the sub-continent for about some 500 years but were reduced, with the departure of the British, to a large island surrounded by an ocean of Hindus, was brought out poignantly.

The film also deals with the plight of a North Indian Muslim family, in the years post partition of India in 1947. The film's leading protagonist (Balraj Sahni) represents the dilemma suffered by many muslims during that particular phase who were torn by the strange question of whether to move to Pakistan or stay back. Unlike the commonplace assumptions that all the muslims in India were more than willing and prepared to leave behind everything and were conveniently willing to be shifted to a newly created muslim nation, the film raised a most neglected theme of the hurdles that even the muslims faced when they had to be uprooted from the soil they were born and brought up in. The stark reality of the emotional and psychological pull and the tug of war that they had to undergo were beautifully reflected in Garam Hawa. With a mixture of thematic concerns that contain romance, politics, social upheavals, communal hatred and visually in the midst of fire, riots and bloodsheds – this film created an impact that was in itself a record for a Hindi Parallel Film to create.

The opening montage of the film is of images about the Freedom Movement and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi which is followed by a lengthy shot of Salim Mirza (Balraj Sahni) photographed from a waist-high angle at the Agra railway station, waving at a departing train. His sister is leaving for Pakistan and he’s seeing her off, they’ve spent their whole lives in close proximity, now they are being parted in their old age.
The filmmaker's adept use of light and framing adds extra dimension to the characters and their struggles. Salim's situation becomes more grave, the camera frames him in smaller spaces, implying his imprisonment in his own hometown. He is strong, but is discouraged by the exodus of family members into Pakistan. The changes that were happening around him were making him uncomfortable.

In the end, he too makes the journey to the train. On the way, Salim and his son Sikander (Faroukh Shaikh) encounter a massive protest rally which seeks to unite the dispossessed of the nation. First Sikander, and then Salim, join the flag-waving mob. The train is forgotten, and the final scene brings a sense of hope as we see Salim accept his situation in a new way and begin to take charge of his life.

The film went on to win a national award for its contribution to "national integration." More recognition followed, including accolades that praised the film's efforts to create "a language of common identity" and to humanize the situation endured by Muslims in North India who did not wish to move from their homes after the partition.

The positive energy that the film successfully revived against a backdrop of displacement, migration, clashes and conflict made this film gain a huge recognition. Adding up to it was the impact that the work created among the masses. The audiences’ response to it reaffirmed the faith that against all oddities and fux, the country nurtures the most integral notions and ideologies to live by. Such a uniting call that the film induced the importance of such a category of film that was needed during that time wherein, India as a developing nation was bombarded by changes all around by extreme modes of western ideologies and newer modes of social philosophies.
Shyam Benegal’s *Ankur* (1974)

Based on a story that Benegal wrote, *Ankur* (The Seedling, 1974), his first feature film, is set in rural South India. He recalls:

> When I was in college first I wrote as a short story, it was about a young woman who is exploited by this young man and when she becomes pregnant he wanted her to abort the child. Back in college I was the editor of the college magazine, I printed the story and it struck me that probable I can make a film so I started writing scripts and I made many drafts. So when I came to start a career here I went around 1960s and I had a reasonable
draft but none of the producers accepted it, they said no this film will not run because there are two problems in this, one is this girl who is a heroine in this film she is sleeping with somebody who is not her husband. So naturally there was nobody who were ready to put money into so it took me twelve years before I could actually make that movie. So this is the situation that I was in it was very difficult, it was not easy but I set a certain kind of way that I am going to make this film.” Benegal (Interview 2013).

Shot: Surya tries to convince Lakshmi to abort their illegitimate child

Surya (Anant Nag), a zamindar’s son, arrives from the city to oversee his father’s estate. Bored and sexually frustrated, he seduces his attractive maidservant (Shabana Azmi), wife of a deaf-mute labourer (Sadhu Meher). The arrival of his wife, who senses her husband’s involvement and the discovery of the maidservant’s pregnancy bring the situation to a head. Superbly shot by Govind Nihalani, the film is memorable for its engrossing details of rural life and its exposure of the feudal system that is brutal and indifferent.

The success of Bhuvan Shome encouraged the FFC to finance a large number of film makers, many of them making their first film. A spate of new films resulted, notably M.S.
Sathyu’s *Garam Hawa*. But the dominant figure of Bombay’s new cinema emerged from outside the area of the FFC’s engineering. Shyam Benegal’s first film, *Ankur* (1974) was financed by a booking agency for cinema advertisements. Yet, Benegal must be considered a part of the wave stirred up by the FFC’s sponsorship programme of the early seventies. *Ankur* is more akin to Satyajit Ray than Benegal’s later work, where he has taken to more forceful and direct means of making his statements. *Ankur*’s slow and even rhythm, its understatement, its shying away from the sexual encounter which is central to its story, are all reminiscent of Ray. It is a polished piece of work, meticulously structured, directed with assurance and acted superbly by Shabana Azmi and Anant Nag. The theme of the tyrant landowner who takes advantage of his woman employees reappears later in more thundering tone in *Nishant* (1975).

**Shot: Lakshmi’s innocent husband beaten by Surya’s goon**

The scene where Lakshmi’s husband, Kishtaya, on hearing of the pregnancy as he believed that the child is his and so he goes to Surya to tell him the good news and ask for some work. Surya in his guilt feels that the man has come to accuse him, and starts beating him represents the brutality of the zamindari system of our society.
Shyam Benegal’s art of making cinema has made him one of the most influential directors in India today. He is someone who, working within the stronghold of mainstream Hindi cinema, managed to create artistically superior, yet commercially viable films. He also tapped fresh new talent like Shabana Azmi, Anant Nag, Smitha Patil, Amrish Puri, Naseeruddin Shah, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Sadhu Meher, Om Puri and others, all of whom to later achieve fame.

The filmmaker like Govind Nihalani acknowledged that “sometimes you work out a deal with the lighting guys and we say that we will take it for this unit of time. Give us a package, so we had done a package. Lots of those scenes had also happened at night” (Interview 2013). Further he states that his training with Mr VK Moorthy, one of his Gurus in terms of camera work helped him create the best forms of realistic visualizations in this film. He admits that Murthy was the master of that kind of film and he just followed his style and did it. He confronts that

At that moment we realized, that ... the visual aesthetic sense played a great part in re designing your light and I being a camera man and the director myself, I could see the limitation of the particular kind of strata, or the area which will involve, whether I have that much number of lights or change it in a manner that I could change it in the little number of lights I had. So whenever there is a conflict between the director and the camera man handling, the director always won over the camera man, otherwise it is Shyam Benegal’s decision, how they manage the economy.

He brings light too upon the situation of even when Shyam Benegal directed the film. According to Nihalani, Benegal was doing a small budget film and that followed the same style which laid emphasis upon minimum expense and maximum result, but one thing is for sure, he admits that the unit must have good food and a comfortable rooms to stay. It is very important according to him, so that there are
high contrast lighting so I just do it out of sheer sensibility that is required watching painting and with Mr Benegal it was always the look of the film, he had the same references to paintings, most of them used to be European paintings whether it’s a Rambrant is known for doing the lighting in the painting, emerging from a particular source. Like somebody carrying a lantern, there is a painting called night watch, few of the security guards are walking at night and they are carrying some lanterns and the feel is their faces and everything are lit from the light of the lamp. The shadows, the background, and the very famous paint is the reading of the bible. You will see the faces are lit by the … of the candle light. That what is called is the source light. That you can see the characters are lit by a definite source it’s like that. (Interview 2013)

When asked about the kind of stories that a parallel film maker prefer to work on, Benegal (interview 2013) explains:

I usually take stories from life or from literature, but what interest me is the world in which we live there are many different world, there is a world of your family, there is a world outside of the house, there is a bigger world beyond that, there is a world of your own community, there is a world of your district or your state of your country. I am interested about all of that, how you relate to those things, relation with family, relation to relatives, the professional world, and the world in which you had an education and society but beyond all these there is a world which impacts you. So I make films where I relate to the world or to the people. I look at the world differently that’s why in my films I am always concern about gender, for me the woman has to be equal, in my world women are kept dependent they are equal in every way sometimes women are much stronger than the man but the man wants to look at her as a victim as that will make her
weak but I don’t look at the world like that in my opinion women and man should be
made equal equality nessasarily doesn’t mean competitive but it can be complimentary.

*Ankur* is probably the most effective condemnation of the caste system ever made and the
implications are not in India alone. Benegal criticizes the caste system and exposes the
hypocrisies of the ruling class with no hint of rhetoric or heavy-handedness. *Ankur* is a powerful,
emotionally complex work, beautifully filmed and stunningly acted. Shot almost entirely on
location, the film captures the lush green beauty of the Indian countryside in which the multi-
colored saris of the women stand out like rainbows.

Benegal’s films always connect with the audience. He is one of the few directors who
makes films for a cause as well as for the audience. “I usually take stories from life or from
literature but what interest me is the world in which we live there are many different world, there
is a world of your family, there is a world outside of the house, there is a bigger world beyond
that, there is a world of your own community, there is a world of your district or your state of
your country,” says Shyam Benegal (Interview: 2013).

While lamenting upon the hypocrisies that run deep into the structures of the Zamindari
system in India, the film attacked upon any form of man-made social institution that supports
exploitation and humiliation of an individual by another individual. The film condemns any form
of system that misuse power and operate to exploit human labour, human body and something
that creates form of psychologically induced trauma that belittles man beyond emotionally
reparable situation. Overall, it could be deciphered that this film is a landmark in the innovative
patterns in which it strikes a major attack against any form of authority that promotes any
inhuman forms of exploitative structure.
Govind Nihalani’s *Aakroash* (1980)

Of Shyam Benegal’s repertory group, Govind Nihalani stood out for the brilliance of his camera work. When he made his first film, *Aakroash* (Cry of the Wounded, 1980), its technical excellence came as no surprise. What it did was Nihalani’s control of his material, the intense performance of his actors, and above all, his deep social concern for one of India’s more neglected people- the tribals. He has said that he gets his ideas for his films from “the morning newspapers”.

*Aakroash* originated from a real incident narrated to Nihalani by playwright Vijay Tendulkar. A young tribal Lahanya (Om Puri) is accused of murdering his wife Nagi (Smita Patil) in a state of drunkenness. His defence lawyer (Naseeruddin Shah) cannot get a word out of him and the movie derives its most serious and intense notes from such a character portrayal.
Some of the scenes are realised with conviction. The drama revolves around a tribal family and a young lawyer who tries hard to save one of them, primarily because it is his first case. The tribals are constantly discussed but they never speak in the whole film, investing themselves with a silent protent of power and the film explored with some intense evocation of hidden tension. Tendulkar and Nihalani concentrate on the highlights at the cost of the total context, creating a theatrical power rather than a cinematic understanding.

This movie takes up and dealt seriously with an off the beat theme by taking up a community that physically, emotionally and psychologically lives in the margin of the mainstream. The location that the community lives in is in itself symbolically rich and could be understood at a multi-layered scenario. The form of exploitation that the film line explores is about the people who is away from the center of the urban locale and is twice or thrice removed when one discusses about community based social issues. Whether it has to do about labour exploitation or physical exploitation, or even gender based issues, the subjects that are the main victims of the story are themselves in an object location and justice for them is a far far away reality. It will be a mistake if one situates the movie in the context of urban or rural dichotomy, but the point that the film successfully reached out to is the way many hard core issues happening in our society had to do with people who belong to the marginal section of the society. This particular community – the people and their stories are still an alien domain to be known or heard of by the majority and indeed this film by even targeting to bring a hard reality based situation still in prevalence in such a domain before the wide audience is worth a congratulating afford.

Evidently, Bombay’s new wave travelled in three different directions - one towards a superior commercial cinema (Chatterjee, Benegal, Bhattacharya) and the other towards the
highly personal one (Mani Kaul and Kumar Shahani) and the third, the Marxist (Saeed Mirza, Ketan Mehta) which also sought a wider audience as the first proved to be a little too complex for it. Undoubtedly, most of this happened due to the fill up given to it by the Film Finance Corporation. (Chidananda Das Gupta, 46, 47)

*Aakroash* had a cast which included some of the main actors of “New Cinema” of that time, Smita Patil, Naseeruddin Shah and Om Puri. The screenplay written by Vijay Tendulkar, became one of the most powerful films of the decade and its rapid rhythm went counter to what many considered the normal slow pace of most films of “New Cinema.” The political “thriller” angrily denounced the treatment meted out to the Adivasis (the tribal people of India- considered to be backward and whose language, customs, laws and religion are very different from other Indian ethnic groups, which according to government estimates are about 80 million all over India). *Aakroash* started a trend in auteur films in Indian cinema already present in the documentary genre and which gradually also caught on in commercial cinema (presented in a much more simplistic way, of course) - a wave of film which denounced the collusion of the feudal order or of the urban underworld by those in power or positions of authority (politicians, police, businessmen, etc.).

The protagonist, a lawyer (Naseerudin Shah) is appointed to defend a tribal, Lahanya (Om Puri) of murdering his wife (Smita Patil), who refuses to speak a word. On investigation, the lawyer finds out that his wife was raped and killed by a group of businessmen and politicians during their revels. When Lahanya is allowed to attend the funeral of his father, he takes the opportunity to kill his younger sister (Bhagyasri Kotnis) to protect her from falling into monstrous hands like the fate of his wife. In the end, Lahanya gives vent to his suffering and his helpless anger with a cry of anguish.
Shot: Bhaskar Kulkarni tries to help the victim

The story is also about a Dalit who is fighting against the injustice and the down trodden section of the society. The film was made in the 80’s but the topic of rape is still relevant in the present scenario.

Shot: The most important shot of the film where Lahanya chops his own sister’s head to protect her from the evils of the society

The scene where Lanhya is standing besides the burning funeral pyre, and he sees the foreman looking at his pre-pubescent sister with lustful eyes is powerfully done. Divining the fate that is in store for her, he grabs an axe and chops off his sister's head to forestall her dire future as perpetual victim, as he sees it. Upon completion of this hapless act of a desperate and
downtrodden man, he raises his face towards the skies and screams, and screams and screams. For the second time in the film, we hear his voice (the first is in a flashback, as he vainly attempts to rescue his wife), a device similar to Andrei Tarkovsky's showing of the icons in brilliant color at the end of his three-hour black-and-white film Andrei Rublev.

**Shot: The constant injustice done by the judicial system to him**

The film is a scathing satire on the corruption in the judicial system and the victimization of the underprivileged by the able and the powerful. Nihalani states:

Aakroash was born out of something different, something real. And how this theme started, Mr Tendulkar (Vijay Tendulkar, a playwright), he wrote Nishant also he was doing
a research, emerging pattern of violence in Indian theatre, and during that research he happened to come across an accident little away from Bombay place called Bhiwandhi, it is a town which is famous for it’s loom industry. And it is a very sensitive town because lots of Muslims live there, some parts of there a riot broke off, somebody runs into a nearby area which are tribal areas. I am sure they were given something and told them to shoot where the riot happening, they don’t know anything about the situation, they were given something to drink and eat and those people told them to shoot and they just shot the arrows. The riot broke and the police also came but when the riot ended, one of the guys was found dead with arrow in his body, whether he died of arrow or some other cause we don’t know. The guy was picked up by the police and sent to jail, we don’t know whether the guy was charged for murder or not. we don’t know whether it was his arrow or somebody else’s arrow. I liked the subject very much, I said this will be a situation in our country today where a person with no education basically an innocent person who is surviving in a jungle, he doesn’t know the system, he has nothing to prove his innocence and it is very ironic (Interview: 2013).

He admits that:

We are in a democracy and we are to protect these days I approached NFDC and I said this is the kind of story I have what do you think. At that time the managing director and in charge of NFDC. He said, he was a very wise man, looking at the situation today don’t get into a story with Hindu, Muslim theme it is very tricky, so why don’t you come up with something and we will support you. And he told me a personal advice, the situation is not right but you can do anything else but avoid the Hindu, Muslim theme I was disappointed, but I thought I can make this story later, for now let me make another
film. I was sitting with Mr Tendulkar and thinking what to do. But this idea of one innocent man incident was like a pond. One day I just finished shooting for an ad film for somebody and was returning in a taxi from the south of Bombay it occurred to me and I immediately rang Mr Tendulkar, and told him this is the idea, he said it sounds good so let’s meet up and we met the next day and he said looks good so let me work on it and I will get back to you. And he got back to me and the whole structure came into existence and for that the entire credit goes to Mr Tendulkar. And I remember, the entire script didn’t go more than one revision. And he used to write so precisely and this was his area. Violence, tribals around and in Maharastra (Interview: 2013).

He never hesitated and honestly admits the context under which his work was able to get the structure it did. He said:

We approached NFDC with the story and they said our rule is you have to give some collateral security, the house or something, it is not a liquid thing, ornaments or building, something that could be exchanged, so that they can get their money back but we don’t have, that was the question raised by several film makers, you are giving us fund to make films, you can’t ask for collateral security. So the government was thinking about it, we have a new policy coming in, which is if we shoot in 16 mm so we will not insist on collateral security, we can do it without security I went to my producers and said, let’s do this, we shoot it in 16mm. He said 16mm nobody is going to buy the film, we will never recover the money in 16mm. Meanwhile, another happy thing happened, a friend of mind, Mr Manmohan Shetty, he was just starting a lab, a film lab that time and he said that I am putting up 16mm processing machine and a printer, blow up a printer, that means from 16 mm film I can give you a 35 mm print. There was something about Mr
Manmohan Shetty, the process was on, I told that let’s go on, then they said the machine was not ready, I said it will be ready. Then they said okay. That’s how we got the sanction from NFDC and they sanction the total sanction around 3 lakhs rest we have to stand. And we ran out of money so I went to Manmohan Shetty and I told him, this film you are procession, we ran out of money so can you help us, so he helped us and twice he helped us and he went on to become the producer of the film Ardh Satya, so we shot the movie with one 16mm camera with zoom lens. But it was a silent film which means when it was shot it didn’t make any noise, so we recorded the sound as it is spoken by the actors, no noise, so we could use the voice, otherwise we have to dub it. The same camera was used for three other films later on,” Nihalani (interview: 2013)

From a detailed analysis and the study done on the aforementioned films in this part of the chapter, we could observe a developing structure and at the same time, a genesis of the Hindi Parallel Cinema in a decade, that is from the year 1969 to 1980. Whether it is Bhuvan Shome or Garam Hawa or Ankur or Aakroash – we see the concrete pattern in which such a kind of film induces a huge critical response from the audience. The impact that these films created was enormous and it grew more with the span of time. Today we could observe that a cross-sectional representation of Indian and its discrete social arena, along with its heterogeneous cultures are acknowledged by such a form of film making. Not just the film makers but the cast, crew, audiences both in and out of India accept the big presence and perspectives and counter perspectives that such Parallel Hindi films contribute ceaselessly.

It was also owing to the tremendous impact that the technological advancement generated that also contributed a lot in the overall growth of such a brand of films. The impetus that it induced let to the representation patterns inside these films gained an enhance realistic forms.
Whether it is the enhancement in the form of newly developed lighting system or the editing schemes in the most up to date computerised digital formats, technology has undoubtedly helped Hindi Parallel Cinema to gain an easy access into the minds and hearts of larger crowds.

In the following segment of the chapter, we would indulge in an in depth discussion of the Hindi Parallel Cinema in the other selected decade that is, from 2000 to 2010 and it will deal with an analysis of the leading Hindi Parallen films representative of this decade.