CHAPTER 1
Introduction

“Cinema is universal, beyond flags and borders and passports.” (Alejandro Gonzalez
Inarritu)

Cinema is more than just a medium of communication. It exerts its power by creating a
mesmeric world that caters to the fancies of the audience. Through its audio and visual
effects, cinema enables people to traverse realms beyond their spatio-temporal
limitations within seconds. Through the purveyance of visual pleasure cinema takes the
imagination and creativity of its audience beyond social, political, cultural and linguistic
boundaries too.

Indian films belong to a multitude of genres like romance, tragedy, comedy,
melodrama, thriller, cartoons and animations. India has one of the world’s biggest and
most vibrant film industries and the multi-lingual and multicultural nature of the
country and the industry provide an unparalleled diversity of visual experience. Yet
there are certain common features that run through much of our popular cinema. In the
words of Manjunath Pendakur, the cause behind the mass appeal of Indian films is their
“bigger-than-life sets, locations, stars, fights, songs, dances and melodramatic
storytelling techniques” (229). Indian films are renowned in the world for their song and
dance sequences, which are used to intensify situations. The locales and backdrops also
gain their own characteristic peculiarities by ranging in locale from cradle to graveyard.

Though cinema is considered as a collaborative endeavor, it carries within itself the
latent values, assumptions and motives of the director and producer, and what they
deem to be socially relevant and acceptable. Thus, perceived reality and screened reality
become removed from the so called ‘actual reality’ depending upon the factors related
to production, distribution and revenue. This disparity widens even further when a film
is produced for a foreign audience, who often has a totally different cultural milieu. So, a film on India can produce differing semiotics when it is produced by an Indian producer/director for an Indian and for a foreign audience. It will be a different extravaganza when it is directed, produced and screened by a foreign director for the foreign audience. Thus, we can discern the power relations within the screened society as well as those in the industry. Through its repeated images cinema creates and nourishes the identity of its viewers.

While going through the history of Indian cinema industry, there exists a number of Indian and foreign production companies that makes films on India (details are provided in the coming section of this chapter). Among them the American film production company Merchant Ivory Productions is relevant, as it becomes the only one company that produced a series of films on and in India. It is a collaborative enterprise of the American director James Ivory, Indian producer Ismail Merchant and Jewish script writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. This research analyses their four films, which were produced during the initial years of production. In James Ivory’s words, Merchant Ivory Productions (MIP) is ‘rather cranky and individualistic, and not particularly marketable… reflecting our own preoccupations and our lives as we’ve lived them in different parts of the world… (films are) a kind of joint autobiography of the three of us’¹. MIP movies basically deal with romance, domesticity, socio-cultural changes, identity crisis, alienation, problems of the displaced, class struggles, gender conflicts and the complicated perspectives of the East-West conflict and conciliation in Independent India, while super hit Bombay films deal with the reverence of Indian culture, patriotism, family values, marital integrity, loss and reunion of family members, plight of courtesans, the flourishing of cabaret and the problems of industrial life.

This research work focuses on the early movies of Merchant Ivory Productions on India, especially The Householder (1963), Shakespeare Wallah (1965), Bombay Talkie

¹ Quoted from “Dialogue on Film: Merchant and Ivory”, by American Film institute/ (1987), published in Lawrence Raw’s (Ed.) Merchant-Ivory Interviews.
(1970) and Heat and Dust (1983). Though MIP produced a large number of films and documentaries on India, only these four feature films of three decades share some commonalities. The films are selected with respect to their technical and cinematic peculiarities, like whether it is a documentary or a feature film, duration of it, its protagonists, etc. These are the initial films of the company. And, these films are directed by James Ivory, produced by Ismail Merchant and scripted by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. And more than that, Shashi Kapoor plays the role of the protagonist in all of them. English actors Michael York and James Mason are in leading roles in The Guru and in Autobiography of a Princess, while Victor Banerjee is the protagonist of Hullabaloo over Georgie and Bonnie’s Pictures. These become the reason behind the rejection of The Guru (1969), the one hour drama film Autobiography of a Princess (1975) and Hullabaloo over Georgie and Bonnie’s Pictures (1978) from the list. Since Shashi Kapoor acts as the hero in the select movies, the main objective of the study is to analyze how the select Merchant Ivory films portray the hero, as an image of a newly Independent nation. For this, we consider hero, ie, Shashi Kapoor as a text on whom the complicated perspectives on post-coloniality, cultural changes, and conflicts are engraved, and the discourses of anxieties and illegitimacies are expressed, and the elements of space, time and nostalgia define the identity of the hero.

1.1. History of Indian Cinema: 1960s- 1980s

The glorious history of Indian cinema commences from the Silent Era (1912-1930), which was nurtured and nourished by the contributions of Dadasaheb Phalke (1870-1944), Babu Rao Painter (1890-1954) and V. Shantaram (1901-1990). As per the records of the National Film Archive, India produced almost 1313 films within the critical 22 years, which includes the first full length feature film Shree Pundalik (1912) of Dadasaheb Torne (1890-1960). Films like Raja Harishchandra (1913), Mohini Bhasmasur (1913), Satyavan Savitri (1914), Lanka Dahan (1917), Bhakta Vidur (1921), etc, set the trend of the time as nationalist (anti-colonial) and mythical allegories. From the silent era onwards Indian films document the socio-cultural ethos and aspirations of the nation. More than a mode of enjoyment they become part and parcel of our culture,
striking roots in the customs and traditional belief systems of the nation. While going through the chapters of Indian film history, we can notice the emergence of film companies, especially in Bombay and Kolhapur. The 1930s also witnessed the emergence of Indo-European co-productions like ‘Mughal romances’ that provided an oriental portrayal of India for a foreign audience. The introduction of playback singing in 1935, added one more credit to the industry.

India produced almost a hundred movies between 1926 and 1927, based on mythological, historical and themes of empire in different genres. The Censorship Act (1918) controlled certain elements in these movies such as the portrayal of women, sex, nudity, etc., ostensibly to protect Indian culture from Western influences. It also carried notes to limit the screening of nationalist and patriotic elements in India, considering it as a threat to the colonial power and administration. The Imperial Film Conference of 1926 provided a reservation system (7.5%) for British films and non-nationalist Imperial films for distribution in India. From that time onwards we can see the presence of foreign production companies on Indian soil.

When India’s first talkie, Alam Ara, (1931) was screened at the Majestic theatre (Bombay) it added voice to movies. Interestingly we can trace the influence of theater, and theatric art forms like Kathakali (Kerala), Tamasha (Maharashtra), etc in Indian films. Indian cinema adopted this traditional heritage of the nation by interposing these along with song-dance sequences. This hybridity makes the movies distinctive and attractive and more appealing to foreign cinemagoers. The talkie films in India evolved with stories concerning social, historical and mythological themes. It was also coterminous with the emergence of Hindi - Urdu as the most widely used language of Indian cinema. However, a simultaneous film movement begins in the South as well and Bombay, Madras and Calcutta became the major production centers in the 1930s and 40s.² The emergence of the studio system in Bombay, Pune, Calcutta, Madras, etc, accelerated the production of Indian films. V. Shanta Ram’s Prabhat Film Company

² In the words of Thoraval, India produced a minimum of 4000 full length features between 1930 and 48, in the midst of wars and other national conflicts. (22)
(1929), B N Sircar’s *New Theaters* (1931), Himansu Rai’s and Devika Rani’s *Bombay Talkies* (1934), S S Vasan’s *Gemini* (1940) and Ashok Kumar’s and Shashadhar Mukherjee’s *Filmistan Studio* (1943) are examples of it.

Another important development along with the advance of film companies was the introduction of women into the acting field with stars like Zubeida (*Alam Ara*), Devika Rani (*Achhut Kanya*) and the first upper crust Brahmin woman Durga Khote (*Amar Jyoti*) and fearless Nadia (*Hunterwali*). The earlier films had nationalistic themes veiled in mythology. Films like *Sant Tukaram* (1936) and *Gopal Krishna* (1938) revived the Bhakti tradition of the rural people. Translations of Shakespeare, Indo-Arabian and Parsi musical scores nourished the Indian film industry. Movies like *Achhut Kanya* (1936) highlighted literary and socio-cultural issues prevalent in India.

The 1950s, marked by the movies of Bimal Roy (*Do Bigha Zamin* (1953), *Devdas* (1955)), Guru Dutt (*Pyaasa* (1957), *Kagaz ke Phool* (1959)), Raj Kapoor (*Awaara* (1951)), and Mehboob Khan (*Mother India* (1957)), is often regarded as the Golden Age of Indian cinema. The films of these directors were centered on the melodramatic sensibilities of the middle-class, struggles of urban women, problems of the marginalized social groups, and concepts of love, marriage, poverty, unemployment and migration. In these movies we can also sketch the portrayal of women, either as an embodiment of all virtues or as a *femme fatale*, or as a prostitute. The 1960s was remarkable in the history of Indian cinema, as Technicolor was introduced during that time. Like other art forms cinema also reflects the tonalities of its time through its narrative style, protagonists, and theme. Films like *Gumrah* (1963), *Dil Ek Mandir* (1963), *Tere Ghar ke Samne* (1963), *Guide* (1965), and *An Evening in Paris* (1967) portray the conflicts of married women inside and outside home, cultural clashes of East and West, problems of the courtesans, etc.

While the main purpose of Indian cinema in the immediate aftermath of Independence was the integration of the nation beyond its linguistic, regional, religious and cultural disparities, the 70s documented socio-political restlessness in the midst of economic crisis and natural calamities, through its male protagonists. The Nehruvian era
witnessed the nation’s rapid drive for industrialization and economic sustainability more than the need for entertainment. Paradigms of strength and progress were invented and constructed through male protagonists with moral fabric and physical strength. In addition to this, censorship was strict and aimed to maintain and preserve traditional belief systems from Western encroachments. “Gandhi’s moralism and nativism and Nehru’s internationalism and modernism” molded a “cultural and cinematic bureaucracy to counter the dominance of the commercially oriented film industries” (Ganti, 47). But, the films of the 70s (like Zanjeer, 1973) shifted in theme from the domestic to the ineffectual public domain of insecurity, unemployment and violence. Interestingly, the trend of the 80s was the ‘lost and found’ theme, in accordance with the optimistic reunion of traumatic separations inside the family. Entry of New Indian Cinema in the early 70s with its socio-realistic themes, low budget films, and close to life locations and incidents marked a parallel development of the film genre, through neorealist directors like Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Mrinal Sen, etc. A thematically divided list of Indian films produced from 1960 to 1990, and the main socio-political and cultural developments of Indian cinema from 1960s to 80s are included in Appendix A.

1.2. Outsider’s Films on India

In the words of Martin Scorsese, “Cinema is a matter of what’s in the frame and what’s out”. (Emphasis added) The Western portrayal of India in the cinematic medium as well as the Western gaze at Indian cinema and its themes has been unmistakably coloured by decades of colonialism and the hegemony of colonialist perceptions and values. The portrayal of the Third World as the “other” through the subjective perception of the foreign artists resulted in divergent representations of India for a long time. Social reform movements and power shifts after the World Wars propagate an influx of nostalgia and interest in Western countries. Their curiosity and euphoria to know more about the East resulted in recreation of Raj in different ways. A large number of film

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3 The heading is a variation of the book title *Outsider Films on India: 1950-1990*, edited by Shanay Jhaveri (The Shoestring Publisher, 2009)
producers and directors from the West have been interested in India. Through their personal experiences and perceptions, they create ‘multiple Indias’ in their frames for viewers in their home countries. The 1920s marked the initiation of foreign interest in Indian locations and themes and this interest has persisted up to the present.

Since the present research is centered on the period from 1960 to 1980, major films by foreign producers/production companies from 1950s to the 1980s are taken for framing the background for analysis. Jean Renoir’s The River (1951) is significant, as it formally inaugurated a divergent ‘idyllic’ (Jhaveri, 2009) version of India. Shanay Jhaveri quotes Ronald Bergan to illustrate the movie is characterized by ‘simplicity’, ‘serenity’, ‘human realities’, and ‘religious simplicity’ (2009). In technicolor the film adaptation of Rumer Godden’s novel of the same title recreates the nostalgia of the characters through personal and collective memories, set in pre-industrial banks of the Ganges. Through legends and snake charmers, Renoir recreates a credible India. Roberto Rossellini’s Italian documentary; India: Matribhumi (1959), Fritz Lang’s German adventure drama film; Journey to the Lost City (1959), Louis Malle’s French Documentary; Phantom India (1969), Pier Paolo Pasolini’s Italian documentary; Notes for a Film on India (1968), Marguerite Duras’s French drama film; India Song (1975), Alain Corneau’s French film; Nocturne Indien (1989), etc, illustrate the West’s interest to document India, based on experienced, perceived and imagined realities of the nation. In addition to this there are a large number of English language films set in British Raj, which include the elements of Raj, pre and post Independent India, Partition, etc (Appendix B).

1.3. Merchant Ivory Productions on India

“Without being known too well, (India) has existed for millennia in the imagination of the Europeans as a wonderland. Its fame, which it has always had with regard to its treasures, both its natural ones, and, in particular, its wisdom, has lured men there.”

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4 Hegel quoted in W. Halbfass, India and Europe. Here it is quoted from the World Wisdom Online Library, titled The Debate about “Orientalism”.
Noticeably, both native and foreign film makers of India have imagined, re-imagined and re-created, implicitly and explicitly, many of the social transformations in India at various times. Among the foreign film production companies, the contributions of Merchant Ivory Productions (MIP) are significant for their elegant handling of transnational and cross-cultural themes with ingenuity and imagination. In 1961, the MIPs emerged as a noteworthy film company. Their films for the most part were produced by Ismail Merchant (1936-2005), directed by James Ivory (1928-), and scripted by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala (1927-2013), and were often based on adaptations of fictional works, particularly those of Henry James, E. M. Forster, and Jhabvala herself. According to Ismail Merchant, MIP ‘is a strange marriage... I am an Indian Muslim, Ruth is a German Jew, and Jim is a Protestant American. Someone once described us as a three-headed god... our work should follow and try to do something of the same pattern (Ray’s style), but make it in the English language which is much more international and has a bigger market’ (Raw, 4).

Merchant’s ‘fascination for the English way of life’ and Ivory’s experiences with Delhi along with Isobel Lennart’s interest in The Householder (novel) resulted in the creation of the Merchant Ivory collaboration and their first feature film of the same title, in 1963. In the words of Ivory, MIP movies provide an ‘outsider point of view’ (15). Their films ‘do not depend on the Indian market’ (18), for the lack of art theatres and the laws of censorship (19).

India had been a center of attraction and curiosity in the West right from the Renaissance period. Missionaries, merchants, artists, adventurers and travelers have been fascinated by the country and they have explored various facets. They even document the new nation with detachment and prejudice in various ways. Interestingly, at the same time, India started producing documentaries to make the people (Indians) aware of indigenous art and cultural forms in the 40s, especially after 1948, as the

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3 Merchant Ivory Productions will be referred as MIP in the further portions.


Government of India declared policies to encourage the “production and distribution of information films and newsreels”. They include films on ‘local contexts, post-colonial exigencies, colonial influences, and international influences’ (Jain, 2013).

Ismail Merchant, son of a textile dealer, was introduced to the fascinating magical world of cinema by the then stunning heroine of the Bombay film industry, Nimmi (1933- ), while he was just thirteen. Nimmi’s influence on Merchant is explicit in the portrayals of Indian women in the select movies, especially in *The Householder*, *Shakespeare Wallah* and in *Bombay Talkie*. It will be discussed in the coming chapters. His openness, persistence in chasing goals, charm and generous behavior led him to New York University and, then to Los Angeles after his artistic years in the St. Xavier’s college (Bombay University). There he was introduced to Paul Newman, who later worked with him for the movie *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990), Saeed Jaffrey and his award-winning actress wife Madhur Jaffrey, and eventually James Ivory too. There he also got a chance to watch Satyajit Ray’s films along with the works of Fellini, Bergman, Truffaut and De Sica. Merchant’s genuine inspiration to make a film on India, based on the mythological concepts was fulfilled in the fourteen-minute film *The Creation of Woman* in 1960. It was Isobel Lennart (screen writer at MGM) who introduced Ruth Prawer Jhabvala’s novel, *The Householder* to Merchant, helped him to concretize his aspiration to satisfy the “public’s fascination with Indian culture and mysticism” (Merchant, 36) , by advising him, ‘Hollywood would never make it, but you should’.

While doing his Masters in filmmaking at the University of Southern California, James Ivory directed his debut documentary *Venice: Themes and Variations* (1957), as he was fascinated to the magical city. Through the perceptions of certain artists on Venice, the documentary, in silent speed details the paintings of Steinberg, Guardi, Veronese and Tintoretto, Titian and some from Academia Museum. Ivory’s entry into the field of Indian film industry can be placed in the matrix of the emerging documentaries of India

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8 By Bhuvan Lall’s *Before Bollywood! The Long, Rich History of Documentary in India. (2004)*

like that of Paul Zils\textsuperscript{10} (who started a quarterly magazine- \textit{Indian Documentary} in 1949), Roberto Rossellini (after his neo realistic \textit{Open City}, \textit{Paisa} and \textit{Europa’ 51} he screened \textit{India’57}), Roman Karman (documented Spanish Civil War), Arne Sucksdorff (\textit{The Flute and the Arrow}, about Murias, a Bastar tribe in 1957), etc.\textsuperscript{11} Ivory, with the help of selected paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), the Freer Gallery (Washington DC), the Metropolitan Museum of Art, etc, recreates the (hi)story of medieval Indian paintings as the ‘immemorial and tranquil life of India’. After this initiation, he turned to documenting Indian miniature paintings of the medieval period in the film titled \textit{The Sword and the Flute} (1959). This documentary in 24 minutes frames the history of Rajput and Mogul paintings, which influenced the Asia Society to document a film in India. Ivory makes use of the voice-over narration of Saeed Jaffrey, and artistically utilizes Hindustani and Carnatic ragas\textsuperscript{12} through the instrumental music of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Chatur Lal, Ravi Shankar and D .R. Parvatikar. Though Ivory historicizes the Hindu and Mohammedan painting styles of devotion and imperial vigor respectively, he creates a fantasy world of India, its nature, women and culture, hiding the brutalities of the Mughal emperors, though they are portrayed as patrons of art through the scheming gaze of the viewers.\textsuperscript{13}

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, wife of an Indian architect, Cyrus Jhabvala, was primarily a self-contained writer from Germany. She had won the Booker Prize once (in 1975 for \textit{Heat and Dust}) and Oscar twice (in 1987- \textit{A Room with a View} and in 1992- \textit{Howards End}). She has written 12 novels, 8 short story collections and almost 23 screenplays. \textit{The Guardian} quotes her on her rootlessness: ‘I stand before you as a writer without any ground of being out of which to write: really blown about from country to country, culture to culture till I feel-till I am-nothing’. (Emphasis added) Her initial novels like \textit{To Whom She Will} (1955), \textit{The Nature of Passion} (1956) and \textit{Esmond in India} (1958) reflect her ‘outsider’ ironic perceptions of the struggles of the middle class, confusions of arranged marriage, socio-political conditions under the reign of Nehru, etc. Ivory’s

\textsuperscript{10} Zils, appointed by the British India Govt. to produce ethno-documentary of India filmed \textit{Oraons of Bihar} (1955) \textit{The Martial Dances of Malabar} (1958) and \textit{The Vanishing Tribe} (1959).

\textsuperscript{11} Detailed in \textit{Filming Reality: The Independent Documentary Movement in India} by Shoma A Chatterji.

\textsuperscript{12} Like Bhairavi, Charukesi, Ahir Bhairavi and Khamas, create the mood of the painting narrated.

\textsuperscript{13} In “Documenting Indian Rhythms in James Ivory’s the Sword and the Flute”, Jayalekshmi N S and Babitha Justin, in \textit{International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Studies}. 
proposal to write the screenplay for her novel *The Householder* (1960) formally created the trio for the later movies of MIP. For Jhabvala India as a prism ‘refracted riotous histories in myriad colours’.\(^{14}\) Her colonialist portrayals of India as a place of vigorous climates, snobbery, orthodox belief systems and self-delusion, and the ‘great animal of poverty and backwardness’ (Mishra, 2004) and her dislike for Westernized Indians, who do not know themselves, are exemplified in her writings. Jhabvala has never seen any Indian film from 1951 to 1975, and for her Indian cinema was the one of Ray’s, comparing to that her films were mere products of a “European view” (Pym, 68). Her experiences with the foreigners, who run away from the complacent materialism to find solace in India, their struggles and frustrations, sexual exploitations, ‘feckless middle-class Westerners, unctuous Indian middlemen, and charismatic but fraudulent gurus’ (Pankaj Mishra, 2004) flourished creativity in her novels like *A New Dominion, A Backward Place*, etc. In the late 70s, she concentrated much on the adaptations of E.M. Forster (*A Room with a View* and *Howards End*), Henry James (*The Bostonians*) and of Kazuo Ishiguro (*The Remains of the Day*) and the problems of the displaced and the search for roots in *In Search of Love and Beauty, Three Continents*, etc. In precise and perfect words she depicted the complexities of human relations, ambiguities of human behavior and inexhaustible portrayals of landscape. Jhabvala’s writings are “neither novelistic nor autobiographical” (Raw, 95), and her emigrant foreign characters are attempting to escape from a “boring English background (materialistic)” (97).\(^{15}\)

James Ivory’s knowledge of India, coupled with “the idea of using the history (of this medium) to explore historical events, life and spirituality” (Merchant, 39) attracted Merchant. While in search for actors for the making of *Devgar*, an anthropological film on Gujarat, based on the script of Gitel Steed, he was introduced to the dashing and ubiquitous figure of theatre, Shashi Kapoor, who later became one of the charismatic

\[14\] Taken from Jayalekshmi N.S.’s ”Ruth Prawer Jhabvala: Writing form the Outside.” TES Literary Supplement, vol. 2, no.1, 2013 June.

heroes of many a Merchant Ivory film. Later, he got the chance to get the skilled cameraman of Ray, Subrata Mitra for his first movie, having the French-Indian actress Leela Naidu as the heroine. The movie is unique as Ray edited the whole movie to give it a new ordered structure, and even composed musical scores for both *The Householder* and *Shakespeare Wallah*, which was their first internationally acclaimed movie.

1.4. Literature Review, Methodology and Chapterisation

1.4.1. Literature Review of the Select Merchant Ivory Films of India

While tracing the literature of the select Merchant Ivory films, there exist a number of research papers in the field. Most of them deal with the Experiences of Indians and the English in both pre- and post-independence India, the clashes between high art and popular culture, decline of the Empire and rejection of the foreign ideologies. They also portray the complex ambivalences of colonialism and post colonialism through the power exertions of East and West, both in Pre-and Post-Independence time. They are detailed as follows.

1. Experiences of Indians and Westerners in both pre- and post-independence India.
   a. frictions of high art and popular culture (*Shakespeare Wallah*)
   b. ‘Chekhovian tragicomedy about flawed and ruined figures’ (*Bombay Talkie*)

2. The complex ambivalences of colonialism and post-colonialism through fraught encounters between British women and Indian men.
   a. ‘the decay of traditions and the failure of hopes’ (*Shakespeare Wallah*)
   b. The Shakespeare was used to influence the native intelligentsia, based on colonial politics becomes an icon of British superiority
   c. metaphor for the end of the Empire in India & rejection of foreign ideologies
   d. ‘psychopathology of power, the process of domination in personal relationships’ (*Heat and Dust*)
   e. ‘frustrations and aspirations of the displaced Europeans’
   f. Stereotypical depiction of Indian and American characters (*Bombay Talkie*)
   a. *The Householder* criticizes the “ingenuous Indian youth” Prem, “previously sheltered by his family” (43)
   b. Indu & Prem -“children, unacquainted with the realities of the world”
   c. In *The Householder*, the less developed foreign characters, “quiet moments of visual perception, the images complement the observant spirit of the film that, although modest and sometimes awkward, seems full of promise” (44)
   d. Lucia Lane as a “Circe figure who turns men into swine… she manages to ruin two men… the most complex and interesting character in the film” (95).
   e. *Heat and Dust*, is “more literary” (110) and more complicated as it has to portray India of the pre- and post- Independent India.
   f. Jennifer Kendal, while in *Bombay Talkie* she acts as a “femme fatale” in *Heat and Dust*, a “morbid neurasthenic” (114).

   a. “They are all slightly perplexed human creatures trying to grapple with hard fact” -On *The Householder*
   b. *The Householder* produces a “discerning Western eye, made both believable and comprehensible”. (34)-
   c. Jhabvala, “*Bombay Talkie* was chiefly fashioned on … a string of favourite images: a wrestling match; restaurant life; a desire to put on to the screen the Bombay film star’s fantastic bedrooms” (47).

   a. “Indian heroines are always shown within the framework of their own world.”
   b. “*Shakespeare Wallah* put the new company on the art-house map”.

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c. *Shakespeare Wallah* is a “poignant drama of failing theatrical company, is considered a classic.”

d. “*Bombay Talkie* is a movie about things not working out, of how people can believe in all sorts of wonderful things happening in their lives.”

e. *Bombay Talkie* is “hysteria! Manic… the movie is the playing out of a final act of hysteria” (Varble, 25).

f. *Bombay Talkie* “doesn’t have enough dialogue. The characters don’t express enough to each other, it is all very thin” (161)

In addition to the literature of the select films, we have to consider the theoretical framework behind the topic of analysis, regarding gender discourses and power structures. There are researches regarding the construction and representation of masculinities, gender relations in South Asian cinema (Gita Rajan, 2006). Gardiner published a paper on the ideological construction and consolidation of white masculinity with regard to feminist theories in *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities* (2005). In addition to this, Butters Jr. (2014) mentions about the interconnections of masculinity, national identity, stardom and performance in Hollywood films, and Smith (2003) discusses on the sexual and patriarchal colonization of the native women. Mazierska (2003) critiqued the representation of masculinity in Polish Postcommunist cinema, regarding misogyny and patriarchy through decades of communism. As far as the Indian context is concerned, Butalia (1984) analyzed the women characters in Indian cinema considering the stereotypical binaries of modernity and tradition. Mohan and Chaudhuri (1996), Mazumdar (2007), Vitali (2008), Mukherjee (2009) explore the roles of women from silent movies onwards. Interestingly, Chakravarty (1993) mentions about the portrayal of hero as a cultural signifier of the nation, Zankar (2003) considers heroes and villains as embodiments of

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virtue and vice and Mazumdar (2007) critically analyses the hero’s physical and psychological portrayals.


1.5.2. Methodology

The thesis makes use of four films, The Householder (1963), Shakespeare Wallah (1965), Bombay Talkie (1970) and Heat and Dust (1983) as primary texts. By the help of discourse analysis, the select movies and its heroes are critically evaluated. For this, different film techniques (mise-en-scène) like semiotics, lighting, sound, shots, points of
view, angles of the camera, focus, frame, cuts, editing paces and tone along with the theme and title, narrative pattern, characterization and costume used in these films are examined. The films are analyzed with the help of various film and literary theories like post-colonial theory, gender theory, gaze theory, theories of nostalgia and travel. In this research, both the films and their protagonists are considered as texts for analysis. Along with discourse analysis, content analyses also help to comprehend the identity of the hero. Online film rating sites like IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes are also used to find out the rating of the select movies. A concise story line of the select movies is attached in the Appendix D.

1.5.3. Chapterisation

This research work is presented in five chapters, considering Introduction as the first chapter, Introduction, which deals with the history of Indian cinema, along with the socio-political milieu till 1980s. It also throws light on the ‘outsider’s’ films on India, briefly introduces Merchant, Ivory and Jhabvala and spells out the parameters and theories used for the analysis.

The second chapter of the thesis, titled “Nation and (its) Hero: Nehruvian India in Shashi Kapoor”, critically evaluates the role of Shashi Kapoor as the protagonist of the selected movies with respect to the norms of hero in the Hindi film industry as well as in foreign India-centred films. The chapter also throws light on the societal and cultural scenario of India from the 1960s to the early 80s, as the The Householder is placed in the matrix of Nehruvian era, a period of clashes between tradition and modernity, Eastern and Western philosophy of life and class struggles in the newly Independent nation. The second movie Shakespeare Wallah is on the encounter between different art forms in Independent India, which prefers films rather than the Shakespearean theaters. Next movie Bombay Talkie is a sarcastic reflection of Indian film industry. And, Heat and Dust becomes an ironic comment of Indian culture of two decades.
In the next chapter, "Desiring Men of India: A Critique of the Heroes’ Carnal Desires”, themes such as the urban anxiety over women’s sexuality, patriarchal belief systems on the behavior of a woman inside and outside her house, how the roles of women vary in different classes, the reflection of modernity in different sexes, are taken up for discussion. The chapter also focuses on the heroes and heroines of the selected movies, with special focus on the struggling college teacher Prem (The Householder), the playboy hero Sanju (Shakespeare Wallah), the chocolate hero Vikram (Bombay Talkie) and the cunning Nawab (Heat and Dust). Along with this, the roles of both Indian and Western female characters are also discussed here, like the optimistic village belle Indu, with respect to the women of upper class (The Householder), public acceptance of the Indian actress Manjula and that of the theatre actress Lizzie (Shakespeare Wallah), the flamboyant Lucia vs. the traditional, orthodox Mala (Bombay Talkie), and the changing nature of women of two periods, Olivia and other British women, and Anne (Heat and Dust).

The fourth chapter, “Space, Time and the Hero”, is about the concepts of time, space, travel and nostalgia in the select movies. It traces the different modes of travel in Independent India during the years, reflected through the movies (1963-83). It also focuses on the representation of the geographical and climatic peculiarities of India, and how the natives and the foreigners face them. The chapter discusses nostalgia in detail, from the personal nostalgia of Prem (The Householder), Raj nostalgia of the foreigners (Shakespeare Wallah), and the differing nostalgias of female characters like that of Indu (The Householder), Lizzie (Shakespeare Wallah), Lucia (Bombay Talkie) and of Anne (Heat and Dust), who goes beyond the margins to satisfy her nostalgic blending with her great grandmother Olivia. It also critiques the personality of the hero with respect to the geographical characteristics of the nation, India.

The final chapter, Conclusion, deals with the findings and conclusion of the research work along with its scope and limitations. It also discusses the distinctive features of the selected MIP movies, especially songs, as an imitation of Indian musicals. As they are screened for the most part in foreign nations, this thesis critically analyses the kind of
pictures of India sought to be created in the minds of foreign film-goers who watch them.

The Appendix section gives a detailed analysis of the films released in India from the 1960s to 80s and its thematic division, English films set in the British Raj, details of Merchant Ivory Productions, story line of the select films, list of Hindi film heroes related to the period of discussion, table of Indian films released in the foreign nations along with that of the Merchant Ivory too, and the details of the select films, respectively. This thesis also has an Endnote, which provides additional knowledge related to the topic.
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