CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

The research is an analysis of three distinct and interrelated cinematic cities of India. The cinematic city operates on the conception of the city, thus the spatiality of the city through films is critical for the cinematic discourses of the city. The selected films undertaken for research not only concentrate on the cinematicscapes, cinematic city or the cinematic space, but also allude to the larger notion of social and political subjectivity of the city. In order to understand the representation of city in cinema, it becomes pertinent to analyze city through cinematicscapes. In general, cinematicscapes is geographical equivalent to landscape and in the context of urbanism, it is parallel to cityscape. In the context of cinema, the subjectivity and the construction of cinematicscapes changes with respect to social, political, culture, location and technology. The cinematicscapes of western cinema and its influence on its immediate society will be very different from the cinematicscapes of Eastern cinema. Their basic construction of the city and later on the construction of spatial and visual reality on cinema is an experience very different from their multicultural, multilingual and densely populated Eastern counterparts.

The scope cinematicscapes gives to understand a city is immense. It deals with the major tropes and aspects of the city such as architecture, spatiality within the city, an individual and communities relationship to the city and several art forms (aural-visual) directly or indirectly representing the city. In addition to this, certain significant aspects of social, historical, political and economic contribute towards the development of the primary cinematicscapes. In general cinematicscapes is a construction of the social realities of the city through films, with the help of visual technology. This construction of cinematicscapes becomes debatable as the facts are molded, twisted, carved and re-configured based on the narrative of the film. The primary reason for this shortcoming is the exorbitant physical size and structure of the city that even the broadest canvass of film is unable to grasp the city at once. The city poses a complex challenge for the filmmakers and to capture this spatial diversity, the filmmaker blends the cinematicscapes with actual and fictional cinematicscapes. The social dynamicity of the city is presented through thoughtful mise en scene, studio shooting, location filming, computer graphics, lighting and cinematography. These factors along with the urban image of the city contribute towards constructing a aural and visual image of the city for consumption. In other terms cinematicscapes becomes an electronic replication of the certain spaces of the city. This rendition generates further
discourses of authenticity on the representation of actual city, cityscapes, cinematic city, imitation, parody and stereotyping of a particular experience, stimuli or response of an individual or an entire community. The audio-visual experience of the cinematicscape is a sensorial experiment to reify or extract the responses of the spectators. They concentrate in the peculiarity of an experience and this experience is related to the social, political and historical events of the city. Their individual experiences are residuals or traces of their interaction with the city and this becomes an important aspect in developing the subjectivity of an individual and later the cinematicscape in a film.

In the first chapter, Hindi cinema’s new fascination with the multilingual, multicultural bourgeoning metropolis of Delhi has been analyzed. This new market for the commercial Hindi cinema has a hybrid, dynamic culture that continues to evolve and re-invent itself artificially and naturally to suit its composite culture. Unlike the other metropolitan cities of India, Delhi essentially lacks ethnic cultural roots and majority of its history is based on corrupt political leaders and cultural elite. The urban and culture life of Delhi is also in contrast to earliest metropolitan cities of India. The power structures of metropolitan cities like Bombay and Calcutta was clustered in the hands of elite and only a small number of elite governed these structures in the post-independent Delhi. After independence of India, Delhi witnessed deluge of migrants from Pakistan, Kashmir and other border states of Delhi. Urban planning bodies managed Delhi through housing schemes, refugee settlement, widow colonies, but the haphazard construction had rapidly spread within the Lutyens Delhi. By the 1990s, the urban planning of Delhi failed and this vortex of infrastructural quagmire exposed the inadequacies of the modernist vision of Delhi. The mushrooming of unauthorized neighborhoods, illegal settlements, working class migrants further led to emergence of micro markets, moving shops and small factories. This chaotic polluted social environment provided a new definition and dimension to the urbanism of Delhi.

Delhi’s recent rise as a superpower of Hindi cinema is directly proportional to the constantly transforming social landscape and its disloyalty towards singular culture, language and identity. Beside the booming industries, IT hubs, the discreet humanscape and landscape of Delhi is still being explored within the urban films of Delhi. The chapter explores this in the context of three films on Delhi. The selected films, Rakeysh Om Prakash Mehra’s *Rang De Basanti*, Mira Nair’s *Monsoon Wedding* and Dibakar Banerjee’s *Khosla Ka Ghosla* are a sociological study on the cinematicscape of Delhi that quintessentially captures the multiple moods, moments and life of the people of capital city. The films concentrate on different
spaces of Delhi and the cinematicscapes that emerges through these films ranges from the analysis of youth to the elite society and finally the middle class of the city. The visual cinematicscapes of the city varies from the densely populated space of Chandni Chowk to the posh location of bungalows located at South Delhi. The individual tales of every film is some or the other manner connected to the social, historical, political and economic paradigm of the city. The story of a common student or a common man arises out of this spatiality of Delhi. The major hindrance in the representation of the cinematicscapes in the popular genre is the believability blending of the narrative with presentation of the city. The narrative of these films falters on the front of realistic depiction. The cinematicscapes of the films has a larger percentage of construction rather than documentation and realistic presentation. Another problem that the cinematicscapes of Delhi faces is the stardom of the actors. The narrative and the city are relegated to the background and the individual stardom becomes the face of the entire city. The original spaces vanish and an imitation is created to support the persona of the star. The contemporary Hindi cinema is guilty to follow this maneuverable trend and the cinematicscapes of Delhi fall short in authenticity and seems more imaginative.

The second chapter examines the major metropolitan city of Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay) and the films selected for study are Danny Boyle’s *Slumdog Millionaire*, Muzaffar Ali’ *Gaman* and Mira Nair’s *Salaam Bombay*. The films capture the cinematicscapes of margins and enter the concrete city of Mumbai from the vision of marginalized individuals. The cinematicscapes represent Mumbai as a space of dystopia that is marked by congestion and collision in everyday life. It is a city of hope for many who migrate to it everyday, in search of jobs and to pursue their dreams for a prosperous life. This chapter examines the causes for “deterritorialization” of the dispossessed citizens who are forced by the circumstances, beyond their control, to move to a new space and re-territorialize themselves in the margins of the new city space.

The popular Hindi cinema has showcased a remarkable resistance to ideological readings and a total failure in reflection of any kind of reality in society. The Hindi film industry fits into a different genre of cinema, with different audience attention and concoction of simplest of narrative. The films are produced to fit into a world of urban life where people have little time to think and interpret in terms of cultural discourse. Thus a typical Hindi film has all the genres intermingled into a single thread and therefore an action, romantic, melodramatic film emerges that is full of songs and dance and is fit for every age group of people in India. The cinematicscapes of the selected films tread on the similar path and incorporates these elements. Thus, the cinematicscapes films reflect upon the urban domestic
lifestyles, public spaces and popular cultural practices within the city. The style of reflection of the city is a mixture of melodrama, romance and modern representation of contemporary language, space and people. The films based on Delhi also emerge from the similar source of Mumbai based Hindi film industry. Therefore, the question of authentic representation, true portrayal and imitation is questionable and debatable. Although the connection of films with the city cannot be denied, but how far are the cinemascapes away from reality is yet to be ascertained for the popular genre of Hindi cinema.

Kolkata, unlike the other two metropolises of India cannot boast of the cosmopolitanism or multiculturalism, thus the canvass of the cinemascapes is narrow in comparison to the other two cities. The cinemascapes of the films under study analyzes modernizing of India and its changing middle classes. Satyajit Ray tries to excavate the idea behind real India and rather than fabricating an imaginary dream. Ray’s cinema refracts the vision of troubled middle class people. The presentation and authenticity of the cinemascapes of Kolkata is burdened by its glorious past. Their cinema is fascinated by life of city and the fabrication of events with the present time creates an image close to reality, but not the primary reality. The cinemascapes of Kolkata poses questions, resurfaces lost meanings, highlights the problems of the people and creates an image of reality.

The Calcutta Trilogy offers an insightful perspective about the youth of Kolkata, but the cinemascapes of the city are almost similar in all the films. The films deconstruct the actual picture of the city and severely grasp the emerging space of youth through the cinemascapes of Kolkata. In a nutshell, the Calcutta Trilogy (Pratidwandi, Seemabaddha, Jana Aranya) captures volatile politics extremism and perturbed violence, communist extremism and perturbed violence of the early 1970’s. Marxist-Naxalist ideology held a sway over the minds and manners in Kolkata and this time of intense anger, shallow morality and desperation reflected in the attitude of the middle class society of Kolkata. The primary image of this disturbed era of the political upheaval is effectively captured by Satyajit Ray and records the physical reality of the world by capturing the street crowds, their complexity of emotions and responsibilities.

The cinemascapes of the three metropolitan cities of India are diverse, different and in constant flux. The cinemascapes of Delhi is developing and still coming to terms with the over exploited cinemascapes of Mumbai and Kolkata. The changing face of India globally has put an immense pressure on the cinematic aesthetics and the emergence of Delhi as a neo cinematic city takes the Hindi film industry to a newer level. The cinemascapes of
Delhi offers immense potential to uncover undiscovered spaces, lifestyles and above all individual experiences. The cinematicscapes of Mumbai has dominated the mind of audiences since ages. Earlier the major focus of the films was the evolving city, the developed city and the city as the financial capital of India. Recently the trend changed and with development of Mumbai, there also developed an underbelly to the main city. The cinematicscapes of the contemporary films focus on the margins, periphery and the struggling tale of an outsider in the city. Although the cinematicscapes of Delhi and Mumbai fall under the rubrics of Hindi film industry, the cinematicscapes of Kolkata has created its own identity and style of presentation. The cinematicscapes of these films seem lesser of a construct and more of serious reality. Their audio-visual presentation alludes to the reality of major individuals living in the global cities of India.

The primary influence of city on cinema has globally changed the aesthetics, dimensions and experience of cinema. The relationship of cinema and the city is unusually intimate and the cinematic image emerges out of this urban experience. Although the entity of city has been studied by poets, novelists, artists and painters, the exorbitant canvas of the city is difficult to approach from the earlier means. The film becomes a perfect medium to understand the city aurally and visually. This incorporates an experience that is constantly in motion and this in contrast becomes the structure of the film. Paul Virilio views this experience in *Aesthetic of Disappearance* (1980) and mentions that human perceptions are manipulated by cinematographer’s deployment of speed and light within the film. He mentions that “From the esthetics of the appearance of stable image present as an aspect of its static nature to the esthetics of the disappearance of an unstable image”. (5)

The research on the cinematicscapes of India is an ongoing process and future research should definitely include independent anthropological, ethonographic and historical documentaries along with the representation of cinematicscapes in photographs, books, magazines and films. This type of research could open a newer understanding of the study conducted on city and cinema and will compliment to the area of research that was just conducted. The future research could expand this type of study and will immensely contribute in the exploration of the cognitive and psychological impact of city-cinema on society and vice versa. This type of research might unearth the changing relationships within the society and the way individuals think about other groups. The emerging concept of the cinematicscapes is fluidic and will change, remodeled according to the future research, but
the basic characteristic of mapping of the urban culture through cinematicsapes shall remain seminal. The scopic regime of cinematicsapes will invoke a deeper understanding on the specific way a film manifests and represents a culture and by incorporating spatiality; new paraphernalia emerges to trace the ever changing modernity, urbanity and the culture of city on celluloid.