Representation of Urban Exclusions: A Study on Films of Hyderabad

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has made presentations in the following conferences:

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. Introduction

A city can be experienced and lived physically with corporal presence, but it is not limited to the 'embodied' experience. City is experienced vicariously through images, stories, news flowing through the networks of communication and media. The experience of space, place, and nation has different meanings for each person, community, population. When one thinks about villages, the image conjured is of fields and farmers, and for cities, it is possibly high-rise buildings and busy roads. These images are constructed by one's own experience and imagination and the information we get through different sources, mainly media. Why is it that people who have not visited New York or Paris or even another place in their own country have a particular image of these cities? The Images that come to mind are not just the famous monuments and physical features but the life and culture there as lived and experienced by the people of these places. These real and imagined cities are part of the discourse in the making of the tangible and intangible city, circulated and reinforced by various means. The cities acquire shape and personality, and these imaginations are fed not only through shared memories but also by consumption of multiple media – news, literature (fiction and non-fiction), television drama and cinema. The city of New York would not have been known as it is if it were not for the films (Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese's films) and numerous television shows based on that city (Sex and the City, Friends, Girls, Broad City, Seinfeld, etc.). For an outsider who has never visited New York, the imagination of the city is constructed and shaped by the entertainment industry which manufactures dreams and worlds.

Peoples' perceptions can be tapped into to understand what constitutes a city. These perceptions are mainly expressed through symbols and representations of their imaginations and ideas of a city. The perceptions are not separate from the cultural connotations, politics, desires, and conflicts, implicit within a city or any space. It is not right to think of space as only a physical construct, devoid of all the human experiences and social practices that provide meaning to it. The characteristics of spaces though universal (cultural, economic and social) may differ for city, village and towns. The notions of space, imagined or real, apply to the city spaces. The differences and comparisons between these spaces are not discussed as part of this

thesis, but the nature and characteristics of city space in the subsequent sections and chapters are discussed in detail. Every city space conforms to a set of standard criteria of tall buildings, sophisticated infrastructure, the centre of economic power, political power, and scientific and technological innovation, malls, production of media, large population, high density and other immaterial characteristics like consumerism, variety of entertainment consumption, and cosmopolitanism. Hence, the classification of city space can be space of high-rise buildings and advanced infrastructure, the seat of money markets and executive and legislatives power, a hub of technological advancement, a centre for cultural capital and space marked by consumerism and high density of population contributing to diversity, and cosmopolitanism. It is a complementary and dynamic process where the people produce the meaning of city space, and the people are defined by the city spaces they reside in and use. Exploring the lived experiences through people, literature, folklore and media, and the physicality of the city can provide insights into these perceptions and constructions. The experience of the city can also be understood through portrayals in the media—primarily, in visual media. This thesis strived to explore mediated representations of socio-cultural exclusions in the urban space of films.

1.2. Space and Representations

Spaces are represented and recorded in many forms in historical texts, fictional stories, paintings, and folklore. Travel expeditions to different parts of the world, shared through letters and reports published in periodicals[1] garnered public interest to know about the far-flung places. As technology grew, the dissemination of these representations became more efficient. With time, access to media grew even more. In the era of globalisation, digital revolution and increasing consumerism, everyone is flooded with images and information overload. With the invention of the camera and subsequent omnipresence of handheld cameras which have become part of everyday lives, memories and our narratives are rested in cameras through videos, pictures, and films as well. Cinema, over the years, integrated technology to represent

[1] *The adventurer,* a journal started publication in mid-eighteenth century has 'voyages and travels' genre gained popularity where accounts of travel expeditions to arctic are published. *Journals of expedition of discovery of Central America* published in two volumes the expeditions to central America from 1840-1901 and *Le tour du monde (*around the world) journal has 52 issues detailed journeys of group and solo expeditions to various parts of the world. These are some of the journals and periodicals which published expeditions and travelogues

and narrate better, still holds people's interest and wonderment. It will remain in the future as a medium for entertainment, self-reflection (of society and people) and a dialogic space of narratives. Cinema changed the way we understand and look at ourselves and the places people move in and reside (Aitken & Zonn, 1994). We are re-presented to ourselves, and these representations of us and our spaces (real and imagined), and the construction of daily lives and experiences intervene with each other. Jean Baudrillard says that in contemporary society, we know ourselves through images of ourselves and rely on technology (film cameras) to capture them (cited in AlSayyad, 2006).

Why is the study of popular culture and its associated representations critical? Stuart Hall, in his essay, *'Notes on Deconstructing the Popular Culture',* brings up the questions of struggle, resistance, marginalisation, de/moralisation, appropriation, expropriations and containment concerning popular culture. He goes on to speak about how culture is transformed, reformed, controlled with the increasing industrial capitalism; this process is termed 'politely' as cultural change (Hall, 2000). Representations, as producers of 'social meanings' are essential to understand the 'hierarchical structures' (Lester-Roushanzamir & Raman, 1999). In these heavily mediatised times of globalisation, it is images that inform the perceptions, and this is a circular process. Some become part of the hegemonic and dominant discourse of a city (McArthur, 1997), e.g. "Delhi as a rape capital",[2] "Hyderabad as a land of Biryani",[3] until they are contested, debated and replaced with a new discourse.

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[2] Many news articles use precursory of "Delhi as rape capital of India" in the titles when reporting on women's safety and sexual assault. The statistics indicate highest incidence of sexual violence against women in Delhi, in India. The news reports on the statistics led to conception of 'Delhi, rape capital of India' and its circulation gained more force and reached to wider audience (news reports on Delhi and sexual violence by international media like BBC, Huffington post, New York Post, CNN, etc) after Delhi rape case popularly known as the Nirbhaya case in 2012
In Delhi, the 'Rape Capital Of India', Five Women Were Raped Each Day In First Quarter Of 2018, May 7, 2018, The Times of India
Why Delhi's rape capital tag is problematic, April 20, 2018, Newslaundry.com
NCRB data reinforces Delhi's rape capital tag, city tops in crimes against women, December 1, 2017, Hindustan Times
Delhi is India's rape capital, show NCRB data, August 19, 2015, The Hindu

[3] The cultural place that 'biryani' occupies about Hyderabad is a long process of shared culture and stories, and media images by locals as well as the visitors. During the Ramadaan season, Biryani takes a back seat, and Haleem is recognised as the cultural dish of Hyderabad, and the frenzy continues for the whole month of Ramzaan.

For various reasons, the representations in popular culture are contested, and questioned - sometimes debated and other times protested. The attention given to popular culture in both mainstream and academic discourse points to its importance. It is through representation (in popular culture) that the social conditions and ideologies can be unravelled, contested and negotiated (Oha, 2001). Benjamin and McLuhan opine that the "*real message, in reproduction and production, has lost its meaning in seriality"* (AlSayyad, 2006, p. 141).

Cinema, as a form of popular culture, has widespread dissemination and accessibility as mass consumption of entertainment. The images in cinema carry political and sociological ideologies where it constructs narratives of society, region and nation. A film is hauled to courts for allegedly wrong representations of Muslims (Vishwaroopam[4], Kamal Hassan, 2013), representing anti-Christ sentiments (DaVinci Code[5], Ron Howard, 2006), protests and rioting for showing same-sex relationship (Fire, Deepa Mehta, 1996) and hullabaloo over usage of Bombay instead of Mumbai (Wake up Sid[6], Ayan Mukherji, 2009). In the context of the political and cultural construct of space/ region, the representation of Kashmir (arguably the most contested space in India) in *Roja* (Maniratnam, 1993) has raised many questions and academic debate. Many academicians have analysed the film (see Rustom Bharucha, 1994; Tejawsini Niranjana, 1994; Benjamin Sonia, 2006; S.V. Srinivas, 1994) on how the film has constructed a fictive space of Kashmir, supplanted by locales from Himachal Pradesh and localities from Chennai. This fictive space points to the loss of the space for romance (as constructed in earlier Hindi films) to the inaccessibility due to the political turmoil in the state (Vasudevan, 2010; Niranjana, 1994). In this case, it can be said that "*popular culture not only depicts nostalgically the lost world of local society, but recreates potent symbols for modern use"* (Walton, 2001, p. 58). Hence, in this study, films have been chosen from the array of different forms of popular culture to study and reflect on the questions and hypothesis in the thesis. Joan Copjec talking about whether cinematic representation reflects reality, states in her essay *The Orthopsychic Subject: Film Theory and the Reception of Lacan:*

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[4] The Hindu article '*Jayalalithaa: Decks can be cleared for release of film if Kamal Haasan and Muslim leaders reach accord',* published on January 31st 2013.

[5] *Da Vinci Code ban in India state*, BBC news, June 1st 2006.

[6] '*Bombay' lands Karan Johar at Raj Thackeray's door*, Indian Express, October 3rd 2009

> *"Cinematic Representation was considered to be not a clear or distorted reflection of a prior and external reality but one among many social discourses that helped to construct reality and the spectatorial subject"* (Copjec, 2000, p. 440).

Copjec here comments that identity/subjectivity and its reality/surroundings is/are mediated and constructed through these representations. Cinema raises questions about citizenship, exclusion, nationhood in its representations and 'non-representations' too (Mennel, 2008; Clarke, 1997; Srinivas, 2008). Film as an artistic expression not only represents but also comments and intervenes in the social reality of ghettos and barrios, the nexus between sexuality and the city and the transformation of the cities through globalisation (Mennel, 2008). David Clarke (1997) also notes that cinema reflects, captures, and responds to globalisation effectively, which can be studied to understand the global and transient flows and the resultant changes.

1.3. Cinema and City

Several studies of cinema/films and its various manifestations have explored different aspects of society, human behaviour, subjectivities, politics and ideologies. Films are considered as a resource to study history, nostalgia and memory, ideology, nationalism, femininity, and masculinity, to name a few. Cinema as a mirror reflects and captures the society (Unni, 2011), dictating or reiterating the evolving values and attitudes, also influencing them. For analysis in this thesis, "mirror" is not used in the conventional sense where it reflects the surroundings with mechanical precision as they are but in the 'Lacanian' sense where the surface of the text charts the processes of self-identification, self-reflection, conflicts and resolutions. Cinema is not just a product of entertainment which is separated from the everyday lives of people but allows us to understand social processes in society. It has come to be a reckoning force, conveying meanings for audiences' perceptions and a potential resource to understand the subtexts and nuances of politics of local as well as global (Mazumdar, 2007). The everyday practices of a society in constant interaction with each other are not devoid of struggles. These interactions involve cultural mediation that can be decoded, and cinema can be a tool to study and explore symbols and semantics of the representation which can, in turn, be interpreted and analysed to understand the larger picture or the minute details of any discourse.

Films' narratives do not take place in a vacuum but in a space with identifiable culture, social system, and shared meanings. These filmic spaces - imaginative or real spaces are re-presented to the audience; Stephen Heath refers to these in his seminal essay as 'narrative space' (Heath, 1993). In western cinema, the city has been and continues to be an integral part of cinema which has been largely ignored by scholars. David Clarke (1997), in his book *Cinematic City*, laments the lack of studies of the imagined cinematic city to understand the city and its modernity. In India, the city was present in Hindi Cinema (now recognised as Bollywood), whereas regional cinemas' narratives focused more on rural life and its space. Post globalisation, the city has been represented increasingly in the regional cinema of Telugu language. The narrative of the city as sin and rural as innocent has transformed to capturing the lives in a region/space and its intricacies through which the meaning of space can be derived and understood. Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) observes that cinema is an archive of the city, as she looks analytically at the cinematic city of Bombay and the cultural shifts in its representation in response to the economic systems and cultural milieu. Cinema is also 'a tool to read the cityscape' and resource for discourse on city (Unni, 2011) (AlSayyad, 2006). A city is a physical space with its infrastructure, malls, multiplexes, flyovers, ghettos (slums), local markets, but also made up of people, stories, and everyday discourses (Unni, 2011).

Narratives have a close interrelationship with the space where it is filmed. The decision of shooting in a particular city can "*alter the character of the film*" and affects how the cinema or space can be perceived (Pratt & San Juan, 2014) (Nowell-Smith, 2001). Filmmakers are focusing on filming the real places and cities as an integral part of the narratives. Kracauer argues that a film recording a real place could potentially alter that space and re-presented to the audience and Deleuze argues that film has the potential to think beyond what is already known and recognisable of a space (Pratt & San Juan, 2014). A film like *Kahaani* (Sujoy Ghosh, 2012) could not make sense in any other city than Kolkata, the narrative of *Raanjhana* (Anand Rai, 2013) could progress only with the change of places and culminate in an epic like dramatic ending in the capital city of Delhi, and the kind of problems faced by a young couple in a live-in relationship set in Jaipur in *Shuddh Desi Romance* (Maneesh Sharma, 2013) would not be similar to a couple in Mumbai. The films by Telugu director Vamsi are set in specific coastal towns and villages, revolving around lives of middle-class

families. The film *April 1st Vidula* (*Release on April 1st*, 1991) is set in Rajahmundry, in a colony of government railway quarters. The ethos of middle-class families is depicted, and the film breaks the myth of simple-minded, kind, and close-knit community orientation identified with the middle-class by bringing out the underlying murkiness and opportunism of middle-class aspirations in a humorous way. The roads that traverse and connect every household shows mobility through the colony, railway hospital, colony's community hall, and intermittent railway tracks where young lovers meet, and at these junctions of encounters, families gossiped, and backyards are used to snoop on each other.

Cinematic space is positioned in the narrative to reveal its relation to the social and cultural milieu of the narratives' contemporary times and sometimes to comprehend the present. With urban centrism of cinema and the rise in foregrounding of the city in cinema, cinema and city seem inseparable for most of the narratives (cinematic and urban) other than those that are explicitly rural in focus (and often, even here, the city is an absent and distant presence). The growth of cinema is connected to the growth of cities (Clarke, 1997). Some films are located in villages; they refer to the city as a place of opportunities and riches but also a place of moral decay. In most of the films, rural migrants in the city are nostalgic of the 'good', and 'simple' country life and their desire to move back is universal. Interestingly, a study conducted on migrants from rural Tamil Nadu who moved to Chennai found that class and caste dynamics structure the longing for rural life and the eventual return. It is only the upper caste and the families who own lands in the village, who have strong desires to return to their roots. (Misra & Niranjana, 2005). This study points to the notion that representation of upper castes whose roots are in the country side, is dominant in films. The urban notions like above are represented in films which are open to investigation (Tolentino, 2001).

Films directed by K. Viswanath also filmed in coastal towns and villages of Andhra Pradesh. Vamsi's films indicate the mutual influence of both topography and everyday practices. Viswanath's films depict the social geography and its role in creating a certain cultural imagination of people and places. His films like *Sankarabharanam* (1979), *Swathikiranam* (White rays, 1992), *Saptapadi* (Seven Steps, 1981), *Swati Mutyam* (White Pearl, 1985), *Swarna Kamalam* (Golden Lotus, 1988) which can be called musical dramas as their storyline is based on the classical music

(*Sankarabhranam, Swathi Kiranam*), classical dance (*Swarnakamalam, Saptapadi*) and their practitioners. The films are message-oriented, upholding traditions and patriarchal customs. Hence, in these films, the protagonists are Brahmins and generally people from the privileged communities. The settings of these films are mostly in typical Brahmin houses (a large hut like house with an open space in middle of the house), in temples and use the river 'Godavari' for ritual purposes only -unlike Vamsi and other directors who have used Godavari for romance, confrontations symbolising the ebbs and flows of river to the life. The story progresses mostly in these spaces. These films reflect the cultural and social systems of the small towns, both the auteurs' films strive for an egalitarian society. However, there is a world of difference between the two auteurs. Vamsi's films have a social mix of different castes, the rebellion against patriarchal notions and caste-based authority; and K. Vishwanath's films egalitarianism is bestowed upon the lower castes and undesirables by the benevolent and progressive upper caste (mostly Brahmin). However, it retains the hierarchical and profoundly patriarchal society of Brahmins under the guise of social message. The films in urban space shed the caste-based feudal system but retain it in different forms of caste-based hierarchies or feudal articulations.

Urban spaces are centres of diversity – along the lines of ethnicity, class, caste, gender and religion. From a statistical perspective, a city may be seen as diverse and inclusive, welcoming and promising, offering space to the stranger to assimilate into the large crowd. Is this the reality at the ground level? When one goes into the specifics, the divisions and exclusions are blatant, and it can be disorienting to a person who is new to the city. There are marked geographies with imaginary and sometimes fixed boundaries, as in the case of gated communities, for people of different classes, ethnicity, and religions and in some cases caste communities (recent advertisements refer to the sale of lands and villas in a gated community only for Brahmins[7]). Cities

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[7] A small advertisement in city edition of a major newspaper about availability of lands for near Yadigirigutta and specified the sale is only to Brahmin.

"Brahmin neighbours only for a township near Bangalore". https://www.ndtv.com/bangalore-news/brahmin-neighbours-only-for-a-township-near-bangalore-540833

https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com/news/india/now-a-brahmins-only-colony-near-hyderabad/articleshow/15761437.cms

are planned and built for particular purposes, one of which is keeping out the 'undesirables', in ways that are sometimes conscious and at others, subconscious. Urban geographers use concepts of 'spatialization' which is defined as spatial metaphors that social processes, materiality and other process takes form in a place, culture and time. It is to describe the processes of spaces and architecture in cities which helps to further the exclusion and alienation – which is already practiced based on race, class, caste, language, and distinct cultural practices (dressing, music, food etc.) (Fielder, 2001) (Mennel, 2008).

Simmel (1908), Lefebvre (1991), De Certeau (1984) and many geographers argue for the city as an interest of study and Lynn Stewart (1995) reviewing Lefebvre's '*The production of space'* states:

> *"The city is of interest to Lefebvre for several reasons. First, it is the city that mediates between the local and the global—it is subject to changes in global economic spheres as well as to local social transformations. Lefebvre also sees the city as an arena of struggle between everyday life (Urbain as potentially productive of festival and revolution), and the abstracting and rationalizing forces of the capitalist State. Thus, the city is both a locus of difference and heterogeneity, and a material manifestation of the projects of the State, industry, and capital"* (Stewart, 1995, p. 614).

Urban spaces are arenas of social interaction of different people and processes of complex social systems where subjectivities intersect and interact by internal and external factors and that *"…subjectivity is conceptualised as a process…. inscribed and reinscribed (sic) through discourses, cultural representations, and everyday practices. It is inscribed in and through, among other means, urban form"* (Hanson & Pratt, 1995, p. 17). Elizabeth Grosz (1998) identified the close and casual relationship between subjectivity and urban space. "*In Paul Smith's judgement (1998) much of the contemporary debate about subjectivities has been carried out in relation to three cultural practices: film, television and literature"* (Hanson & Pratt, 1995, p. 18).

The city is immensely dense and made up of several parts and '*diversity is natural to the city'* (Jacobs, 1961, p. 143). This diversity fosters more diversity, with migrant groups bringing in others in the hope of employment and a better life. The encounters

in the city in these settings among diverse people bring conflicts and negotiations. Georg Simmel (1908) states that conflict is important for a city to thrive and survive. Simmel expresses that encounters in the metropolis are unique as they are coincidental and are not informed by hierarchical, and transactional encounters in a rural setting (Simmel G. , 2011). The movement of people seems fluid, occurring seamlessly through different spaces, unwatched, and uncontrolled, and this *"…traffic between symbolic and concrete spaces also enriches spatial stories……. symbolic spatial stories become concretised in urban spaces, with very real implications for the women and men living within them"* (Hanson & Pratt, 1995, p. 19). Though the encounters are coincidental, there are implicit hierarchies, where a person is judged by appearance, name and locality. Hanson and Pratt (1995) found that a discourse on notions about certain people from specific locations gets written firmly into the spaces and onto the people. These implications and issues of access are subtly hidden within the city spaces.

The contradictions and contestations within the urban spaces are complex, and as noted earlier, cinema could provide insight into the problems of dealing with diversity and interrogating the failed promises of inclusiveness and opportunities for a better life. Cinema could throw light on unravelling a cultural map of a city of exclusions and inclusions through times. The exclusions according to the extensive literature review done by Steve Herbert (2008), plays out on the lines of hygiene/sanitation, race (where wealth also plays a role), ethnicity (their 'supposed' resistance to assimilation), class (as a socio-spatial marker), sexual orientation and sexual behaviour, which says in other words, that exclusions is a spatial practice. This thesis focuses on exploring the city of Hyderabad through its representation in cinema, to explore these exclusions in a city that has been going through particularly exciting times politically, economically and culturally.

1.4. Hyderabad

1.4.1. Background

Hyderabad, stands fourth and as urban agglomeration at sixth place in terms of population among the metropolitan cities in India. Established in 1591 by the Qutb Shahi dynasty which ruled it for close to two centuries, the city was later governed by the nizams who are of Asaf Jahi dynasty till 1948, when it became part of Indian

Union. It remained the capital of Andhra Pradesh state from 1956, and will continue to be joint capital for ten years from the year 2014, to the newly formed states of Telangana and the Seemaandhra region of Andhra Pradesh. Telugu film industry, located in Hyderabad city, fluctuates between being the second and third largest producer of films in India. In 2016, the Telugu film industry (275 films) was the third largest producer of motion pictures in India after Bollywood (340 films) and Tamil film industry (291). Hyderabad is a city marked by diversity in religion, language and ethnicity. The dominant languages of Hyderabad are Telugu and Urdu. It is a city of contrasts: a fast-growing IT capital, but also having a slum population of 1.7 million, according to a GHMC report submitted to World Bank, of which 66% reside in the core of the city.

1.4.2. A Brief History

The history of Hyderabad begins from the founding of the city by Qutb Shahis in 1591. For a brief period, Hyderabad city was under Mughal rule. When under the rule of Sikandar Jah, the third Nizam (from the title Nizam-ul-Mulk which means governors of the country), the twin city of Secunderabad was founded to station French Soldiers and later the British army in 1798. For eight years after independence, Hyderabad continued to be a separate state in the Indian Union. The proposal to integrate the Hyderabad state with Andhra Pradesh met with a lot of opposition from the former. However, a “gentleman’s agreement” was signed between the two parties and consequently, the state of Andhra Pradesh was formed in 1956, including much of the region of the erstwhile Hyderabad state. Andhra Pradesh was the first state to be carved on linguistic lines, with Telugu as the dominant language.

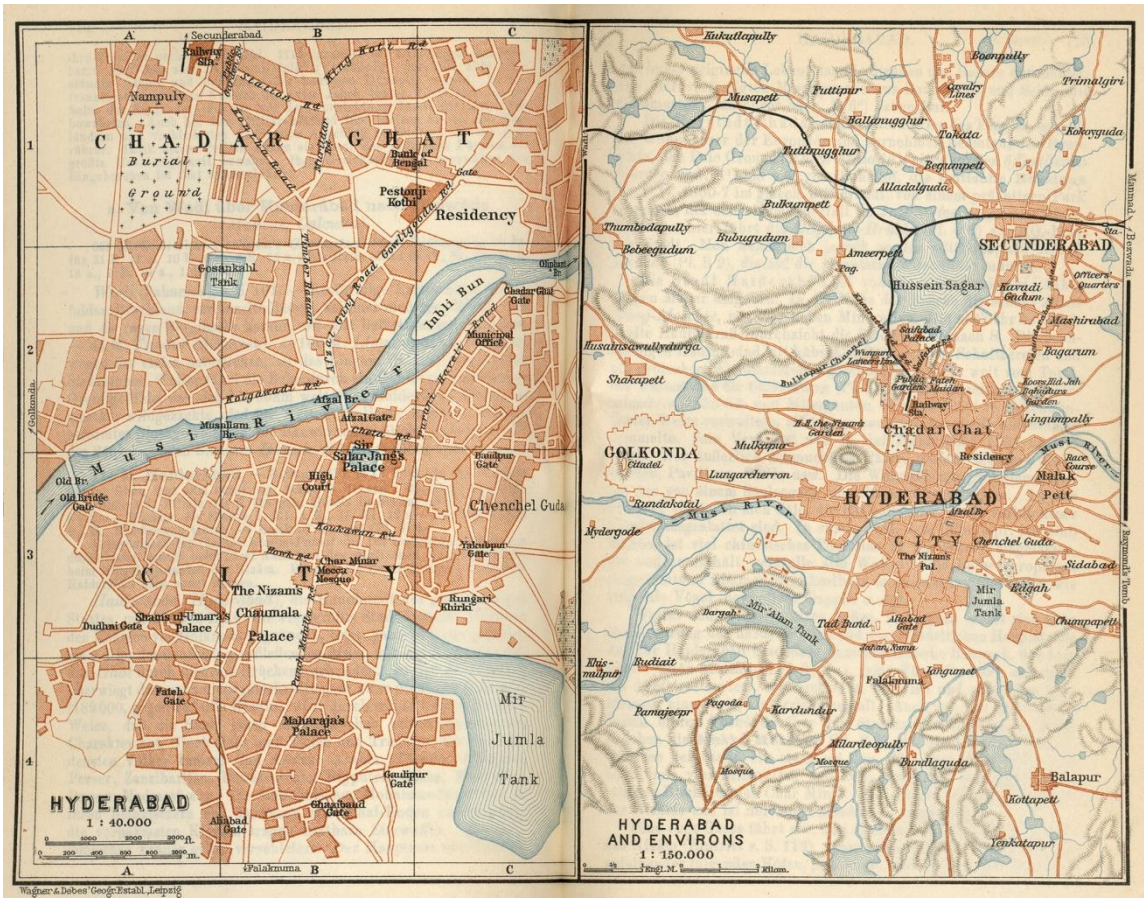

Figure 1.1: Map of Hyderabad city in 1914; Source: University of Texas Library

1.4.3. Telangana -Andhra Conflict

The Telangana – Andhra conflict dates to the different historical trajectories of the two regions. The protests from the Telangana region were due to a strong feeling of cultural, political and economic marginalisation. According to Haragopal (2010), history of Telangana was shaped under the feudal princely state of the Nizam, which influenced economic, political development, and cultural consciousness of the Telangana region and its people. The Andhra region was under the colonial Madras Presidency, and the region in contrast to Telangana experienced the advantages of modernisation, agricultural surplus, and urbanisation, and saw the rise of entrepreneurial peasant upper castes.

Andhra people, as part of Madras Presidency, felt uncomfortable with the rising aggressive Dravidian cultural assertion of Tamils. In response, to assert their separate identity, the Andhras romanticised Telugu and Telugu-ness which came to be associated mainly with the Andhra region and its culture. This privileging of a particular type of Telugu-ness associated with coastal Andhra, continued after the

formation of Andhra Pradesh which marginalised Telangana. The economic and politically dominant Coastal Andhra people looked down upon Telangana as an inferior region in terms of both development and Telugu culture (often understood as "Andhra" Culture) (Haragopal, 2010). While coastal Andhra Telugu was seen as "pure" Telugu, Telangana Telugu was seen as corrupted by Urdu, Marathi and Kannada (the important languages of the Nizam state). Demands for a separate Telangana state continued since 1956, and finally culminated in the new state being formed in 2014.

1.4.4. Hyderabad – Contestations and Claims

With the formation of the Andhra Pradesh state in 1956, rich peasant caste people from Andhra started moving into the city of Hyderabad with their wealth and aspirations. The coastal Andhra people with distinct cultural and linguistic identity, strong caste affiliations among upper castes (Brahmins, Kammas, Reddys, Rajus, Kapus) (Punyamurthy, 2016; Benbabaali, 2018; Roohi, 2017) migrated to the city. The Andhra people now had their own capital city, which is '*more beautiful and with better climate'* than Madras (Luther, 2006). Madras was the erstwhile capital of Madras presidency, where the [mostly] wealthy and upper caste Telugu people set up entrepreneurial ventures and were employed in various occupations, including films. The resentment of Telangana people against Andhra people increased when educated Andhras held most of the government jobs in the state capital of Hyderabad. This imbalance got further skewed with globalisation and the IT boom of the 1990s, when Hyderabad emerged as a global ICT centre. The land, industries and IT sector jobs are dominated by mostly Andhra upper caste groups (Haragopal, 2010). In the IT sector alone, 70% of the jobs are held by professionals from only four districts of Coastal Andhra – Guntur, Krishna, East and West Godavari districts (Maringanti, 2010). Maringanti quotes Sociologist Biao on this trend, "*have lands in Andhra, have houses in Hyderabad and have a job in America"* which accurately sums up the current socioeconomic situation in Hyderabad (Maringanti, 2010, p. 36).

The cultural struggle of retaining the Telangana identity as distinct from the Teluguness of the Andhras, has been exacerbated by Telangana's economic deprivation as well. Narendra Luther (2006) describes how with the spatial growth of Hyderabad and Secunderabad fusing into an urban agglomeration, the gardens of Hyderabad disappeared to accommodate the growing immigrant Andhra population.

The new cultural codes with globalisation through dress, lifestyle choices, malls, multiplexes, technology usage and cinematic representations of the city then become gradually inscribed onto Hyderabad (Maringanti, 2010; Srinivas, 2008). The wariness of Andhra people settled in Hyderabad for years, and the disgruntlement and sense of betrayal of Telangana people, were important forces that played a role in the transformation of the city and its people.

A discussion of the politics of the struggle and the various angularities of the Telangana movement is beyond the scope of this study and the political correctness and hijacking of the people's struggle by vested political interests in the formation of the state, though not side-lined or ignored are not considered for now. It is relevant only insofar as it has entered into the narrative of the city in cinema. The claims on Hyderabad city, where both Telangana and Andhra have invested heavily is still contested and debated. The questions of to whom does the city belong and who is qualified to claim the right to citizenship of the city, bring in constitutional, political, rational and emotional dynamics into play. These are not easy questions to answer but stimulating to deal with to understand what it might mean to live in, belong to and experience a city, along with the attendant questions of identity, and imagined spaces of the city.

1.4.5. Hyderabad in the Making

Unlike other cities where the colonial presence was crucial for its development and making of the city culturally and physically, Hyderabad did not experience direct control by colonial powers and the administration was mainly under the Nizams. The exercise of power by the Qutb Shahis, Mughals and Nizams (Asaf Jahis) in the city shaped Hyderabad as a distinct urban, cultural and political entity in Telangana. Due to this history and culture, though Hyderabad is part of the Telangana region, it acquired characteristics that were unique and different from the broader Telangana region. According to M. Radhakrishna Sarma (1993), "*no other Indian city is soaked so much in history as Hyderabad"* (Sarma, 1993, p. 65). He rues the problems in identifying Hyderabadi culture and argues that the city does not only constitute mosques, Charminar, Golconda and Qutb Shahi tombs, but it is much more and should go beyond that (Sarma, 1993).

Hyderabad does not seem to have firm cultural boundaries (Sridhar, 2011). However, in the popular imagination, Hyderabad developed its unique culture with a curious mix of North Indian and South Indian linguistic and cultural traditions, often termed as "*Deccani Tehzeeb*[8]" and displayed in its Hyderabadi dialect. The Muslim population in Hyderabad is 40%, which is a sizeable portion of the population and not a minority community, if only going by the numbers. The Muslim population is primarily located in the Old City which Ratna Naidu (1990) in her book *Old Cities, New Predicaments* terms as "walled city". She says that this area is of interest for urban conservationists due to its medieval history, and it is also an area of distress under the shadows of communal tension (Naidu, 1990). The city where most of the Muslims reside has earned the title of "Old City" with derogatory connotations (Moid, 2011). The remnants of the history and the Nizami culture reside in the monuments and are visible mainly in Old City which is on the southern side of the Musi river despite the rapid transformations brought in newer parts of the city by globalisation, development and development of infrastructure. The past and present adapted to each other and now coexist in comfort, showing both modernity and tradition in the cultural scape of the city.

To understand and identify the spatial dimensions of the exclusions and inclusions of Hyderabad, the historical legacy that makes most of the city and the political contestations that went into its making need to be identified and understood. Given that culture is never static but ever-changing and evolving, what are the new markers of Hyderabad and the processes and transformations that took place, socially, politically and temporally? How can these markers allow us to understand the 'culture' of Hyderabad?

In other words, how may we find and record the geographies, processes and nature of exclusions and inclusions of Hyderabad? Is it found in its popular spaces or the almost invisible spaces or the streets, the dwelling of the poor, the monuments, in someone's living rooms/houses or the workplaces of Hyderabad? The everyday living experiences and contestations that inform the public, their interaction and their spaces

[8] Deccani tehzeeb is the culture of Hyderabad state that evolved under the Nizams' rule. The Hyderabad state consists of districts from present Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana region. The confluence of languages of Kannada, Telugu, Urdu and Marathi with French and British colonial influences created a unique dialect called 'Deccani/Dakhni'. The Deccani culture is still reflects in vestiges of nizami art and architecture, and in food and language.

could provide some answers. The monuments, bridges, rivers, bazaars and the new hi-tech architecture have history and narratives etched in the memories and imagination of the people of Hyderabad spilling onto papers, streets, and importantly for this analysis, the silver screens.

It is significant to understand the representation of the city and city as imagined by its citizens as well as new migrants who laid claim to its spaces. According to Aravind Unni (2011), the cinematic city cannot be ignored in any understanding of cities. The meaning of spaces is produced and continuously changed, and it is crucial to disentangle how these processes of "spatial ontologies of the film" and "filmic ontologies of space" are developing (Aitken & Dixon, 2006).

Hyderabad is one of the fastest growing cities in India. Hyderabad, though culturally diverse and historically vibrant, did not figure either in the cultural imagination of mainstream popular culture and nation, or the local media, as it was considered as "not-Telugu enough", because of its history of Nizam rule. Cinema captures the changing discourse of a city. Films are analysed to bring out the nuances and complexity of the city and its cultural, political, economic and social organisation, as Kracauer observes that film can reveal something new about a city. The framing of a real location could alter how the location is perceived and understood. Hence, showing new meanings of urban space, hitherto hidden. Hyderabad is unique with its history and culture from other cities drenched in colonial history, and has been testing grounds for new political and cultural ideology. Hyderabad could be a case study in forming of a region (Telangana State) and how the history of being a princely state under Muslim rule, informs the current contestations, claims and exclusions in the city.

Thus, Hyderabad with its rich history and diverse demography (see Appendix 1) offers an interesting site to analyse urban inclusions and exclusions. Moreover, Hyderabad is probably one of the few cities in India that has seen the articulation and assertion of identity through production of a new genre of local films (Deccani films). The research selects films on Hyderabad, in an effort to map the exclusions and understand the politics behind the exclusions. These exclusions take a spatial form, expressed in the urban spaces of Hyderabad. The excluded and marginalised and their ways of coping and rewriting the city to accommodate them is depicted in these films. Often films offer frames of analysis which capture these processes of spatial exclusions, which could be challenging to observe in ethnographic practices. The fictional space

of Hyderabad makes an urban contract of real Hyderabad in the processes of filming at real locations. Films are a medium to capture, represent and understand the intersections between region, city, diversity, politics and demography.

1.5. Research Questions

The main objective of this research is to map the exclusions and inclusions in Hyderabad through a critical reading of representations in select films. The key questions are outlined below.

1. Mapping the exclusions in Hyderabad culturally and spatially using the medium of cinema.
    a. How does the spatiality of the cinematic city shape the mobility, access and transformation of an urban citizen in the films/cinema? How does the spatialization of the city determine the social relations, rules of citizenship and marginalisation?
    b. How is the region of Hyderabad constructed in cinema? How have different historical and paradigm changes affected or influenced the representation of identity and articulation of exclusions in the urban space in cinema?
2. To deconstruct the representation of exclusions and inclusions of Hyderabad in films by focussing on three registers on the representation of the city, and to understand how ownership of the city is created and reinforced and how different groups and communities navigate the city. This is done by looking at three different scales of films produced – Nation/ Bollywood; Region / Tollywood and Local/ Deccani. The three themes that the thesis navigates are:
    a. How are the Muslims represented in the cinematic city of Hyderabad?
    b. How do women traverse the city in cinematic urban space? What are the rules that define gendered coded space in private and public spaces of the city?
    c. Is the presence of the "uncanny" in the cinema on Hyderabad associated with the alienation of average Hyderabad citizen? How do we understand the spaces and processes of production of dystopian visions and exclusions in Hyderabad as represented in cinema?

There is considerable overlap among the themes and the categories discussed in the thesis given the complex and fluid nature of identities. For instance, though there is a

chapter on Muslims of Hyderabad (focussing only on Deccani language films), the next chapters also deal with Muslims who are women, representation of Muslim women in Bollywood, Muslim representation in the context of terrorism in different chapters. While noting this repetition of categories and their overlap across chapters, the division of chapters are based on specific themes to avoid confusion and to give a structure to the thesis.

1.6. Conceptual Framework and Methods

1.6.1. Conceptual Framework

This thesis draws on the concepts of Henri Lefebvre's '*Production of Space'*, Michel de Certeau's '*The practice of everyday'* and Georg Simmel's essays on the urban metropolis. Lefebvre has elaborated and theorised how spaces acquire meaning and are produced, and in that production, three kinds of spaces emerge which are not physically separated or distinct but based on the processes in that particular space. De Certeau takes a walk with an everyday citizen and lays out the city as a readable text, where the average urban citizen manipulates it for his/her needs, pleasure and freedom. Simmel describes the effects of urban modernity on the metropolis subject and how different metropolis subjectivities are formed in the urban. These concepts are used as the backbone to build on the analysis of the cinematic city of Hyderabad.

Henri Lefebvre's idea of space is that it is dynamic and vested with meaning. Space acquires meaning by daily practices of people, and these practices and activities produce space. He talks about processes involved in the production of spaces, the social processes and values that dictate spatial practices. A geographical space is social, and the 'lived' experiences produce spaces. He delineates three spaces – lived, conceived and perceived spaces and the processes involved in the production of these three spaces; Lived space is space of daily routines, social relations by members of the society; Conceived space is the space perceived by cartographers, scientists, and experts; Perceived space is space of art, complex symbolism and social life experienced by inhabitants. De Certeau's 'strategy' and 'tactics' in practices of everyday life were used in the study. Strategies are imposed in order to create an ideal abstract space, whereas tactics are creative, unplanned and work around the imposed

order. These strategies work in various uses/processes of the space like poaching (borrowing the space for time being), strolling, reading, speaking and shopping.

Both Lefebvre and de Certeau stress on the importance of social dynamism of spaces but also recognise the importance of language and the body in performing the space. Their study draws from their life in and study of urban spaces (especially Paris). Whereas, Simmel focusses on the urban and its inhabitants, and the effects of the urban on those inhabitants. Simmel discusses stranger and poor in the metropolis, the effect of metropolis of urban subject. His focus is more on individual rather than the social fabric in the urban.

Mary Anne Doane's (2000) masquerading femininity is drawn in understanding gender in the city. Doane theorises that women cannot separate the body from self. This '*spatial proximity'* of women to their bodies lead to '*over-identification'* (Doane, 2000, p. 500 & 501). Women oscillate between masculinity and femininity. Women masquerade femininity in response to the male gaze and repressive orders. This theory is applied to understand the responses of women to the urban gaze and control.

The lacunae of these western concepts of Urban in understanding the city of the developing world is filled by Indian authors Aravind Unni, Ashish Rajadhakshya, Madhav Prasad, Ranjani Mazumdar and Maaz Bin Bilaal's analysis of films on urban India. The existence of tradition and modernity in Indian urban cities and the complexities that arise from it, especially in these globalised and digitalised times are ideas used to inform this research study.

1.6.2. Semiotic Analysis and Discourse Analysis

The study adopts Semiotic Analysis and Discourse Analysis to help in its reading of the chosen films. A text can be interpreted in different ways and is open to various audiences' responses or interpretations, so the dominant reading (interpretation) is analysed here (Lester-Roushanzamir & Raman, 1999). The structure of discourse, subtext, and production of meaning in the chosen films are explored. The methods discussed below help bring to the fore the *'latent'* themes and revealing the connections between those themes. The issues of representation can be dealt with the help of these methods.

Semiotic Analysis

Semiotic analysis is also called a science of signs (by Saussure). In this method, the ideology behind the signs is analysed. Though Saussure and Pierce are proponents of Semiotics, from the 1960s, it was further expanded and given its current shape by Roland Barthes, Umbert Eco, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Christian Metz (Stam, Burgoyne, & Fillerman-Lewis, 1992; Wollen, 1998). Semiotics is labelled as a new revolution in film theory (Buckland, 2000).

Semiotics challenges the acceptance of the films' narratives as the mere existence of entertainment and tries questioning the ideological framework of the film and how that film articulates experience (Wollen, 1998). In semiotics the film is transformed as text and the two critical processes to achieve it, are enunciation and reflexivity. Francesco Casetti[9] states that enunciation and reflexivity are achieved through mediation. For every object that is present in the film, there is an addressee, and the description is along the lines of three looks adduced by Laura Mulvey. Laura Mulvey's three looks are: look of the male character, the look of the audience merging with the look of male protagonists and the look of the camera whose gaze is inherently masculine. Casetti and Christian Metz (2000) differ on the presence of an addressee; for the latter, presence of 'addressee' is problematic as there is no one at source who 'watches or sees'. The one who is at the source also becomes a spectator and joins them in watching. Hence, Metz is interested in "*articulation of space and time within narrative films"* (Buckland, 2000, p. 66). In Semiotics, cinema is:

> *"...a language ...a set of messages grounded in a matter of experience and as an artistic language, a discourse or signifying practice characterized by specific codifications and ordering procedures"*. (Stam, Burgoyne, & Fillerman-Lewis, 1992, p. 32)

The advantage of this method is that it can be used in conjunction with other theories or approaches like psychoanalysis, feminism and ideological studies. Raymond Bellour's (2000) analysis of the films *Birds* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1963), *Gigi* (Vincent Minnelli, 1958) and *North by Northwest* (Hitchcock, 1959) recorded in the book '*The*

[9] Francesco Casetti is a professor at Yale who is a prolific writer on film and television theories and semiotics. For more information see https://francescocasetti.com/

Analysis of Film' employed semiotics with psychoanalytic theory. Anuradha Ghosh (2000) looks at Satyajit Ray, and Ritwik Ghatak's films and the use of the figure of the child in their films, which, she argues, is laden with symbolic meaning; she calls this the 'child signifier'. The child in both the auteurs' films is a bearer of tradition and symbol of hope. The child in Ray's films signifies a different meaning from that in Ghatak's films. Child in Ray's movies is the symbol of 'lost innocence in man', and in Ghatak's films, the child is a symbol of 'faith in man' (Ghosh, 2000). Bhawana Somaaya (2004), in her book '*Cinema Images and Issues',* uses semiotics to raise questions of ideologies, explore the representation of gender, and evolution and changes in dominant discourses in popular Hindi films.

The relevance of this method to this research is that the symbols and signs that are circulated in cinema are analysed. It is relevant because the method tries to understand how these signs are borrowed from the real world and also how it informs our cultural knowledge. Semiotic theory works on the premise that human experiences are mediated through signs. The method enables us to look at every '*seme'* (a concept put forward by Barthes), smallest units of meaning, and place it in the context of cultural knowledge. The method helps to explore the mise-en-scene[10] of a frame which informs how space is being constructed and the connotation intrinsic in different kinds of representation.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis traces its origins to semiotics and grammatical theory, particularly to the work of Noam Chomsky, Saussure and Foucault. It has attained the status of a separate discipline in the 1970s (VanDijk, 1985; Tolson, 1996). To demonstrate how closely Semiotics and language theory are linked to Discourse analysis, David Howarth quotes Derrida, "*with language...everything became discourse"* and "*…discourses are still understood as semiotic dimensions of social practice"* (Howarth, 2002, p. 2). Discourse analysis analyses a particular talk or discourse (Shiach, 1989). This method helps unravel and reflect on the power structures and the ideological forces in work, i.e. "*how people recognise, produce and describe social events"* (Corsaro, 1985, p. 169).

[10] Mise-en-scene pertains to arrangement of everything (props, décor, actors, light, costumes, space) in a frame of a film.

This method helps us look at the narratives critically and locates the power and ideology that suffuse a place. Foucault talking about discourse says that it enables circulation of power in the context of person and the society. Some discourses are historically constructed and in specific social-political contexts (e.g. Medical and Legal Discourses) (Talbot, 2007). Discourse analysis emphasises to bring forth the social relations, lived experience and the link between the people's imagination of certain things and social relations which becomes the part of the discourse (Baker & Galasinski, 2001). Media has a more prominent role to play in setting the terms for discourse as it provides "*inhabitable discourse that forms the substance of culture and experience"* (Talbot, 2007, p. 4). In understanding discourse theory, it helps to know that discursive practices are not individualistic but governed by institutional spaces and social systems (Tolson, 1996).

1.7. The Research Process

A total of 32 films from Tollywood (15 films), Bollywood (7 films) and Dollywood (Deccani language films -10) are analysed for this research. The films where the urban space of Hyderabad is visible and significant to the storyline, have been selected for this research. To identify the films, Chris Lukinbeal (2005) lists out different processes given by Bernard Nietschmann (1993) who "*argued that there are four ways a film can depict a strong sense of place* and how *landscape reinforces social identities"* (Lukinbeal, 2005, p. 7):

(1) Allowing the viewer to comprehend the geographical scale in the movie

(2) Films using the signifiers of a place, not just one (a stereotype) but many

(3) When the place becomes more than the background and becomes a foreground

(4) When the narrative is placed in a specific place/region as in the cinema of Woody Allen, Steven Soderbergh, Clint Eastwood, Robert Redford. (paraphrased from (Lukinbeal, 2005, p. 7).

The films for this study are chosen to reflect their relevance to the research in terms of signifying exclusions in the city and also to provide a broad view of understanding the spatiality of the city of Hyderabad. The selected films were from the period when Hyderabad became established as a production centre of cinema, i.e., from the late 1980s and till the formation of the separate state of Telangana in 2014. The reasons

for choosing this timeline are that though there were Telugu films produced before the formation of Andhra Pradesh state, it was only from Madras/Chennai. Hyderabad was not seen as a part of Telugu identity due to its 'other' history of Nizam rule. Before 1956, Telugu films were not screened in Hyderabad. On the rare occasions when a Telugu film was screened, it was screened in only one theatre and given a single screening per day. After 1956, the Telugu film industry slowly started recognising Hyderabad and Telangana region for market and distribution of Telugu films. Till the 1960s, Hindi films were screened more than Telugu films in Telangana region and Hyderabad (27 films in 1956 to 47 in 1959). The expansion of Telugu film industry happened only in the 1970s, with various studios established after 1964 in Hyderabad (Annapurna, Rama Naidu studios) and also location-based shooting in Hyderabad started. With globalization in the 1990s, Hyderabad rapidly became a centre of cultural production (Srinivas, 2008; Srinivas, 2013; Maringanti, 2010).

The timeline of the chosen films is from the late 1980s till 2014. After 1964, with government incentives and subsidies, the studios of Telugu film industry started shifting to Hyderabad. However, the move to Hyderabad was not completed until the 'Matinee Idol' of Telugu films NT Rama Rao became the chief minister in 1982. (Srinivas, 2013; Maringanti, 2010). Therefore, films released from the late 1980s are chosen, as the decade of the 80s saw Hyderabad emerging as an important film production centre with a Chief Minister who patronised films. The choice of 2014 for the cut-off for choosing Telugu and Deccani films is due to the formation of Telangana state. It was assumed that the formation of Telangana state in June 2014 would have an impact on the Telugu film industry with changes in the form and content of both Telugu and Deccani films. However, in hindsight, one observes that there was not a significant transformation in both these film industries.

For a better understanding of the Cinema on Hyderabad, a brief background of the Telugu film industry in Hyderabad and dominant ideologies in the narratives of Telugu cinema are provided below. The 32 films are categorised into two time periods -1980s to 2000; 2001-2014:

1. From the late 1980s to 2000: This includes the pre-liberalisation period, with its attendant political and economic changes, laying the foundations towards liberalisation. These initial preparations to reduce the state's role in economic and social welfare saw a shift in the narratives of cinema. The cinema showcased

narratives where the common man was seen to rebel against the ruling elites, including the wealthy and state institutions, for justice and equality in what were called mass films. After the 1990s, liberalisation set in pace many changes - globalisation, the ICT revolution and digitalisation.

2. From 2000 till 2014: It is from 2000 that the Telangana struggle re-surfaced and reached a crucial stage with demands for a separate Telangana. This period also saw the consolidation of globalization in Hyderabad, with many multi-national corporations setting up offices, the new IT zone being named Cyberabad, migration of youngsters seeking jobs in these companies rising sharply, city expanding with real estate booming, NRIs returning to take up jobs in the IT sector. These changes saw a new cosmopolitan Hyderabad emerging in terms of both built environment and people. The Old City of Hyderabad was largely bypassed by these developments. The disparity between the Old City and new Hyderabad was now clearly discernible.

A set of films were selected from each timeline from Tollywood, Bollywood and Independent production houses (see Table 1.1). These films are those where Hyderabad is woven into the narrative, and the narrative progresses with the city as a backdrop for the characters and story of the film. To put it more precisely, "*more interesting are the films,"* to study and learn about the city in totality," *in which the city as it is acts as a conditioning factor on the fiction"* (Nowell-Smith, 2001, p. 104). The selection of films reflects a shift in gaze from local (Deccani films) to regional (Telugu Films) to national (Hindi films). The primary sources of data for the thesis are films. Secondary sources are books, journals, reviews of films, news articles and Internet sources.

Table 1.1: Films selected from different languages

Chapters	Theme	Deccani (Local)	Tollywood (Regional)	Bollywood (National)
Chapter 2	Muslims in Hyderabad	10	-	-
Chapter 3	Gender and Cinematic City	-	10	7

Chapter 4	Uncanny and Dystopic City	-	5	-

The criteria for selection of Tollywood, Bollywood films was to pick films that are popular and hits. The reason behind selecting popular films was one, to examine the popular imagination of the Hyderabad city and two, to limit Telugu films from the nineties as there are many films set in Hyderabad. During the later stages of analysis, it was discovered that popular Telugu films were also high in number, and it would be too time-consuming for each of them to be analysed in their entirety for the thesis. Hence, only those films were chosen, that were epoch-making and had served as a model for several films that came after them. Films that did very well at the box office or subverted expectations were also selected. The local film industry, Dollywood, which produces films in Deccani Language, was selected for its representation of Hyderabadi culture and language, which have been ignored by mainstream media.

Applying semiotic and discourse analysis, the films' mise-en-scene, symbols and signs, and the dominant discourse are observed. The theme of representation of Muslims in Hyderabad, the semiotics of Muslim space and religious signifiers placed in Old City, and the discourse played out in the Deccani language to subvert the marginality and make spatiolinguistic assertions on the city is discussed. While reading the Tollywood films, the focus on discourse of gender practices and gender relations in Hyderabad city and the semiotics of spaces women traverse and inhabit emerged. The last theme of uncanny and dystopic city was observed in the discourse of violence and power relations between different groups inhabiting the Hyderabad city.

Chapterisation

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 acts as introduction to the topic of the study with conceptual framework, research questions and literature review. Chapter 2 presents the analysis of the representation of Muslims in Hyderabad city. The image of Muslims in Deccani films is read in the context of region (the Old City), language and marginalisation and assertions through self-representation. Chapter 3 brings out the nuanced and complex relationship of women with Hyderabad in the

Telugu and Hindi films. The transformations of city space and negotiation of women in the city from the 80s till 2000s is charted. Chapter 4 studies the uncanny and dystopic in the Hyderabad city. The representations of gangster, poor, migrant, sex-workers and Muslims in regional media (Telugu films) is critically reviewed. The spatialisation of marginalisation and spatial practices in response to it is mapped in the chapter. The transformations of social practices and the engagement with changing Hyderabad from pre-globalisation to post-globalisation is presented. Chapter 5 is the conclusion that ties up the findings and observations from different chapters and gives an account of socio-spatial practices of exclusion and inclusion in Hyderabad.

1.8. Literature Review

1.8.1. How to Read Cinema

Classical film theory, in many ways, began with the debate between creationists and realists. The creationists or formalists are Sergei Eisenstein, V.I. Pudovkin who theorise that cinema "goes beyond realism". The realists, Andre Bazin and Siegfried Kracauer, claim that cinema is close to the real. The basic premise of both the approaches is that film is the photographic reproduction of the real. The assumption that film is absent from human intervention and resists reinterpretations, value and expression undermine the classical film theory. Anthony Easthope, in his edited collection of essays *Contemporary Film Theory* (1996) points to ways of understanding cinema which are delineated in the following paragraphs.

After the classical period, "*it is affirmed that film is a form of language, an ideological operation, position offered to the subject*" (Easthope, 1996, p. 9) and that every film is politically contingent on the ideologies in work at production (Comolli & Narboni, 1996). This is the fusion of Marxism and psychoanalysis heavily based on semiotic principles (Heath, 1976). Under the rubric of 'Politics and Subjectivity', this mode of analysis focuses on the textual forms that film has to offer with the exhortation to look at it critically. The focus is on the subjects and the positions they take up as offered by the film, "By *co-opting the work in semiotics* and *aided by psychoanalysis* (Jacques Lacan and Sigmund Freud) *to understand more the relations between the text and reader, addresser and addressee"* (Easthope, 1996, p. 11).

One of the other important ways to look at the film is through feminist ideologies, where 'scopophilia' is stressed, and the questions of gender and sexuality are raised (Cook, 2005). It was '*Juliet Mitchell in 'Psychoanalysis and Feminism' drew attention to Freud's account of female sexuality'* (Easthope, 1996, p. 15). Laura Mulvey, in her seminal essay '*Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema',* puts forward concepts of the representation of femininity and its symbolic meanings (Mulvey, 1989). Antony Easthope points out that "*the analysis of film in terms of semiotics, theories of ideology, of subjectivity and of gender, does not lead to the same answers"* (Easthope, 1996, p. 19). It is the "*triangulation of semiotics, psychoanalysis and historical materialism*" that makes up film theory (Clarke, 1997). There are many ways to read cinema, and these different approaches and the associated concepts have helped frame the study. A wide range of scholarship has been built over the years that offers guidance to those seeking to understand cinema as a cultural and social artefact and as an important representational mode. Given that this thesis seeks to understand how filmic spatiality operates to construct discourses of inclusion and exclusion, a specific set of methodologies has been applied to reading the cinematic texts. These are briefly outlined here.

One of those concepts is 'gaze' which was crucial in the study to understand the power relations. In the book '*Film and Theory: An Anthology'*, the section 'The Nature of the Gaze' is entirely dedicated to feminist theory of gaze and the gaze at other femininities (ethnic, racial and other women belong to the minority group). Here the gaze plays an important role as it is significant in expressing exclusions where the dominant group has power and control over the gaze and the other objectified by that gaze, and it is more visible for the female. The loss of the control on gaze is emasculating experience for the masculinity (AlSayyad, 2006). Nezar AlSayyad defines gaze as a "*source of power and knowledge over other employed by different agents for different means"* (AlSayyad, 2006, p. 162).

Freud talks about the similarity of hieroglyphics and women which Mary Ann Doane (2000) dissects this concept further in her essay *'Film and Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator'.* Doane talks about the difficulties of theorising the female spectator, as hieroglyphics lacks signifier and signified relationship but is iconic. Hence, in her view, a female spectator does not possess the semiotic nature of a phonetic language. Women are too close to themselves and unable to detach

themselves and from the plenitude. She goes on to say that female spectator masquerades and moves through masculine and feminine subjectivities with ease (Doane, 2000). This movement from masculine to feminine subjectivities is 'Masquerading'. Women 'masquerade femininity' in response to the oppressive social and gender norms. There are different gazes in an urban context, which are discussed later in the discussion of Cinematic City and were utilised in the analysis of films for the research.

Semiotics became another mode of studying cinema where the symbols and signs take precedent, and the hidden meanings and ideology are unravelled. Saussure was the pioneer of Semiotics, an approach to studying symbols that has been further enriched by the ideas of Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and Christian Metz. The dominant form of the methodology employed to study cinema remains Semiotics (Easthope, 1996).

1.8.2. Reading Indian Cinema

For this study, a specific range of Bollywood, Tollywood (Telugu Cinema) and locally produced Deccani language films were selected. The rich literature on the Indian Cinema by prominent film theorists and academicians forms the basis of reading the films for the research. The concepts and formulations mentioned and discussed above, and below form, the foundation for the research and the conceptualisation of analysis is built on them. The understanding of "Indian Cinema", its structure, form and to train the gaze with the methods is as prescribed by the literature discussed here.

Indian Cinema and Bollywood

'Making Meaning in Indian Cinema' (2000), a collection of essays edited by Ravi S. Vasudevan tries to evolve/adapt concepts and theories which help us read the Indian Film text. Vasudevan starts with the Seminar on Indian Film in Shimla (1995) and points out that the 'popular-commercial' Indian films have been studied extensively and focus has increased post 1970s by scholars drawing from a Marxist approach. Tejaswini Niranjana's (1994) essay, on Roja *'Whose Nation? Tourists and Terrorists in Nation in Roja'* has opened up the debate on the methodologies and '*ways of analysing the film*' to understand the narrative and the politics (Vasudevan, 2000, p. 2). The introduction by Ravi Vasudevan discussed the ideas presented in Chidananda Dasgupta's call for elite art films for the progress of films, society and nation. On the

other hand, Ashish Nandy argues that the commercial cinema nurtures the diverse traditions and cultures of our society and keeps the homogenising process of modernisation at bay (Vasudevan, 2000). Moreover, how the cinema represents and puts forward the narrative of 'the tug of war and nexus' between tradition and modernity is reflected upon in the essays of MSS Pandian (2000) and Moinak Biswas (2000).

Several analyses of the cinema looked at state, family and polity through different lenses. State has come to occupy a prominent place in where state control in the form of censorship, dictating rules and prescribing restraints on representation is discussed by Tejaswini Niranjana and Vivek Dhareswhar (2000) in their analysis of *Kaadalan* (Shankar, 1995) (*Pemikudu*, the Telugu dubbed version) and also by Lalitha Gopalan while dealing with violence on the body in revenge films (Gopalan, 2000). Madhav Prasad's 'notion of feudal family romance' discusses the constraints placed on representations and especially of women in cinema by the ambiguities of authority – patriarchy and state work in nexus with other elements to keep the restraint on women's representation (Prasad, 2000). Ashish Rajadhyaksha (2000) focus is on spectatorship and democracy in the Indian cinema which is also the theme of S. V Srinivas's essay on Fans' association of Chiranjeevi, a unique phenomenon to India (Srinivas, 2000). Ashish Rajadhyakhsa's essay talks about the Indian spectators' 'reading competence' of Indian Cinema, and tries to develop a theory of cinema that 'account for Indian Cinema', but focuses more on spectatorship and throwing open more questions to be researched and answered (Rajadhyaksha, 2000).

Jyothika Virdi (2003)'s book '*Cinematic Imagination: Indian Popular Films as Social History'*, discusses how popular Indian films are a repository of social history when analysed. The book reflects on India as a nation and its representation in films as well as the politics of gender and exclusion as represented subliminally in the Indian popular cinema. She comments on the homogenisation in the Indian cinema where the others are marginalised and highlights that a particular group/ class (mostly upper caste Hindu) is mainly represented.

Virdi puts forth interesting points at looking at Indian cinema, for instance, while applying psychoanalysis to Indian Cinema – she says that the oedipal resolution of western psychoanalysis does not work in Indian popular cinema. She quotes Sudhir Kakkar, who talks about the oneness of the mother and son, and their desires result in

desexualisation of the mother. The relation of a son for whom the mother becomes a divine object of worship of mother cancels the castration threat. The father-son rivalry here is the father's envy of mother-son's relationship. In her reading, the difference between genres of weepies and masculine action films blur and fuse in Indian popular cinema, and while romantic love strives for individuality and freedom of choice, this happens within the limits of patriarchal setup in most of the Indian cinema (Virdi, 2003).

'The Melodramatic Public: Film Form and Spectatorship in Indian Cinema' by Ravi Vasudevan (2010) discusses various facets of Indian Cinema and the levels at which a film could be analysed. The book charts out the progression and changes of Indian Cinema in the context of India's history, politics and social-economic transformations. The underlying assumption is that the Indian Popular cinema is heavily invested in melodramatic themes, and so is the public. The book starts with a discussion on western concepts of melodramatic as applied to Indian cinema, and in this context, Vasudevan views melodrama of Indian cinema as public fictional.

According to Vasudevan (2010), entertainment or popular cinema is strongly based in existing 'culturally available narratives' and 'performance codes'. The cinema deals with questions of nationhood and citizenship with respect to and in the context of the colonial and post-colonial history. He urges film theorists to look at the politics that emerge out of the cinema instead of juxtaposing politics onto the cinematic narrative. He states that there are different ways to engage with cinema which are, "*social typage, social form and individual characterisation in the encompassing space"* of cinema (Vasudevan, 2010, p. 14). His book also deals with territoriality and nation by studying Tamil cinema and how the Tamil region is related to nation and imagines the nation. Another section of the book deals with urban experience represented in cinema taking a leaf out of Ranjani Mazumdar (2007)'s work on Bombay Cinema and the city. The later sections analyse and chart the changes in the emulation of characters where they are in sync with the changes of globalisation and how cinema represents issues of private and public, regional and communal identities (Vasudevan, 2010).

The attempts to consider Hindi cinema/Bombay Cinema as national cinema has implications for the regional cinema and heterogeneity of India as a nation of different linguistic, ethnic and cultural regions and it is put succinctly by Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) who says:

> *"India has four powerful film industries located in different parts of the country, each addressing cultural specificities and contexts. While there are similarities and overlap in narratives, the differences are equally striking in both content and form...assumptions about "the national" speaking through "the cinema" need to be attentive to this diverse reality"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. xxxiv)

Selvaraj Velayutham (2008) also rues that the dominant discourse of Hindi cinema at a national and global level as the national cinema has marginalised the rich complexities of various regions, their cultures and their cinema (Velayutham, 2008).

Telugu Cinema

The scholars referred to in order to develop an understanding Telugu cinema and its history are primarily E Sathya Prakash, S V Srinivas and Uma Bhrugubanda's 2011 thesis titled '*Genealogies of the citizen-devotee: Popular cinema, religion and politics in South India'*. E Sathya Prakash's unpublished manuscript on the history of Telugu cinema. S.V. Srinivas's book '*Politics as Performance: A Social History of the Telugu Cinema'* gives a history of Telugu cinema from 1930 to 1980 in detail and discusses in detail the rise of NTR as a star in Telugu cinema and then his foray into politics. The implicit role of films and performance of NTR in his success as a politician is discussed. Srinivas highlights the importance of 'Teluguness', and linguistic and cultural identities for cinema and its public and various ramifications of the changes in Telugu film Industry, factoring in formation of state and Telangana struggle in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana region (Srinivas, 2013) which will be discussed in following section on Hyderabad and Cinema.

S.V. Srinivas's (2009) other book '*Megastar: Chiranjeevi and Telugu Cinema after N.T. Ramarao'* picks up where the last book left off - Telugu Film industry after NTR's retirement into politics and succession of NTR by another star from. In this book, he talks about the rise of another prominent star Chiranjeevi who (at the time of writing the book) entered politics by launching a political party. He explores Chiranjeevi's films, the importance of films and the course that Telugu film industry has taken to make a politician out of a film star. Telugu film industry majorly produces 'Mass films' from the late eighties, continued till now with a brief hiatus in its timeline. These mass films identify with Chiranjeevi who is called Megastar;

according to S V Srinivas no other star has received such a mass following till date after Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (former chief minister of united AP). Mass film can throw light on how cinema can be and brings formal and thematic concerns in focus, "*where one of the pleasures of working on contemporary Indian cinema surfaces when the films read our desires back to us both regressive and utopian"* (Srinivas, 2009, p. 103).

E Satya Prakash's work on Telugu cinema history starts from the first Telugu silent talkie film Bhisma Pratigna (1921) by Telugu director R.S. Prakash. His reading of the history of Telugu cinema shows that there was cultural and social resistance toward elitist bourgeoisie or Brahmanical hegemony. Telugu cinema in its nascent stage allowed for experimentation and to bring in a revolution in a change of ideologies by producing films focusing on social concerns by Gudavalli Ramabrahmam and like-minded people. The 1920s and 1930s provided opportunity and space for new directors with new visions. As Telugu cinema is reordered with linguistic markets and then later with the linguistic organisation of states, the star system is slowly rising, but the story is still a priority. By 1970s the Telugu films shed the pretensions of social messages and reformist ideas and also deteriorated the heroines' roles (Satyaprakash, 2015).

Mass films can be useful to understand "*how cinema can be political?"* (Srinivas, 2009, p. 75). In mass films and in Telugu film industry (in Tamil film industry too), the male star is always more important than the story. In Telugu films with the decline of socials, the feudal authority has ended with a shift to maintaining the state's authority. The star of the mass films is often an orphan who has no claim to inheritance or a descendant to feudal authority and emphasis is on orphan hood of the hero. Hence his legitimacy is on his own. Mass films shape narratives in such a way that it helps to enhance the star image. In this context, Richard Dryer notes that the narrative is constructed to represent 'star-as-real-person' and stars work on screen and off screen maintaining the same persona (Srinivas, 2009).

The middle-class in society see the "rowdy[11]" as representing everything that is wrong with society and politics. But in mass films, the heroes are rowdies or behave as such by bridging the gap between 'citizen to non-citizen'. The star in this role can move

[11] 'Rowdy' in Indian colloquial language means an individual whose behaviour is disorderly and rough

into different class statuses by a process of disavowal of subjectivities where he can embody both the low class and high-class statuses. For the rowdy, the presence of aggressive women creates a crisis of masculinity, which is countered by his surpluses.

From mid 1990s mass films started failing and seemed to be in a major crisis, with stories that were no longer relevant due to the following reasons: rise multiplex theatres; rejection of the film genre and form after the advent of filmmakers like Mani Ratnam and Ram Gopal Varma; and the stars could not go beyond the image that has been carefully constructed, called 'image trap' by Pandian (1992). In the space of mass films, Naxalite films became popular which identified with Telangana dialect and pushed towards region specific movies and also class films have emerged where nativity is depicted and shot in coastal rural areas, identified with the coastal dialect (Srinivas, 2009).

In the early 2000s, along with youth films which have a simple plot with a twist which are 'story-less', lacking flashbacks as well as villains (Srinivas, 2009, p. 218), there was a revival of mass films. These mass films hide plot twists from the actors and audiences too, and the heroes are marked by tragedy and not by excess, and there is a '*disavowal of the rowdy*' only to resort it to when the need arises - a memory of yesteryears' rowdy (Srinivas, 2009, p. 214). The film's locations also moved with the film genres, for example: faction film genre set in Rayalaseema (Srinivas, 2009, p. 222) (paraphrased). In 2000s the mass films are revived fully with new generation of heroes who are the progeny of the 80s and 90s heroes Pawan Kalyan (last brother of Chiranjeevi), Mahesh Babu (S/o Krishna), Prabhas (Nephew of Krishnam Raju) Ram Charan (S/o Chiranjeevi), Naga Chaitanya (s/o Nagarjuna), Rana Dagubbati (nephew of Venkatesh) and so many more. With these ups and downs, dying and revival of genres, the heterogeneous cultures of different locations and the long Telangana rebellion leading to the bifurcation of the state, caste politics, legitimising the competing male stars shaped Telugu film landscape in a different way.

The history of Telugu cinema gives political, economic and cultural contexts to understand the urban in Telugu cinema. The scholarship provides the confluence of polity, culture and social of Telugu identity in Telugu cinema. That Telugu identity is dominantly associated with coastal Andhra locales. The occasional representation of regions of Telangana and Rayalseema in Naxalite and faction films respectively in united Andhra Pradesh, indicates the unease in representation of the violence and

instability. The urban in Telugu films is absent for very long. However, the rise of urban representation in cinema is observed in the last two decades which lacks an in-depth exploration by scholars. Cinematic city though a late entry in to the space of Telugu cinema, would offer interesting arena for investigation in shifting identities of 'Teluguness' in Hyderabad and inclusion/exclusion of other linguistic and cultures in the cinematic city. The cinematic city scholarship is dileneated in the next section.

1.8.3. Cinematic City

City

> *"To think about the city is to hold and maintain its conflictual aspects: constraints and possibilities, peacefulness and violence, meetings and solitude, gatherings and separation, the trivial and the poetic, brutal functionalism and surprising improvisation"* (Lefebvre, 2000, p. 53).

Before diving into the literature of the cinematic city and relation of spaces and cinema, there is a need to understand the city as an entity. How do cities function? Why are they unique? Why are they objects of study for many scholars from the earliest cities at the beginning of civilization to contemporary cities? There is a vast and diverse scholarship on the city. Henri Lefebvre (2000) says that city has no definitive definition: Urban is not just a site of productions or conglomerations of capital or decision making but it "*intervenes in the means of production"* (Lefebvre, 2000). The literature discussed here was selected for its relevance to the thesis—where the focus is less on the economy of the city but on human geography and infrastructure, both material and immaterial. The authors whose work is mainly drawn upon with other supporting literature to further the knowledge of the city and its structure include Henri Lefebvre (1991)'s '*The Production of Space',* Michel de Certeau (1984)'s '*The Practice of Everyday'* and collection of Georg Simmel's readings in the book '*Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms'* edited by Donald N Levine. These three authors deal mostly with 'everyday' of the city, the mundane, the individual, informal economics, interpersonal networks of community, and the streets of the city and the underlying politics, culture and economics. They all stress that these are what provide a real understanding of city within the context of knowledge of the city's history, economics and politics.

Michel de Certeau

The everyday practices that works the meanings into the spaces, had helped the spatial analysis of films on Hyderabad. The city is "*founded by utopian and urbanistic discourse"* (de Certeau, 1984, p. 94), built on certain concepts, ideology – powers that are invisible, transformative but not tangible or controllable. In Lefebvre's words, the concept city of de Certeau is conceived space which is ideated and represented by scientists, experts, architects, and policy makers. This concept city is bound to decay due to the "*unreadable but stable tactics* (discussed in the next paragraph)... *merely concealed by the frantic mechanisms and discourse of the observation organisation"* (de Certeau, 1984, p. 96). Within the rational, ordered city, there are legends and myths about the city and in making of it. In pursuit of a concept city, if these legends and myths are destroyed, then the place is just a 'suspended symbolic order' making the city inhabitable in which no one believes in anything (paraphrased) (de Certeau, 1984, p. 106). Films does offer myths and legends of a city, that were explored the lived spaces both concept city and city of experience.

De Certeau talks about the range of everyday practices in a city space, where the navigation of spaces and the spatial ordering takes the front seat. In an urban setting, the contacts and encounters are numerous but also at the same level fleeting (Giddens, 1996). Anthony Giddens (1996) uses Erving Goffman's 'civil inattention' to a stranger walking past by us but we consciously demonstrate bodily engagement by taking a glance, before avoiding each other and looking away – this glancing and looking is "dimming the lights" (indicates no hostility) and the whole process is 'polite estrangement' while the opposite to this is "hate stare" (Giddens, 1996, p. 81). These encounters are also arenas of conflicts, compromises and resolution that a mise en scene of an urban cinematic space consists. Giddens (1996) supporting the study of practices of everyday he debates Ervin Goffman's writing of day to day, personal interactions and counters the criticism against Goffman by stating that the institutional order in shaping the society and present is not ignored as the institutional forms are implicit in the day to day interactions between people (Giddens, 1984). Hence, the discourse in these urban encounters reveals the power relations in and of a space.

Michel de Certeau talks about the power relations of imposers/producers who are elite or the state and the oppressed/consumers who are average individuals. He conceptualises how the individual or a group of citizens use the same imposed orders

and systems in creative ways to their own ends and means. The chapter 2 of this research study relies on the concepts mentioned here, which are linguistic processes tied into a region/locale/city represented in Deccani films. This is done by consumption process, use of language by *realization*[12], *appropriation*[13], *contract*[14]*and present*[15] (de Certeau, 1984, p. 33). These procedures of language (metaphorical and literal) use creates unpredictability within the frames of the syntax. It's not about the used material, but the way materials are used (de Certeau, 1984).

The important concept that Michel de Certeau introduced in his work that has been applied to the entirety of the thesis is "strategies and tactics". Strategies are where power vests and makes the space 'proper' – "*triumph of place over space;* enables *mastery of places through sight – a panoptic practice* and possesses the *power of knowledge* to *transform the uncertainties of history into readable spaces"* (de Certeau, 1984, p. 36). A tactic is "*a calculated action"* and a "*space of the other"* (de Certeau, 1984, p. 37). Certeau defines tactics as something that is untamed, cannot be fixed in a place but still restricted to a certain space. The tactics are unrenderable and process becoming more complex as the place and might get more complex to such an extent that even the strategy undergoes a transformation. Cut-out and turn-over is another conceptual framework borrowed from Foucault's 'panopticism' and Bourdieu's 'Habitus' where the cut-out comes first and then turn-over – *first an ethnological isolation; then a logical inversion* (de Certeau, 1984, p. 62). Cut-out separates certain practices from a whole unreadable system as observable parts which are whole in its own. "*The second move turns over the unit thus cut-out"* to determine the "*procedures hidden in the details* and in the *system of our society",* and thus "*human sciences are illuminated"* (de Certeau, 1984, p. 63). He talks about the importance of art in recording the everyday practice in its virtuosity, and that art and science have to come together to decipher this everyday city. That memory of the margins finds *new representational spaces* in art – literature, cinema etc. Cinema records the everyday spatial practices, cinema as an art and could be reduced to decipherable frames. Hence,

[12] Realization of the linguist system by speech acts
[13] By making the language one's own by speaking it
[14] Contract of speaker with someone
[15] speaking in the current time – relates to temporality of the speech act

cinema is representational space serving as archive of city, and it is where the nostalgia rests. Representational spaces are clarified in the Henri Lefebvre's section.

Georg Simmel

Simmel wrote about a range of topics that are relevant to the city; some of these are briefly discussed here. Some of the themes that emerged in the context of the analysis are conflict, prostitution, stranger, poor, metropolis and the mental life. Anthony Vidler (1991) in his paper '*Agoraphobia: Spatial Estrangement in Georg Simmel and Siegfried Kracauer'* writes about Georg Simmel and the basis of his concepts from his own experiences in pre-Nazi Germany (also see (Gerlach & Hamilton, 2004)):

> *"Simmel, the epitome of the stranger, cultivated, urban, and Jewish, who was for this reason excluded from the normal academic career of his contemporaries Weber and Dilthey, thus defines the role of being at once strange and estranged in the money economy of capitalism"* (Vidler, 1991, p. 41)

Simmel maintains that for a social unit to form, and for an individual "to attain unity", conflict is an a priori condition. Conflicts are necessary to maintain a functioning social entity. Conflict in a social space and society is to "*cause, or modify interest groups, unifications, organisations"* (Simmel, 1908, p. 6). He lists causes of conflicts: hate, envy, need, desire as being dissociating factors. The conflict looks to resolve these factors. Conflicts have positive and negative aspects which can be described and defined separately but impossible to do it otherwise.

As Simmel reasons, if we did not even have the power and the right to rebel against "*tyranny, arbitrariness, moodiness, tactlessness, we could not bear to have any relation to people from whose characters we thus suffer"* (Simmel, 1908, p. 75). It is important to protest and rise in retaliation, which gives one relief that they are not victims of circumstances and not endure suffering silently.

His views on prostitution are knotty as he makes assumptions about women's inclinations and personality, that a woman who offers sex for money cannot detach herself from that transaction like men. So, she offers her complete self, hence at the end of the transaction, she feels inadequate to suffer terrible loneliness and ends up losing the 'value of rarity' which is intrinsic for women. He seems to takes one of the two dominant views which are a) sex worker as demoralising agents – a malaise to the

moral and social fabric of the city and b) sex workers as hapless victims of exploitation and trafficking with no other choice but to take up sex work and sex worker is in urgent need of rescue and rehabilitation - Simmel subscribes more to the latter view. (Simmel, 1907).

In Chapter 4 of this thesis, the analysis draws upon Georg Simmel's concept of a stranger. The stranger is crucial to the city and in offering a locus of understanding the urban space. The role of stranger is crucial in urban space, where stranger flows with crowd merges and separates to provide the insight into the familiar yet unfamiliar spaces. The characteristics of a stranger, according to Simmel (1908), are:

Stranger

- Comes today and stays tomorrow
- Close by but remote; Remote but s/he is close
- Privileged due to his/her objectivity
- Above social and personal relations

These characteristics qualify him/her to be a confidant for many. And for these reasons, strangers are not generally perceived as individuals, but as strangers of a certain type. "*Their remoteness is no less general than their nearness"* (Simmel G. , 2011, p. 148).

It is possible to critique the assumption that the stranger is a freer man who has no standard against which to measure the current social system, that he is not bounded by any tradition, customs etc. But a stranger comes from some tradition, some societal structure with its own social mores, as has been demonstrated in travel accounts of Europeans where other cultures are exoticised and referred to as primitive, savage, barbaric etc., by measuring it against the observer's civilization.

The above criticism is addressed by Simmel, who says that in such cases of othering in any form, the 'general characteristics of human are disallowed to the 'other' by the stranger'. Here, the relation of a native to the stranger is a 'non-relation', and he is not talking about it when he is talking about a stranger (paraphrased) (Simmel, 1908, p. 148). But if we assume that social scientists would take on the role of a stranger and be more objective and less prejudiced, the examples that go against this presumption are filled in the early anthropological research (anthropological studies have

originated from colonialism, and in general the studies served colonial interests; for instance the study of Yanomao Indians which helped Venezuelan government to classify them as dangerous tribes in the 1960s).

When researching the exclusions in a city, the common factor that determines practices of exclusion is class, which overlaps with other marginalised identities. The poor are actively and visibly excluded from certain spaces of the city in the name of beautification. Georg Simmel has taken the poor as a subject of study from the city, and starts off with the question, whether the poor have legal and political rights. He states that the one right bestowed upon the poor is the right to assistance. This right to assistance is granted to the poor by the wealthy and political elite for their self-esteem and to maintain the status-quo but not to help or improve the status of the poor. The Catholic exhortation to give alms to the poor is concerned more about the souls of the rich than the welfare of the poor (Simmel, 1908).

Social conscience, with its bad and good intentions, cannot tolerate the sight of poverty (paraphrased) and "*class prejudice is strong enough to make poverty… invisible"* (Simmel, 1908, p. 175&177), both together force poor to the peripheries. Simmel answers the question he raises at the beginning of the article that poor are deprived of their political rights by providing assistance and hence becomes a unique urban social phenomenon where they cannot protest or form a social group.

Georg Simmel's '*Metropolis and mental life'* talks about the formation of an individual in Metropolis and the effects of living in Metropolis on one's subjectivity and modes of interaction with the city and the people. Simmel provides the reason for rising of individuality is conflict within the individual, which mounts when s/he protests being subsumed into the imposed order from society, politics and history. To understand modern life, one needs to investigate the adaptation that a person makes in response to social structures which enable individual aspects of life and the aspects that extends beyond an individual.

Here, Simmel mentions the blasé attitude contributed by heightened external sensory stimuli of the modernity of the city with its "*changing images, pronounced differences…at a single glance"* (Simmel, 1903, p. 325) and as the metropolitan subject crosses the street, takes the public transport, and encounters strangers at every step. In reaction to this changing pace of the metropolis, the individual tries to mask

his/her persona with indifference and eventually become numb to the differences. Metropolis, as the seat of the economy, leads the urban person to depend on rationality and intellect rather than emotions and impulses. With the inability to recognise the difference of objects, the qualitative value of objects is reduced to 'how much' and "*inevitably in dragging the personality downward into its own valuelessness"* (sic) (Simmel, 1903, p. 330). This can be seen as the beginning of uncanny city spaces and beginning of uncanny in the psyche of the urban subject.

Henri Lefebvre

Henri Lefebvre wrote an expansive book, '*The Production of Space'* on how spaces are not a given but produced through daily practices of people. The people inscribe meanings into spaces by their practices, and in turn, the spaces shape the people's perceptions about the space. The book while theorising meanders along different trajectories and has been criticised as sometimes losing cohesiveness (Stewart, 1995). This section will discuss only the main and significant concept from the book, which is the three processes involved in the production of the space:

1. Spatial practice, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation.

2. Representations of space, which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations.

3. Representational spaces, embodying complex symbolism, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces). (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33)

These are also termed as lived, conceived and perceived spaces. Lefebvre says history arises when there is a production of space and cautions the reader not to consider only the dated and teleological events but also other factors like nature, labour, technology and knowledge that changes the production of space. Lefebvre says that the institutions, religious symbols and rituals are written on absolute space that is a priori nature which is appropriated by users later by power, ideology and politics, making the spaces historical and 'representational spaces' (Lefebvre, 1991).

How to Study the city and Why?

Jane Jacobs, in her book '*The Death and Life of American Cities' (1961)* discusses the earlier views of architectures and thinkers: Lewis Mumford, Clarence Stein, and the late Henry Wright, and cites Catherine Bauer about the Decentrists' views of the city:

> *"Decentrists hammered away at the bad Old City. ...interested only in failures. ...The great city was Megalopolis, Tyrannopolis, Nekropolis, a monstrosity, a tyranny, a living death. It must go. ..."solidified chaos" (Mumford). ..."a chaotic accident ... the summation of the haphazard, antagonistic whims of many self-centred, ill-advised individuals" (Stein). ..."a foreground of noise, din, beggars, souvenirs and shrill competitive advertising" (Bauer)."'* (Jacobs, 1961, pp. 20-21)

This is the popular view reflected in popular culture as well, that urban is a place of sickness and a place of social ills. But Aristotle claims that no person is truly human outside the 'polis' and Lewis Mumford despite his criticism of city agrees that personality has first formed in cities and that they enable self-reflexivity in redefining self (Mouton, 2001). Vyjayanthi Rao in her essay, '*Embracing Urbanism: The City as Archive*', makes a case for the city as an archive and that with the effects of globalisation which occur simultaneously across the globe, the concept of place is becoming shaky. In this context, "*the city offers a space to understand the contemporary society"* (Rao, 2009, p. 372). She also argues by pointing out the limits of both archives and city, as separate and independent resources, to be a veritable source of history, memory and recollections. But city-as-archive forms a relationship between city and archives – *abstract and analogical* – which may help to reveal the processes of the historical and epochal socioeconomic transformations not just of Indian cities but of other '*all (sic) contemporary cities'* (Rao, 2009, p. 378). Henri Lefebvre (2000) places the specificity of the city, as city mediated among mediation and can be understood on in reflection and he calls the city 'work of art' and also 'material production'.

In structuralism, the city is studied as a system of signs that could be deciphered using semiotic theory. The facades, architecture, the flow of pedestrians, traffic, etc., became signs and symbols to be studied. The linguistic turn encouraged to consider

the semiotic (material) and non-semiotic (cultural) systems of the urban landscape. With De Certeau's comparison of a city to a text and New York skylines as giant letters on the urban landscape, the city has become a text that is constantly written by the architects, policymakers, the elite, the planners and the ordinary urbanites (Vuolteenaho, Ameel, Newby, & Scott, 2012).

In Poststructuralism, for the postmodern geographers Edward Soja, Baudrillard and others the city is rendered unreadable with changing meanings, and the instability of the 'hyperreal' metropolis. There is no single point from where the city could be understood; rather, it can be read through different perspectives of popular culture, politics and personal narratives, and so on. These too, are all enmeshed in the urban landscape, and it is necessary to untangle them and lay out the map of the urban (Vuolteenaho, Ameel, Newby, & Scott, 2012). To summarise it in their own words:

> *"…the poststructuralist and postmodernist theorisations of cities as "simulations of simulations" (Baudrillard 1988) or spaces where there exists "no outside-text" (Derrida 1994, 158) have been waning in recent years"* (Vuolteenaho, Ameel, Newby, & Scott, 2012, p. 7).

The reason for this, the authors write is that the "materialist constellations" are ignored where specific structures exist in not just an endless mix of meanings and labyrinths.

The concepts of these authors provide a framework for the study of the cinematic city of Hyderabad. The everyday lives of people of Hyderabad depicted in the city are analysed by adopting some of the concepts discussed above, such as spatial practices and representation of spaces, strategies and tactics to construct a map of the city linking these everyday discourses to spatiality. The individuals also inform the analysis of the city (as theorised by Georg Simmel) involved in these discourses.

Landscape/City and Cinema

This section details the scholarship on construction/representation of urban space in the cinema and also the significance of studying the urban in the cinema. The many ways of analysing cinematic city are explained. The book, '*Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in Global Context'* by Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice, establishes the close and complementary relationship between cinema and city. The book pushes the point to look at that relationship to explore lived social realities (Shiel & Fitzmaurice, 2001). '*Cinematic city'* by David B Clarke (1997) tries to explore

different frameworks and methodologies to study the cinematic city effectively and in totality. The collection of essays employs different methods (like psychoanalysis and textual analysis) and frameworks (feminist and Marxist) in exploring the imagined cinematic city. Walter Benjamin says that film captures the unconscious of the street as psychoanalysis does to the unconscious mind (Vidler, 1993).

The various cultural productions on cities are inspired by and have their origins in the shock-like experience of the urban modernity which Simmel calls *blaseness* of a city. The cities are where the modernity flourished and continues to be present, which contributed to the cinematic growth and vice versa. According to Georg Simmel, the modernity and urbanity subjectivities of the city and its effects of overwhelming sensory and imagery are reflected well in cinema (Mennel, 2008). Cinema has not been used extensively to understand the deeper nuances of urbanism (Unni, 2011). Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice stress the vital role of cinema in the cultural economies of cities (Shiel & Fitzmaurice, 2001). John Gold and Stephen Ward (1997) talk about the ancient close connection at many levels between film and city. They established the way city is reflected in film content, "*that films are urban art and that mostly cities form the backdrop for the narratives in cinema"* (Gold & Ward, 1997, p. 330).

According to Aravind Unni, cinematic discourse along with 'history of urbanism' helps reveal new theories of modernity and postmodernity (Unni, 2011) (AlSayyad, 2006). The experiences of this modernity as Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin opine, are both dystopian and utopian which are reflected or reproduced in the cinema. While commenting on globalization and its ever-increasing effects on every facet of daily lives, Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) turns to the changed representation of urban spaces and the city as a whole in cinema where the specific change is focus of cinema catering to 'consumer-oriented joint families' within boundaries of tradition but with a global appeal. Cinema offers an excellent means to study to gain an understanding of globalisation, which itself is important for the connections between cinema and city (Shiel, 2001). The scholars here argue that the different perspectives, images and narratives contained in the city are captured in cinema. Giuliano Bruno talks about the cinematic city as the spectacle and spectacle emerges in the process of travelling the city through the images. Through this journey, the city was always critically negotiated. She raises the question of whether every city is cinematic (Bruno, 1997).

The city's paradigms of utopia and dystopia in cinema through the lens of modernity, postmodernity and globalisation provides an understanding of the past of the history which shaped the present, these reflections on the city's past and contemporary times in cinema provide glimpses of the future visions of urban.

Of the processes mentioned above - modernity, postmodernity and globalisation, Globalisation's effects are far-reaching and seem detrimental in third world cities (Tolentino, 2001). Globalisation acts out, manifests itself in cities (Mennel, 2008). Arjun Appadurai lists markers of globalisation, which are "*electronic mediation and mass migration,* which enables *works of imagination as reflected in global cinema"* (Mennel, 2008, p. 202). In the process of globalisation, the relationship between place and culture has changed. Culture is no longer tied to place and has become deterritorialized (Mennel, 2008). The relations of movement and image, and time and image and the indeterminacy and chaos of these relations, and resistance to linear time form the basis for the representation of crisis of global capital flows (Narkunas, 2001). Cinematic responses to globalisation have become the focus of research for many scholars, and the questions of "*how globalisation gives shape to particular narratives and a global city"* have become important questions to explore (Mennel, 2008).

The rest of the section describes concepts and frameworks factor into understanding the exclusions of architectural and institutional spaces or absences of it and cinema would provide ground for 'readability' of a city. The scholarship discusses the spatial turn of the cinematic narrative and argues for an analysis of space in implicated into the textual analysis of cinema. Martin Lefebvre's book '*Landscape and Film'* (2006) opens up a gamut of theories and concepts to understand space in cinema. The importance of cinema is stressed to understand the landscape and its attainment of symbolic status (Lefebvre, 2006). Lefebvre states that there are narrative and spectatorial modes in viewing a film where only one works at a time (Lefebvre, 2006). This is a difficult concept to accept, as both modes lend themselves to each other to make meaning of the cinema. Subsequent essays in the same book have subverted this notion that in making meaning of the cinema, viewing every aspect of the film comes to play that includes visual and spatial elements. A film does not reproduce the landscapes, but "*it is a technical, economic, cultural and semiotic (discursive) production"* (Costa, 2006, p. 247).

Foucault, in his work '*Of Other Spaces'*, sees space as a great obsession of the twentieth century as time and history were for the nineteenth century (Elliot & Purdy, 2006). Michel de Certeau points out to the intimate relationship between image and landscape and that it is landscape which enables multiple readings of the text (Conley, 2006). When it comes to the reading of city as a text, the 'unreadability' of the city is stressed by many scholars — a city as a messy and challenging archive to be studied (Rao, 2009). "*The shock of the urban, of sound and space, of terror and violence, require articulation and representation"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 33). Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) called cinema as city's archive in her book *Bombay Cinema: An archive of the city.* Suketu Mehta's book '*Maximum City'* published in 2004 which follows the real-life characters who seem like they walked out of the cinema screens of Bombay cinema coupled with empirical research on Bombay architecture and infrastructure backs the argument of Cinema as an archive of city. The books' comprehensive description of events and people the author encounters blur the lines between reel and the real city. The portrayal of Bombay in the book foregrounds the important role of infrastructure or the lack of it in providing the citizens and their everyday lives: "*the prospects, capabilities, and rights (or the lack thereof) of specific groups within the city"* (Rao, 2009, p. 376).

The markers of a city do not just rest in its physical reality, it is also the stories, everyday discourses, art, symbols and imagery (Unni, 2011) and constructed by images and representations (Lapsley, 1997, p. 187) (Fitzmaurice, 2001). For Henri Lefebvre, the city is expressed and symbolised by a person's being and consciousness (Lefebvre H. , 2000).

Urban landscape's relation to melodrama is where constant conflicts and contestations are played out and according to Ben Singer the "*tactile sensationalism of modernity most vividly present in cityscapes as an important component of the melodramatic society*" (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 8). In the mediatised and globalised world, the lived city has an impact on sociality, communication and cultural practices as well (Christensen, 1997). To understand the city in its fullest, "*the representations of the city offer the reader to unravel the hidden secrets, and notion of the uncanny of the city"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 40). It is in the cityscapes' discourses, the paradigms and metaphors of the spatial meanings and representations are embedded (Mahoney, 1997).

Spatialization, or the creation of 'material spaces' through architecture, is used as a tool of segregation, and to institute laws to create exclusive spaces (for example, "no loitering" signs in public spaces; exclusive cantonment areas in cities) (Narkunas, 2001) (Tolentino, 2001). This separation is also a harbinger of fear and mistrust, which runs through every connecting network of the spaces and in the spaces (AlSayyad, 2006). David Harvey states that the spatialization of the city increases investment and results in the displacement of certain classes and groups (Tolentino, 2001). Class spatialization happens by placing the poor in cramped spaces and have no art, are removed from nature and alienated (Mennel, 2008). Cities' built spaces are "*taking symbolic and metaphorical significance"* in cinematic representation (Mennel, 2008, p. 7). Anthony Giddens (1984) opines that social relations and spatial relations are interlinked; the 'spatiotemporal structuration' determines the social relations which are reproduced in cinematic space.

The cinematic mise-en-scene tries to link the cinematic with the social space by providing us 'clues and myths' (Mazumdar, 2007). The experience of the city is explained in terms of spatiality – characterised by the city's architectural pastiche and temporality – 'marked by a schizoid experience of time' in the essay which tried to deconstruct Blade Runner (Ridley Scot) (Doel & Clarke, 1997). "*It is through an examination of this substantial and symbolic architecture in popular culture and theory that we can interpret the experience of modern metropolitan life"* (Gerlach & Hamilton, 2004, p. 15).

Uncanny City

"The film noir emphasises on black and white qualities of light and shadow" (Mennel, 2008, p. 47). Noir films are marked by alienation, loneliness, brooding protagonist, broken families, the crisis of masculinity versus femme fatale, preference of transitional spaces (train stations, hotels, streets, alleys) (Mennel, 2008). In this analysis, the concept of the noir genre is subsumed under the category of uncanny city. The estrangement and alienation experienced by a city dweller may be termed 'spatial pathology'. "*Berlin psychologist Carl Otto Westphal, one which identified for the first time a condition of urban anxiety that he named agoraphobia"* (Vidler, 1991, p. 4).

The articulation in the narrative is of the crisis of the urban disintegration. Colin Mc Arthur talking about the 'oppressiveness of the city' points out that it is gangsters and police who 'occupy a special place in the representation of the city' (McArthur, 1997). The cinematic city is the locus of national experience, made up of multi-ethnic social environments, and the modern city is represented as unliveable (Krutnik, 1997). It is the technology, which enables the representations, which becomes the problem in dystopian visions of the future in science fiction films (Mennel, 2008).

Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) commenting on the uncanny and anxiety associated with urban and its modernity brings in the ideas of Anthony Vidler, Donald and others:

> *"…modern uncanny is (i) haunting as "city of labyrinth" – "labyrinth of hallways, doorways and stairways leading nowhere and signifying nothing". (ii) The spatial phobias are associated to "metropolitan uncanny" and (iii) "spatial anxieties" stem from the uncanny where "childhood, uncanny, memories, nostalgia and claustrophobia coexist". Anthony Vidler says that this uncanny is best captured in cinema where "the traces of its entire intellectual history have been summoned in the service of an entirely contemporary sensibility"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 162).

For Freud, the source of the uncanny is from the inexplicable lurking between mild anxiety and terror. Hegel calls uncanny as the notion that falls describes only 'sickness of spirit', devolves into 'emptiness' and 'insubstantiality' page (Vidler, 1996, p. 27). E T A Hoffman mapped the uncanny to the architecture gaining spatial connotations – psychological uncanny of architecture (quoted by Vidler, 1996).

Memories and Nostalgia

This section explains the relationship of space and memories and nostalgia, where the myth and spectacle of historical places of city are questioned and subverted respectively. The urban spaces' role in containing memory and nostalgia are interpolated with the formation of urban subjectivities in cinema. Henri Lefebvre points out that monuments transcend fear, death, violence, the aggression and negativity to splendour, power and prestige. Ranjani Mazumdar focuses on the importance of unravelling sequences and action at the sites of cinematic urban landscape "*to understand the politics of monumental and mythic space in the exploration of the cinematic city"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 20). Monuments are spaces of

the spectacular but also 'displace the everyday sites of memory' (Mazumdar, 2007). The allusions and reference to memory and associated nostalgia is closely intertwined with inhabited and imagined spaces, not just with time. The memories transform to acquire a 'spatial texture' as the resting sites of the memories become photographs and films (Bruno, 1997, p. 53). Hence, films become a personal archive of a community's memories. Modernity which is closely associated to the urban reels in a 'sense of loss' and the city either fulfils a 'historical vision' or remains as ruins after a 'grand narrative' (Easthope, 1997). The relation of memory and spaces by referring to Walter Benjamin's idea of a dialectic image, which is the juxtaposition of the past images in the present, happens in a dialectical way. Hence, "*Dialectical Images are historical"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 27). For Benjamin, the city is shaped by the memories and vice versa.

The arbitrariness of the subject's relation to the world is countered by the creation of 'subjective geographies' by giving names to the unknown imaginary spaces. The names or figure are picked from the "*personal and silent alphabets"* of an individual to "*strengthen the foundation of sense of being alive*." This process helps to access past memories, to understand the material in the present (or vice versa). These 'conflations' of 'discourse and visual shapes' in analysis becomes 'experiences' and 'perceptions of perceptions' (Conley, 2006, p. 296). The same process of creation of subjective geographies happens where the spatial and visual components meet. The subject to relate to the unknown sifts through the memories and experiences, projects it onto the cinematic landscapes. Here the 'visible becomes discourse' where the subject discovers her/himself in the vast expanses of the cinematic landscape but is also contained by it (Conley, 2006).

Stranger, Flaneur and others in the City

In this section, the urban figures, as theorised by scholars, are listed and explained. These urban figures are an everyday staple of the urban cinema that was analysed in this study. The importance of the stranger as a concept in the city to observe and investigate the city is stressed often in studies on the city. The stranger has been discussed in detail in the earlier section related to Georg Simmel. Here, the various interpretations and usages of that concept are explored. It is stranger's perspective which beckons its force in shaping the identity and stranger as much s/he is the 'other' is ever present part in an urban milieu (Clarke, 1997) (Mazumdar, 2007). It is the

‘fleeting figure of the strange’ that informs the understanding of the city (Clarke, 1997). In the city, a stranger above everything else is first a stranger even though he is an ‘organic member of the group’ (Simmel G. , 2011, p. 149).

The inhabitants of the city contribute to the narrative of the city by weaving a story by subconsciously choosing from available symbols and ‘signifiers’ to piece together their stories (Mazumdar, 2007). Arjun Appadurai and Dipesh Chakrabarthy comment on the fuzzy division between public and private spaces, and how many of the personal and daily activities are carried out and performed in the Indian streets. Mazumdar points out that both these scholars do not speak about the absence or presence of women in the street (Mazumdar, 2007).

Flaneur, as Walter Benjamin describes him, feels at home in the street and is a stroller which started with the Arcades in Paris is an ‘invention of industrial luxury’ (Benjamin, 1985). “*The Flaneur has been located primarily within experience of capitalist modernity in major cities of the west”* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 92). Flaneur is someone who is abandoned in the crowd, likes the solitude but seeks the anonymity of the crowd. The cities with arcades, and offering commodities, and visual pleasures are the place for Flaneur, which feels like home (Benjamin, 1985). Flaneur is laden with the aura of modernity, which is a crisis of masculinity and contempt for order and rationality in spaces, and is involved but detached at the same time (Clarke, 1997). Mark Neumann sees the flaneur as a heroic icon that has come to “*terms with changing social spatialization”* (Neumann, 2001, p. 112).

Flaneur in cinematic context as described by Anne Friedberg introduces concepts of “mobilized” and “virtual” gaze “.....*which are used to comment on modern and postmodern forms of perception and the subjectivities they engage”* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 80). David Clarke also comments on how moviegoing has replaced ‘mobility’ from actual to ‘virtual’ (Clarke, 1997). Flaneur’s gaze is closely linked to the ‘cinematic gaze’. The concept of flaneur moulding the environment for his needs and desire was equated to the potential of cinema to alter the space it records. The cinematic gaze offers readers to find the hitherto hidden discourse of the space. It is the cinema in India which played the role of the arcade for flânerie, and emerged as ‘phantasmagoria of the Indian modernity’. A counter position of the flaneur is a gangster who seeks control with his gaze and does not limit himself to certain parts of the urban landscape and does not limit to just strolling but ‘territorialising’. Benjamin

offers the opposite of arcades – ruins where the 'narratives of death and catastrophe' are the primary markers (Mazumdar, 2007). The space of ruins and acts of 'territorialising' in films assists in uncovering the uncanny and dystopic nestled in the urban spaces, especially in gangster film genres.

Women in the City

The book '*Why Loiter?'* by Shilpa Phadke, Sameera Khan and Shilpa Ranade raise pertinent questions about the access of women to the city and their freedom to loiter in the urban spaces. The discrimination based on gender, class and caste is not just social but also 'plays out spatially as well' (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011, p. 14) (AlSayyad, 2006). The authors say that the control of women under the guise of safety is to curb 'consenting sexual relations' with 'undesirable men' (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). The book throws up many important issues about access, right to the city and the often neglected issue – the right to pleasure (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011).

The city is considered as dangerous to women but also the presence of the women is dangerous to the city. Elizabeth Wilson in her writings on European urban talks how women in the city become a cause of 'pleasure and as well as danger' and the "*public-private bifurcations played a crucial in determining a moral discourse around the woman in the public"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 81). The city represents a crisis of masculinity, a symbol of alienation and fragmentation, and the spaces of the feminine are violent and unreadable (Mahoney, 1997). On the contrary, Henri Lefebvre terms that spaces produced by male sexuality – the phallic spaces- are violent and that the process of production of spaces by men affect the gender relations and dressage (to which upper-class women are subjected). Lefebvre talks about the inevitability of revolt of femininity against phallic domination but cautions against a situation where it gets replaced by uterine space (Lefebvre, 2000). Partha Chatterjee and Sumanta Banerjee stress on the 'outside-inside dichotomies' and how women become the symbolic carriers of tradition and culture (Mazumdar, 2007). This is the image of a new woman a product of nationalist movement against the colonialism and colonial criticism of women's condition in India. This woman was "…*superior to Western women, traditional Indian women and low-class women. This new patriarchy invested women with the dubious honor of representing a distinctively modern national culture"* (Chatterjee, 1989, p. 622).

The feminist critique against the knowledge of existing urban geography is that in charting out the fragmented city, Edward Soja and even Massey's urbanscape is described by masculine geographies. Moreover, beneath the transparent urbanscape are 'sexual differences and masculine coding' (Mahoney, 1997). Sarah Edwards (2008) states that the texts of flaneur written by Baudelaire and Benjamin mention woman as 'passante' or a passing woman:

> *"In Baudelaire's 1860 poem, 'A une passante', woman's isolated presence in urban space inevitably constitutes her as erotic spectacle, tinged with misfortune and immorality – 'Full, slim, and /grand /In mourning and majestic grief, passed down /A woman' – for a female 'streetwalker', who abandons the domestic sphere for unstructured roaming, is traditionally a prostitute…"* (Edwards, 2008, p. 121)

A woman on the street is either a sex-worker or transformed into the figure of femme fatale from the noir film genre which is seductive, dangerous and a threat to the masculinity. These configurations of women into deviants and objects are an *"attempt to contain women as 'petrified, fixed sexual objects'"* (Edwards, 2008, p. 121). The figure of flaneuse is problematic and unattainable. Unlike flaneur, a flaneuse is not tolerated on the city streets. She cannot be the flaneur as described by Benjamin and many others, as "*Even the essential aimlessness of flanerie is modified by her awareness of physical danger and a sense of trespass, due to shifting but ever-present prohibitions on women's occupation of urban space"* (Edwards, 2008, p. 122).

A society or community's moral uprightness and integrity converge on the bodies of its women. A city or spaces decadence is symbolised in the prostitution and the moral-less women. The close relation of women, death and the city are a recurring theme in many films. Mennel further talks about the absence of the women flaneur and how the women become a sexualised object, and the gaze belongs only to the flaneur (Mennel, 2008). Giuliana Bruno's work on cinema took the debate in new directions as she looked at the 'feminization of the urban space' (Bruno, 1997). The cities of noir cinema have nothing to offer to women, instead, the city is obsessed by countering the male fantasies and anxieties (Krutnik, 1997) where woman is either "*a prostitute or femme fatale* in cinema *to negotiate female sexuality and gender relations in a city"* (Mennel, 2008, p. 29).

Postmodernity

Edward Soja argues that to understand postmodern geography, the changes in the urban space has to become the basis (Tolentino, 2001). Frederic Jameson opines that postmodernity can be understood about cities and war, and also cinemas as they mostly tend to represent the city (Mennel, 2008). Frederic Jameson elaborating more on postmodernity puts across these points:

With Post Modernity

- metanarratives are replaced with fragmented individual narratives which are not necessarily coherent
- built spaces are mutated
- real is replaced by representation and is mediated (Jean Baudrillard)
- fears and suspicion border on paranoia (Christopher Butler)
- role of history in cultural production is changed
    - history acts as references (mostly incongruent) which are cited by cinema
    - history is not an action at a particular moment of time
- pastiche art or literature which creates new meanings (Mennel, 2008)

Mike Davis argues that postmodern city has processes of militarization through architectural and spatial separations and surveillance. It is not the flaneur and blasé but a cyborg who can sustain in the postmodern city. AlSayyad (2006) quotes Donna Haraway, who in 'A Cyborg Manifesto' describes the cyborg thus:

> *"By the late twentieth century, our time becomes mythic times, we are all chimeras, theorised and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology.... the cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality"* (AlSayyad, 2006, p. 127).

In a postmodern city where surveillance becomes the norm and reliance on technology increases, time loses its positivistic definitions. Our times are defined by our virtual presence and our identities as an extension of technologies. The film *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982) depicts this metaphor in the form of 'replicants'. Replicants and humans' ambiguous identities, blurring of boundaries between being human and

machine are spelt out in the film. The film makes it difficult for 'cyborgs' too, to survive in a postmodern dystopic city.

Postmodern Cities have become sites of spectacle and value of cities from production has moved onto offering city as images of spectacles (Swann, 2001). A postmodern city is distinct by possessing features like *"fragmentation, time, decentralization, militarization and surveillance"* (AlSayyad, 2006, p. 123). There is either extreme blockade or extreme surveillance, which sometimes citizens willingly accept for safety.

Modernity

Anthony Giddens's (1996), book '*The Consequences of Modernity'*, talks about the effects of modernity on the social structure and also the effect on spatiotemporality. This section will summarise the book and bring in relevant themes and concepts from the book to this thesis. Giddens says that we have not reached post-modernity yet, but we are on the threshold of it. He disagrees with the authors, who claim that postmodernity is here. What Giddens deals with is post-modern and modern, and states that Modernity has changed 'forms of social connectedness' in a general sense but has also changed the interpersonal relationship of the everyday. He does not mean that tradition and modernity has severed when transforming from the former to the latter. Giddens differentiates the traditional from modern in three characteristics: the pace of change, the scope of change, nature of the modern institutions:

> *"Modern urban settlements often incorporate the sites of traditional cities, and it may look as though they have merely spread out from them. In fact, modern urbanism is ordered according to quite different principles from those which set off the pre-modern city from the countryside in prior periods."* (Giddens, 1996, p. 6)

He talks about modernity's process of emptying of time, and it is related to the emptying of space; with the invention of mechanical clocks and standardisation of time, the time has been removed from the place, thus, resulting in empty time. Space has come into focus, as the place is removed, with its ability to relate to the absences from across distances. The absences in a space or a locale can be still related to the spaces. Social life is no longer localised as locales are infiltrated with social influences from distant spaces and acquire a 'phantasmagoric nature' (Giddens, 1996, p. 18).

Empty spaces: 1) are 'representational spaces with placelessness'; 2) can be 'substituted with any space' (Giddens, 1996, p. 19).

Modernity has developed symbolic tokens that can be exchanged by different groups and across spaces with no troubles of understanding it, example: Money and expert systems is the trust in the built environment and the expertise involved, though they remove social relations. These two are 'disembedding', and we rely on guarantees and faith. In modernity, thought and action falls back on each other. Something like tradition cannot be allowed until it is justified by knowledge. *"The reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices…"* (Giddens, 1996, p. 38). Humans do not view themselves as continuous with nature instead live in a created environment in modernity. Given the complexity of Indian cities as carrying tradition within its modernity. The theories of modernity were tested for its applicability in understanding the tenuous relationship of tradition and modernity. If as outlined by Giddens, modernity has enabled reform in social practices, in the chapter on gender, modernity and tradition. He defines postmodernism and post-modernity:

> *"Post-modernism: concerns aspects of aesthetic reflection upon the nature of modernity"* (Giddens, 1996, p. 45)
>
> *"Post-modernity: the trajectory of social development is taking us away from the institutions of modernity towards a new and distinct type of social order"* (Giddens, 1996, p. 46)

This modernity and its effects are first witnessed in cities and then spreads to the rural settlements. Many rues that the old kinships and values of the community are forgotten or forgone as a direct effect of modernity in the cities:

> *"The idea of the decline of community has been effectively criticised in the light of empirical research into city neighbourhoods … Claude Fischer has sought to show that modern cities provide the means of generating new forms of communal life, largely unavailable in premodern settings"* (Giddens, 1996, p. 116)

To the question of whether modernity is western, Giddens categorically answers "no", due to the reflexive nature of modernity and how certain criteria of natural science

subsumed under discursive argumentation, overrides cultural differentiation. Giddens focuses on dis-placed nature of modernity and claims that there is nothing unique about localised anymore because distant places influence it. Modernity and its by-product globalisation create homogeneity and nothing local survives anymore. This point can be countered as a city comprised of heterogeneous groups, and local spatio-cultural practices shape these homogenous orders of capitalism and modernity which makes the aspects of the city unique and acquire place-specific connotations

1.8.4. City and Cinema in Indian Context

A few scholars have looked at Indian cinema as a serious socio-cultural artefact that shapes perceptions and meta-narratives about the state, nationhood, and many other themes. The concept of the cinematic city is less explored, and the efforts to understand the imagined city might free Indian cinema from the imposed 'national narratives'. *'The Bombay Cinema – an Archive of the City'* by Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) tries to chart out and bring together the cinematic practices and urban experiences. Mazumdar in this book offers ways to negotiate with urban and ways to try to understand the urban subjectivities through cinema. The negotiations are multifaceted and at multiple levels, which reflects on a complex dynamic between the cinematic city and real city. Mazumdar points out that "*Bombay cinema is a legitimate archive of the city"* (Mazumdar, 2007). The book covers most of the aspects of cinematic urban topography but fails to reflect or offer sufficient insights on gendered aspects of the cinematic city. The chapter on '*Desiring Women'* looks at the changing representation of urban women and women in general in the Bombay cinema over the years. It would be enriching if some of the gendered politics of urban spaces in cinema, and the access of women in cinema to cinematic urbanscape were explored. This is a gap that the current study seeks to address.

Vasudevan (2010) talks about the urban imagination, which is of the present and contemporary but not devoid of history, which has to be examined in multitudes. Then he turns to the postcolonial cities, he sees them "as *spaces of migration"* which are '*cosmopolitan'* born out of and filled with "…*ethnic violence, social deracination and invention and Spaces of technology and culture of modernity"* and a hub of *"communication, internet, transportation, anonymity*" (Vasudevan, 2010, p. 293). The clearance of slums and resettlement in cities during an emergency has emerged

again in the liberalization era when the informal city has come under scrutiny for the goods that are pirated (Vasudevan, 2010).

In Vasudevan's (2010) study of cities of Indian Cinema from 1974-2003, body and city are the parameters in the narrative of cinema where the body is the interpretative vehicle. While taking up an array of films for the study of urban experience and the focus was on the violence in overt and daily practices, he also takes up documentaries on cities and towns. The body as an interpretative vehicle of the city is not placed in the urban space and seems untethered from the surrounding environment. The implication of urban space and city in the analysis of embodied violence is lacking. The study picked up the concept of body in the city, and this was used for constructing the embodied cultural and linguistic urban performance.

Jyothika Virdi (2003) among her analysis of other films, talks about tradition versus modernity discussed *Shri 420* where the protagonist loses himself to the seduction of wealth and glamour and becomes corrupt in the city only to finally leave the city with his lover. The song in *CID* narrates the perils of living in the city. The films before the 70s have a discourse of anti-urbanism (Virdi, 2003).

Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) takes *Deewar* and *Baazigar* to reflect on the relationship between anger and urban topography. *Deewar* (Yash Chopra, 1975) and *Baazigar* (Abbas Mastan, 1993) are both revenge films but very different from each other. Deewar addresses the disenchantment with the nation-state and the promise of the modernity while Baazigar charts an individual psychosis making the stranger in the urban the central character amid modernity and the nascent globalisation. The idea of homelessness lends a foundational idea to both films. She quotes Ashish Nandy's comments that it is the unique feature of urban to romanticise the homelessness. Here, she draws the difference between western urban and Asian urban. Unlike western cities, "*Urban forms in South Asia are not either overwhelming or hegemonic"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 4). There is no sharp divide between rural and urban, the village as an imaginative space exists in the city along with urban.

Hyderabad and Telugu Cinema

The Telugu industry was originally located in Madras part of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. Telugu film industry was part of the industry that produced films in Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. It was only after 1956 that Telangana became important for

Telugu Film industry as market and investment. The linguistic identity of Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada has come to fore when talkies have emerged in cinema. The changes and developments in Telangana did not affect the Telugu film industry in Madras. However, According to S V Srinivas (2013), Telugu filmmakers longed for 'Teluguness' in the cinema which Madras could not offer, and by the time Hyderabad has only one studio. The history of being in the space of non-Telugu Madras after the linguistic reorganisation of states, but producing Telugu films from there about Telugu space and place has shaped Telugu cinema. This peculiar history of the Telugu film industry, among other factors resulted in Telugu film existing in a heterotopia, a 'placeless' location and S.V Srinivas's observation about Telugu cinema fits here:

> *"Telugu film could outlive Andhra Pradesh and the cinema hall … eternally looping around 'home' which was a genre, a star, and also, of course, a geographical entity that is lost and a community that is a memory"* (Srinivas, 2009, p. 240)

In this vacuum of place or placelessness in Telugu cinema, it is difficult to find a meaningful representation of Hyderabad in Telugu cinema. There is mention of cinema production house *Lotus Film Company* in Hyderabad under the patronage of the Nizam, which produced films out of Hyderabad. It was the first mention of Hyderabad associated with cinema, but it is debatable whether the films produced by Lotus Film Company can be called Telugu films indeed, as there was no clear delineation of language films in the silent era. There was no visible representation of Hyderabad in these films. There might have been a possibility of representation of Hyderabad in later talkie films, but the Nizam disbanded the Lotus Film Company which fell out of favour with him after the film on Razia Sultan by Dhiren Ganguly depicted a Muslim princess falling in love with a Hindu man. There was no production of films from Hyderabad until the 1960s (Satyaprakash, 2015).

With incentives and subsidies introduced by the state government in 1964, the relocation process began. The filmmakers, other members of Telugu film fraternity and the well to do Andhra migrants were shocked by the 'lack of Teluguness' in the Hyderabad and Telangana regions which have their own distinctive cultural and geographical landscape, different dialect, and the dominance of Urdu (Srinivas, 2013). The centre envisioned Hyderabad as a region with no linguistic bias as an area where

Hindi could be propagated in the south. No Telugu films were played in Hyderabad before 1956; Telugu releases were scarce in Hyderabad. Telugu films were shown in one theatre and limited to a single screening per day. Even after 1956, Hindi films were screened more than Telugu films. Slowly, Hyderabad has seen a rapid expansion of Telugu films' exhibition and distribution (Srinivas, 2013).

The discontentment of the Telangana region with the merging of the Andhra region with Telangana rose with the developments like the construction of dams in Andhra regions. Srinivas (2013) quotes Simhadri that the drought districts of Telangana were purposefully denied water by coastal Andhra politicians and bureaucrats. In December of 1968, Osmania students went on strike over violation of Mulki rules (for definition see Chapter 1, section 9.2.). The demands for a separate state were led by Telangana Praja Samithi spearheaded by intellectuals with no affiliation with political parties. The films of the time had no trace of agitations (Srinivas, 2013) just as the recently popular, mainstream films which had no trace of the agitations except for films made on a low budget especially made to propagate message about Telangana struggle and separate statehood for Telangana. It was clear by the time that it was economic and political interests that have held Andhra Pradesh together. The portrayal of Telangana and Telangana people in films was poor and caused hurt to the 'Telangana sentiments'.

S.V. Srinivas on the depiction of Hyderabad city in films says

> *"The city's geography and Telangana region's dialect became a noticeable presence in Telugu cinema as recently as the late 1980s with Siva (Ramgopal Varma, 1989). In this film, for the first time in popular Telugu cinema, the local specificity of the city was foregrounded, the action being set in narrow by lanes of city's bastis and Irani tea shops, against the backdrop of the odd historical monument"* (Srinivas, 2013, p. 388)

This study in the analysis of Telugu cinema looked at the urban (Hyderabad) in cinema. The history of exclusions of Telangana, the push of the Muslims and women to the fringes in the imagination of city foregrounded the analysis to understand the spatiality of these exclusions in contemporary times. The study noted the absences and its implications of the non-representation in understanding the space of the cinema. Telugu cinema steeped in caste biases, patriarchal gender notions and

dominance of Andhra culture provided a representation of Hyderabad opened and analytical arena of conflicts, compromise and negotiations located firmly in geographical exclusions and spatial subjectivities. The globalisation era changed the city of Hyderabad, transforming not only the economy but the culture, social relations and topography. This analysis provided insights into the lived and conceived spaces of Hyderabad city.

Chapter 2 – Representation of the 'Other': Muslims in Deccani Films

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, Deccani language films whose narratives are placed in the city of Hyderabad are analysed. Deccani language or '*Dakhni'* developed and flourished in Hyderabad state under Nizam rule, which consisted of the Deccan region (parts of Maharashtra and Northern Karnataka, and present-day Telangana). Hyderabadi Urdu or Deccani is an amalgamation and assimilation of different cultures and languages of the Deccan region. These films represent the generally underrepresented of the city – Muslims. Women, the poor and Muslims fall under a category that has been referred to as "*The People in Parenthesis*", a term coined by Doreen Massey. This refers to the groups in the narrative space who are less focused upon; less studied and largely subordinated (Mahoney, 1997). The city tends to exclude these groups along with certain spaces (like the Old City); they are often 'invisibilized'. It is these marginal groups and spaces that are underrepresented in the mainstream Cinematic Landscape of Hyderabad, that are the focus in the Deccani language films. The Hyderabadi/Deccani films can be read as a text that brings together categories of region, language, religion and identity.

The films navigate the urbanscapes of Hyderabad's Old City that is largely Muslim, and to a lesser extent traverse parts of Cyberabad[16], the main city of Hyderabad, and Secunderabad. The rise of Hyderabadi Urdu/Deccani language films started with the success of *The Angrez* (2005, Nikhil Kunta) which initially struggled to find theatre bookings but later went on to run in theatres for 175 days. The second film, *Hyderabad Nawabs*, also ran successfully for 175 days. More than 70 Deccani films have since been produced, with comedy being the biggest genre. The overarching themes in these films situated in or about the city are outlined and discussed in this chapter. The dominant discourses in these films are examined, with the intention of opening up more questions, possibly explore answers and offer themes for further research.

[16] The IT corridor developed by spread of software industry and MNCs has earned the name of Cyberabad.

For a better understanding of the rise of the Deccani films, this chapter engages with other films that are tied to a specific region, locality, and language (that is not the official language of the State). The literature on such films is reviewed to contextualise the ways in which Deccani films are produced and distributed locally. Bhojpuri cinema and Malegaon cinema are also looked at to explore the politics, cultural contestations and power relations behind regional cinema generally, and Deccani films in particular.

The Bhojpuri region covers parts of western Bihar, few pockets of Jharkhand and eastern Uttar Pradesh in northern India. Malegaon is a town 290 kms north east of Mumbai, in Nashik district of Maharashtra. Bhojpuri films use cinema to assert linguistic and regional identity, while Malegaon cinema also tries to achieve the same, using Ahirani and Pawari dialects. Malegaon films tie in with a range of minority politics--Muslims, Scheduled Castes and Tribes--who make up its population and speak these dialects of the *Khandeshi* language. The use of comedy in the films is of particular interest and raises some questions which the chapter tries to answer by exploring comedy genre in films and comedy as a tool to reclaim or assert identity for the marginalised. The important questions that the chapter tries to answer are:

1. Can region provide a frame to understand the emergence of Deccani films?
2. What are the politics of a *spatiocultural*[17] cinema in the cinematic landscape of Hyderabad which is dominated by Telugu and Hindi cinema?
3. Is comedy an effective tool for the 'other' to counter the stereotypes and marginalisation in representation?
    a. How is comedy used in the films to counter the stereotypes and exclusions stemming from marginality and produce an alternative discourse in a city which has pushed them to the margins?
    b. How does the 'other' become the Flaneur or close to it and assert a claim to the urban space in the films?

2.2. Old City: Revisiting its past

The marginality of the community living in the Old City is tied to the marginality of the space and the dominant religion as well. All the Deccani films discussed here are

[17]The culture tied to a certain space or region by Kumar (2016)

situated in the Old City of Hyderabad. The marginalisation in the city is found to be not only economic but cultural, social and spatial. Over time, the Old City has lacked attention from the State to initiate or complete development projects or to improve infrastructure[18]. This marginalisation of Old City space fits in with the ideas of Lefebvre (1996), where he states that industries are established outside the cities and the Old Cities become markets, workshops, a limited place of production of raw materials, labour and tools. This is seen in Old City spaces surrounding Charminar where there are markets and workshops engaged in petty production, with a high percentage of the workforce in the informal sector.

The Telangana government referred to the Old City spaces as "dead zones" while announcing plan projects to improve the Old City in 2014[19] . The Old City is viewed as a relic of the Nizam's era and a heritage site, which needs preservation but not development (Naidu, 1990). It is seen as an impoverished city on the southern side of Musi with a sizeable Muslim population and a remnant of Nawabi culture as the capital city of Asaf Jahi and Qutub Shahi eras. The development of the Old City has not been in tandem with the pace of growth of the city in the rest of the city (Vithal, 2002).

The Old City has turned into a city under the ruins of modernity, a marker on the map of the cityscape of a memory of the former glory of Muslim rule. The "Police action" of 1948 changed the discourse of that space and the communities living there. With the declaration of Independence of India, the princely states under the British Raj were annexed to the sovereign Indian state. The last Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan, refused to join either India or Pakistan and preferred to form an independent nation within the Commonwealth of Nations. The British government refused this proposal, and the Nizam held negotiations with both India and Pakistan. The Indian Army forcibly entered and annexed Hyderabad and other Nizam's territories in 1948, an incident which is referred to as the Police Action or "Operation Polo[20]".

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[18] www.newsonline.co.in/en/hyderabad/govt-eludes-development-projects-in-old-city/

[19] www.deccanchronicle.com/140723/nation-current-affairs/article/hyderabad-old-city-get-special-projects

[20] Operation Polo, the Hindu. September 16, 2015.

https://www.thehindu.com/features/kids/a-peek-into-the-history-of-hyderabad/article7659135.ece

The police action ended the Nizam's rule, and power from the feudal order was vested in the newly formed democratic state. The elites of the feudal state were mostly Muslim who had political power. The jobs hitherto held by the Muslim elites went to the government employees from coastal Andhra. Many from the community either migrated to Pakistan or the USA or to the Gulf. Most of the remaining Muslim population were poor and joined the working classes that became in some measure dependent on state welfare, and the Muslim elites who chose to stay made peace with the loss of their Nawabi status but continued to occupy positions of cultural and social prominence in the new state. The poor Muslims remained in the Old City continuing their self-employed petty businesses, and some spread out to other bastis/slums in search of opportunities. Many wealthy Muslims moved out of Old City, which was no longer the centre of power, politics and administration, and settled in Banjara Hills, one of the affluent Muslim areas of Hyderabad. Over the years the Old City, once a major political capital of the Nizams, lost its shine and was reduced to a Muslim ghetto.

The Sachar Committee's Report (November 2006) noted the economically and socially disadvantaged state of Muslims in India. Some of the Muslim population were found to be even more disadvantaged than the Dalit communities in some states (Islam, 2007). The findings of the report resonate with the visible trends in the Old City and the situation of Muslims in Hyderabad. Though the population of the Old City is predominantly Muslim, it also consists of different groups. The boundaries of the Old City are not tight but porous, with different areas marked out by various ethnic groups (Jairath & Kidwai, 2011). The stereotyping of the Old City and its association with decadence and poverty is discursively produced through dominant ideologies and by mediated texts. Here, the people and its characteristics are considered to be "*constituted of the place*" (Sibley, 1997). The Old City's representation in mainstream Telugu cinema was mostly marginal and even where present, failed to take into account the cultural or social realities of the place. According to Srinivas (2008), the representation of Old City in Telugu cinema and especially *Okkadu* (2003, Gunasekhar) is a fantasy of a new Old City which has shed its backwardness, patriarchy, and communal tension, which disregards the region and its linguistic specificity to represent and reinforce a unified identity of Andhra Pradesh and nationalism (Srinivas, 2008).

How can the Old City so marginalised and underrepresented be explored and deciphered? One way this becomes possible is through its assertion and reclaiming of language. Urban geographers write on the importance of the language of a city, where it is the main component of performance – or *urban performativity*[21]. "*The city is thus a layered site excavated in language through the force of collective memory"* (Patke, 2002, p. 8). Language is the medium that lets us explore the past and present. Memories are indemnified/ written on to the city to make up for the lost memories of people and encounters and covers itself with the "*veil woven out of the lives in the city*" (Patke, 2002).

The Old City is not a closed world, it has connections to the new Cybercity (most of the cab drivers servicing the corporate companies are from the Old City), and it has spatial relations with other developing urban centres of the city. In Telugu and Bollywood films, the representation of Hyderabad has in recent years shifted from indoors to outdoors, depicting the street life, the markets, malls, government buildings and IT corridors. Space is fluid, and the flow of movement seems aspirational from here (Old City) to other parts. People in the Old City do not want to remain in the Old City, but dream of moving out to richer neighbourhoods or establish businesses in the city in which they aspire to become successful (Vithal, 2002). Though vibrant and bustling, teeming with people all the time and with thriving small business centres, the Old City is still seen as an impoverished, rundown locality, with a majority of its people poor.

2.2.1. Muslim Communities in Old City

The large population of Muslims in Hyderabad by and large lack representation in Tollywood (Telugu films) or in the few where they are present, it tends to be a token representation. Muslims are stereotyped in terms of their clothing, appearance and the kind of work they are engaged in. There has only rarely been a Muslim protagonist in Telugu films, with the few that show Muslims being remakes of Hindi films like *Mughal-e-Azam*, and *Alibaba aur 40 chor*. A token Muslim presence is found in films like *Siva* (1989, Ram Gopal Varma), *Okkadu* (2003, Gunasekar), and *Mutamestri* (1993, A Kondadarami Reddy), as the friend or sidekick of the hero who is extremely

[21] Urban performativity is the performance of urbanite when in contact with difference. The identities formed from this performance and is fluid, evolving depending on many factors.

docile and malleable. Their role as weak characters enables the hero to dominate the screen and improve his star image. This friendship also acts as proof of the hero's secular credentials and ability to achieve communal harmony. If there is a substantial role of a Muslim character in a film, he is more often than not a terrorist, smuggler or rowdy or a good Muslim who must prove his patriotism and dedication to the nation -- films like *Khadgam* (2002, Krishna Vamsi), and *Vedam* (2010, Krish). This burden of proving one's loyalty towards the nation is absent from a Hindu character or one belonging to any other religious minority in Telugu films. The mainstream and regional representation of Muslims in media is still low, and they are often ignored. Old City residents are absent in Telugu media, and if represented, it is with an "*obscene excess of identity"* (Srinivas, 2008, p. 92).

The majority of the Muslim population are impoverished and belong to backward population of the country[22] socially, economically, and in education (Vithal, 2002). The Deccani films are located in the city and specifically the Old City. The cultural identity of Muslims is derived from their location in Old City, informed by the history and their migration during the Nizam rule. Their marginalisation is evident from the kind of occupations the Muslim characters in Deccani films are associated with – sign painter, butcher, knife sharpener who carries his equipment on the cycle, owner of a car driving school, a chef at a small restaurant, and auto driver. In many films, the Muslim protagonist is unemployed, using wit and *jugaad*[23]to get by day to day, as illustrated in the film *Berozgaar* (Aziz Nazer, 2010). Some of the other unconventional occupations in the films are: a black-marketeer of cinema tickets, bicycle thief, a hawker of homemade medicine, salesman of pirated films, a local rowdy, fake *baba*[24], and police spy. In the film *Angrez 2*, when the warring software employees and the Old City people make peace, one of the characters introduces the Old City dwellers and their occupations -- the Owner of rickshaw and auto rentals, Mechanic, Fighter, *Sulabh* Complex[25] owner, Driver and *Pehelwaan* (wrestler), three

[22]http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/sites/upload_files/moma/files/pdfs/sachar_comm.pdf

[23]*Jugaad* is borrowed from Hindi language which means a low-cost solution to any problem

[24] A spiritual guru in India who offers life and religious advice to followers.

[25] Sulabh complex are public toilet for use by anyone by a nominal fee of rupees 1 or 2

people who each own a *paandabba*[26], and a Furniture shop owner. The people of the Old City represented in these films are involved in the informal economy or are self-employed in the kinds of occupations listed above. This signifies the precariousness of employment and income, which is heavily dependent on the vagaries of external conditions.

These occupations are tied to the location of Old City where these traditional, self-owned small businesses and informal livelihoods have thrived and continue to exist. Newer occupations and businesses cropped up due to the changing demands of the market and growing technological innovation, which includes movie and software piracy, and unauthorised repair services for various electronics. None of the software employees, in Angrez and Angrez 2, are from Old City. In *Berozgaar* and *Angrez*, the protagonists are outsiders or cannot fit into a formal economy, where it reinforces the stereotype of residents of Old City who remain in such unorganised occupations and resist becoming educated or seeking employment in the new labour markets of the neo-liberal city. Aravind Unni (2011), in his essay, '*Reading the Muslim Space in Bombay through Cinema'*, says that Muslim space is a space of marginalisation and underdevelopment, a region inhabited predominantly by Muslims, marked by isolation and seclusion (Unni, 2011).

The marginalisation of Muslims is tied to their religion, and their locality - the Old City. The play of marginality and the politics of discrimination and alienation in the city spaces stems from a complex interplay of religious identity, locality, and socio-economic contexts. The depiction of marginalisation of the Old City and its residents is not fictional, but it is evident from the way Deccani films are perceived and treated by the Telugu cinema industry and the State. The exclusionary practices are not only spatial in the physical sense, but are also cultural, social and economic as evident by the actions of dominant players in the cinematic space. Though the films used the local Urdu/Dakhni dialect, spoken by many and understood by almost all the citizens of Hyderabad, but having been refused certification by the State Board of Film Certification, the films were sent to Mumbai for certification, as they were considered as Hindi films. This points to the language politics and hegemony that affects these

[26]A box type shop setup attached to restaurants, at street corners or on streets which sells mainly paan (a betel nut wrapped concoction) but also sells cigarettes, water and other small things.

low budget films. If they come under the category of Hindi films, they pay 20% entertainment tax, whereas Telugu films pay only 7 % entertainment tax[27].

It was only in 2008, that the Deccani filmmakers were able to convince the government that they belong to the regional/Telugu cinema[28]. The Telugu film industry in the State is dominated by the peasant upper caste (Kammas) from coastal Andhra with economic and political power who privileged their own Telugu culture and language. As migrants to Hyderabad after 1956, the coastal Andhra film fraternity has no sense of shared history of the Nizams rule and culture. The Andhra culture and language are imposed and distributed through popular culture and politics, and socially, to become the norm inadvertently and sometimes purposefully. The other dialects and cultures of Hyderabad city and Telangana like Telangana dialect, Urdu and Deccani Urdu thus became marginalised over the years and have only recently started finding their space in cinema and popular culture.

Sunera Thobani (2014) says that media and religion are related, and religion is articulated through its language and text in mediation. And the revelation, though not possible in the first reading, it is possible in alternate ways of reading. DeVries also says that "*instead of approaching religion and technology as oppositional",* it should be seen as together (Thobani, 2014). It is through the use of this technology of media that Old City space and its culture finds representation. Though the Deccani films do not stress the identity of the Muslim, it should be understood that poverty and marginality are also derived partly from their religious identity. The Sachar Committee Report (2006) also talks of Muslim socio-economic backwardness based on a ten-year study of Muslims in India. For these films, the Muslim identity, poverty and the dilapidated state of Old City space and housing is natural, unlike the Bollywood films of *Bazaar*, *Bobby Jasoos* and *Daawat-e-Ishq.* The mise-en-scene of the films focuses on poverty, and the characters talk about it often and are always sombre when talking about their condition. The torn clothes, dirty streets, narrow lanes

[27]http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/telugu/movies/news/Na-Telugu-na-Hindi-hum-hai-Deccani/articleshow/18793045.cms

[28]http://www.newindianexpress.com/entertainment/tamil/2008/nov/07/earthy-transcontinental-too-4901.html

and small houses are framed, to give special attention to the penury and destitution. The camera freezes these frames for a few seconds to stress on the poverty and their relation to space and religion. In the Deccani films, the characters and the narrative try to find humour in poverty. Here, the representation of 'other' (Muslim) gives an insight into how these separations and boundaries are constructed.

The exceptions to this are the films *Fun aur Masti/Gullu Dada One* (Shekar Surya, 2007) and *Sabki Boltee Bandh* (Aleka Choudhary Vemula, 2011) where the protagonists are Christian and Hindu, respectively. The group of friends in *Sabki Boltee Bandh* are Hindus who have stable jobs, and the one unemployed youth of the group is wealthy and wishes to start his own business. Characters from other religious communities are fringe elements in this film and serve mainly to help the narrative to move forward. The minorities, who are powerless, disadvantaged, and discriminated outsiders need and can gain a presence in global cities, presence vis-a-vis power and presence vis-a-vis each other (Mennel, 2008). In the Deccani films, the Muslim communities left out in the globalisation era, try to catch up with development and aspire to belong to the middle-class by any means or risk getting left out.

2.3. Language in Constructing Local Identity

Deccani or Dakhni or Hyderabadi Urdu was the lingua franca of the Deccan region, and Urdu was the official language under the Nizam era. After the Police Action in 1948 and annexation of the Telangana parts of Deccan with Andhra Pradesh in 1956, the Deccani lingua franca of Hyderabad was pushed to the margins and neglected by the state and as well as in popular culture. Lefebvre says that the language of a city is specific to the city, expressed in the discourse, which includes customs, gestures, clothing, and the particular use of words and language by the inhabitants (Lefebvre H. , 2000). We see this particular use of the language of the city in various aspects in the figure of '*pottey*', discussed in the later sections of the chapter. The Deccani language has over the years, become eclipsed by Hindi and Telugu. Deccani language reflected the assimilation of different cultures and languages (Urdu, Telugu, Marathi, Kannada). This language of Hyderabad is colourful and "*often includes humour at one's own expense"* which is abundant in the films made in Deccani language (Pandey, 2015, p. 23).

It has been apparent that language and space are interrelated, and this connect was facilitated by the linguistic turn along with the spatial turn in urban research. A brief

discussion on the linguistic turn in the urban research will help understand the Deccani language film phenomenon better and its relation to Hyderabad city and not just the Old City space:

> *"Language is interpreted with a materialist perspective and is theorized as the nexus of human activity at the interstices of visual semiotics of spaces, the interaction order within spaces, and place semiotics"* (Higgins, 2017, p. 126)

Urban semiology is important to understand the city, which is made of a system of signifiers and signified in the daily encounters and interactions and these all are based in linguistics (Lefebvre, 2000). Though the linguist turn has arguably resulted in excess culturalisms, it has also sensitised to 'cultural otherness and ethnicity' (Vuolteenaho, Ameel, Newby, & Scott, 2012).

Hyderabadi Urdu is an amalgamation and assimilation of different cultures and languages of the Deccan region. The Hyderabad argot consists of words used in an idiomatic way that make sense to the community. Examples include: *baigan* which literally means brinjal, but it can mean something wasteful or useless, *matti* (dirt, soil) which also has the same meaning as brinjal, use of familiar epithets like *orei/rei* a Telugu word which translates to *abbey* in Hindi or "Oi" in street English. These metonyms of the language are strongly associated with physical, cultural and social space of Hyderabad. Narendra Luther and Christina Francis lament the loss of elements in the *tehzeeb* of the language and culture of the region. Others note that city made in the *'image of heaven'* has disappeared with high-rise buildings, malls and is now covered by the concrete jungle. In the claustrophobic spaces, the voice of Deccani films tries to sustain what is left of the old *tehzeeb* and reminisces the old times (Pandey, 2015).

Food plays a vital role in Hyderabadi and Muslim culture. The dishes which quintessentially belong to Hyderabad originated primarily from the Muslim communities though drawing in local influences and tastes brought in by other migrant communities. It is a combination of Persian cuisine with Indian spices and cooking styles. The Deccani films are filled with references to Hyderabad food, especially Biryani. *Irani chai, Osmania biscuit, samosa, Nahari, boti kebab, pathar-ka-ghosht, tala-hua-ghosht, haleem, shahitukda, double-ka-meetha,* and so on. These keep recurring in the films and Biryani is consistently mentioned and shown a couple of times in every film. Biryani is mentioned more than fifty times in the film *Angrez*. In

the film *Zabardasth,* the protagonists on the run from police start living in a village; of all the things from Hyderabad, they miss the Hyderabadi food the most. The language and culture of food are associated with the space of Hyderabad.

The identity of the Hyderabad locals is not just tied to one aspect of their life; their identity has acquired a post-modern character in these mediatised times and for their increasingly mediatised selves (Dwyer, 2011). Different ways mark the multiple identities and sense of self in globalised place which are location, current social and *narrative environments,* personal markers, religion, caste, gender, and region, where the sense of self is ever shifting and changing (Kumar, 2015). In changing neoliberal cities, class, caste, gender and religion together and individually is a "*signifier structuring the young lives"* (Nayak, 2006, p. 825).

On identity and difference, Michael J Watts says: "*...difference and identity is produced and reproduced within a field of power relations rooted in interconnected spaces linked by political and economic relations"* (quoted in AlSayyad, 2006, p. 205). This identity is never a complete fact; it is incomplete, still in process, in production and found within representations (Baker & Galasinski, 2001). Difference and identity marked by place and religion are constant, but the ways of articulation are evolving and changing with time and space. The cultural identity of being and becoming is subjected to "*dynamics of history, culture, and power"* (Hall, 2000, p. 706).

As discussed in earlier sections, the dominant culture of Hyderabad or *Deccani Tehzeeb,* which includes food, language, and popular culture has been marginalised gradually. After the Police Action and influx of predominantly peasant castes from Andhra with economic and social capital, not only was the Deccani Culture and language was pushed to the margins, but also the Telangana culture and language. This can be elaborated by considering Bourdieu's classification of class by taste (Bourdieu, 1984). The bourgeoisie, represented by the Andhra peasant upper caste groups had 'economic capital', and hence defined the tastes and dominant culture. The bourgeoisie presumes that their class is defined by cultural consumption, which is considered inborn in them, which cannot be acquired or learnt. The petit bourgeoisie class with aspirations to move up differentiate themselves from those lower than them by asserting their separate symbols of culture (Dwyer, 2011). In this assertion, the cultures of the poor and marginalised are ignored. This is seen even in cinema.

While Deccani language films are slightly more than a decade old, they have an international market from the Hyderabadi diaspora settled abroad mostly in the Middle-east and the USA. The ICT revolution has enabled the emergence of local cinemas from a specific region like the Bhojpuri and Malegaon Cinema. There are other local cinema circuits in Punjab, Meerut, Manipur, and Ladakh that resist the imposition of Hindi cinema as a national narrative and as a representation of their cultures. Though these local films employ the same tropes of Bollywood, these films reflect the local ethos and culture (Tiwary, 2015; Liang, 2009). Due to the lack of the literature on the diverse emerging local cinema, and encouraged by the availability of vast literature on Bhojpuri cinema, Deccani films are compared to Bhojpuri Cinema to explore the possibility of similar political, linguistic and cultural struggles/reasons for the rise of local cinema. This section also draws on Indira Tiwari's dissertation '*Digital Proliferations: Mapping the Contemporary Media Scenario in India'* (2013), where she talks about the *non-industrial films* and as a case study examines Malegaon cinema.

Bhojpuri cinema is much larger than Deccani cinema, and its origins go back to 1963 when the first film *Ganga Maiyya Tohe Piyari Chadhaibo* was produced. The resurgence of Bhojpuri film owes much to the film *Sasura Bada Paisewala's* (2004) success. Malegaon cinema began in 2000 which produced spoofs of Hindi films. The Deccani films have not garnered the same level of following or viewership as Bhojpuri films but are not as small as Malegaon Cinema. It can be placed between those two local cinemas. The literature on language assertion of Bhojpuri Cinema and the regional assertions of Malegaon cinema is considered in order to understand and give a context to Deccani language films. On local cinema, Indira Tiwary says:

> *"A film is defined as local when there is considerable overlap between the people appearing in the film and those who watch it or were intended to watch. Their central concern vis-a-vis the local is the idea of self-recognition"* (Tiwary, 2013, p. 70).

Malegaon's local cinema, dubbed Maliwood, tends to produce spoofs of Hollywood and Bollywood films, using the Khandeshi[29] accent (Tiwary, 2015). Malegaon's

[29] While Marathi is used in those regions, the Khandeshi dialect made up of ahirani and pawari languages are spoken by the Schedule castes, schedule tribes and Muslims of the Malegaon city

Muslim population is estimated at 78.95%[30], making Islam the dominant religion of Malegaon city. Malegaon is one of the urban peripheries of Mumbai city. Like the Old City of Hyderabad, Malegaon is rife with communal tensions where the Muslim and Hindu communities live separately (Tiwary, 2015). The Old City of Hyderabad has in the past seen communal tensions that were stoked partly by the introduction of Ganesh Chathurti procession for political leverage, creating a simmering tension that later erupted during the riots of the 1990s in the aftermath of Babri Masjid demolition which left 300 people dead and lasted ten weeks (Zyskowski, 2008).

The Malegaon Khandeshi films are made out of a love for cinema which provides an escape for the power loom workers of Malegaon. The films are a homage to the cinema that they loved from Hollywood and Bollywood. Likewise, the Deccani films are a homage to the Hindi and sometimes Telugu films where the films are a pastiche of different Hindi and Telugu films' scenes. The famous dialogues of Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan, Salman Khan, Shahrukh Khan and Akshay Kumar among others, are repeated comically, and some scenes from their films are referenced in the films. In *Gullu Dada Thiree*, when the thieves are caught, they say that their names are Amir and Salman[31]. They imitate the actors Amir Khan and Salman Khan in the film *Andaz Apna*. Gullu dada uses the dialogue "do not angry me", from the Hindi film *Rowdy Rathore*. The aspirations and influences of the characters are from Bollywood stars. The actors in these films reference famous characters from older Bollywood films featuring these stars.

The start of Bhojpuri cinema is attributed to the growth of middle and lower caste assertion through their voting power and their strength in numbers, looking at ways to empower and as a by-product to represent themselves. The upward social movement of these groups helped for "*Cultural Self-Assertion*" (Tripathy, 2008). Akshaya Kumar (2016) in her article '*Bhojpuri Cinema and the "Rearguard": Gendered Leisure, Gendered Promises'*, employs the concept of "*rearguard cinema as ready-to-consume version of cultural practice and rear of 'rearguard' denoting a spatiocultural location"* (Kumar, 2016, p. 160). Deccani film too can be categorised

[30]https://www.census2011.co.in/census/city/362-malegaon.html

[31] Famous Bollywood stars Amir Khan and Salman Khan, whose combination was famous in film *Andaz Apna Apna*, which has become a classic comedy film after its release.

as rearguard films as they are a consumable version of cultural practices and incorporate spatiocultural aspects of *Hyderabadi tehzeeb* in language, food, religion and space of Hyderabad city, especially the Old City. In relation to Bhojpuri films and relevant to Deccani films too, we are witnessing a resurgence of local/regional identities which were left subordinated by mainstream languages (Abbi, 2013, p. 55) Abbi (2013) goes on to say the following about the dialects of the dominant languages:

> *"...grass-roots level social and linguistic currents... has implications for... other officially recognised state languages where the present hegemony of the officially recognised state language may come under a challenge from submerged mother tongues now treated as dialects"* (Abbi, 2013, p. 61)

Many scholars conclude that Bhojpuri cinema is a form of cultural assertion and protest vis-a-vis Hindi hegemony. On the same lines, Hyderabadi Urdu/Deccani language which was pushed to the margins may be seen as reclaiming its importance through cinema, social media platforms and other new media. To elaborate on the importance of representation of marginalised:

> *"...struggles over ethnic or regional identity-in other words, over the properties (stigmata or emblems) linked with the origin through the place of origin and its associated durable marks, such as accent—are a particular case of the different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and, thereby, to make and unmake groups"* (Zyskowski, 2008, p. 40).

The representation of the marginalised with their markers – cultural, social, linguistic, religion, ethnicity, dialect or cultural dish (like Haleem and Biryani), helps overcome the forces that can efface a group or mould the group either by exclusion or assimilation. When the filmmakers involved in Deccani films were asked if their films can be compared to Bhojpuri cinema, they disagreed and said that Deccani films are technically superior in the script and other features and that it is different from the sleazy and bawdy films of Bhojpuri cinema[32]. Though the circumstances and context for the rise of the local cinema of Bhojpuri and Deccani are similar, the association of

[32]http://www.newindianexpress.com/entertainment/tamil/2008/nov/07/earthy-transcontinental-too-4901.html

language to its culture is different. Language thus emerges as an important marker of differences in culture and expression between regional and ethnic identities.

2.4. Comedy as Tool of Assertion

Film comedy is termed "*as a reflection of social, political, and cultural trends"* (Horton & Rapf, 2013, p. 1). Deccani films employ comedy in the style of the caper story. There are also buddy comedies, where the protagonists include two or more friends. Of many genres of cinema, comedy genre deserves special attention as comedy allows freedom to reveal the complexities and nuances of the society, and it is also free from severe censorship. It is also an important genre to be studied because *"...comedy that celebrates the human capacity to endure rather than to suffer* is ...the *one that demands the most work, the most talent, and also the most humility."* (Horton & Rapf, 2013, p. 10). Horton and Rapf in their book '*A Companion to Film Comedy'* say:

> *"It has been argued that all genres can be conceived in terms of dialectic between cultural and counter-cultural drives where, in the end, the cultural drives must triumph. But between the inevitable ''fade in'' and ''fade out,'' screen comedy has been free to work its complex and often subversive purpose, revealing and commenting on the preoccupations, prejudices, and dreams of the societies that produce it"* (Horton & Rapf, 2013, p. 2)

There are three types of theories in comedy, *Superiority theory, Incongruity theory,* and *Relief theory* (Nikarge, 2017). Superiority theory relates to when the comedy is about laughing at someone/group/individual where the joke is at someone's expense. The pleasure is derived from the information that they are not like 'them' and are better than 'them'. Incongruity theory is when the mismatch or meeting of different situations/groups/community creates comical chaos. Relief theory posits that the laughs and the humour are therapeutic. It is in relief theory that comedy reveals the problems but does not offer a solution. The films *Angrez* and *Angrez 2* employ both Superiority theory and Incongruity theory in their humour. The laughs are largely directed at the Old City residents and use the same stereotypes of Old City space and the people to draw out laughs. Though the new and modernised middle-class put themselves in awkward positions eliciting laughs, they are always redeemed in the later scenes. The lecherous and scheming ways to get the attention of women in their office are later clarified as just

‘harmless fun’. The characters claim to respect women and are portrayed as naughty men with good intentions.

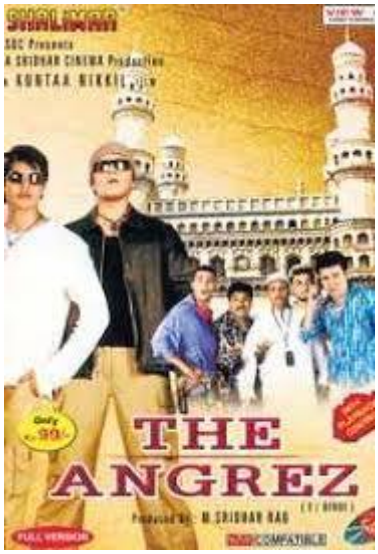
Horton & Rapf (2013) list out the various functions and forms of comedy:

1. Comedy as a form to look at the universe
2. Comedy is a form of ‘‘play’’ that embraces fantasy and festivity. Mikhail Bhaktin’s carnival. The Greek origin of comedy – Komos, dressing in costumes and singing, insulting everything. Latin origin – Comus, a springtime god indulges in lecherous and playful acts, signifying that there is comedy in rebirth and renewal
3. Comedy and tragedy are near cousins whose paths often cross.
4. Comedy implies a special relationship with and to its audience. Breaking the fourth wall is characteristic of comedies.
5. In the world of the truly comic, nothing is sacred, and nothing human is rejected.
6. Comedy is one of the most important ways a culture talks to itself about itself. (Horton & Rapf, 2013, p. 10)

The Deccani films more or less fulfil these functions or employ these forms of comedy in their movies. All the films represent some form of marginality of the Muslim minority in the Old City space. The films are a play of fantasy where the poor heroes come into some good fortune in the form of money or luck in the end. The unemployment and poverty of the heroes of the film are used to create comedy. When the film slips into drama or evoking intense emotions, some comic element is introduced. For example, in *Gullu Dada Thiree*, as a particular scene’s melodrama intensifies, Amjad Khan as Gullu Dada immediately rescues it from slipping into pathos by saying, “*I only make comedy films, so I cannot let this get emotional*”. Thus, also breaking the fourth wall and maintaining the connection with its audience. The tirades on current political conditions, politicians and celebrities in the films are slipped into the narratives. The reference to Hyderabadi culture through the food, language, localities and local jokes in the films displays the last point on comedy listed by Horton and Rapf. The Deccani language, with its self-deprecating humour, provides the keyframe, and this language has come to be strongly associated with the Old City spaces.

2.5. The beginning of Deccani Cinema – Angrez and others

The clash of Old City community and the globalised software employees is shown in the films *Angrez* (see figure 2.1) and *Angrez 2*. The Old City residents are caricatures in the film, which employs stereotypes of Old City space. Angrez is the term used for foreigners and Non-Resident Indians who visit India. In the first film in the series, *Angrez,* the misconceptions and anxiety held by each community about others are displayed. The Old City group at an *Irani cafe*[33] make fun of the 'shorts wearing NRIs' and the software employees being misfits in the Old City space. When the NRIs Rochak and Pranai are taking pictures of Old City and the people sitting in the cafe, the group in the cafe are offended that the rich people take pictures to get acclaim for capturing the poverty of that space. The software employee and the NRIs are scared and apprehensive that the Old City people are aggressive, brutal and violent. In images of the stereotypes held about Old City Muslims, the fear and anxiety are projected. The group who looks at the other does not see themselves as a category though they wish for heterogeneity and similarity (Sibley, 1997). They look at the difference as 'other'. A Muslim is an 'other' because s/he is not Hindu. The 'othering' stems from the notions of Islam as an ideology that is different from Hinduism.



[33] It is a small eatery on streets and found mainly on street corners where among many food items, Irani chai is the main staple on the menu and sought out item. The name Irani Cafe comes from the Irani chai, which a sweet tea made with sweetened milk, tea leaves and lots of cream. Irani cafes are unique feature of Hyderabad where they are found on almost every important and sometimes on discreet streets.

Figure 2.1: Angrez poster; Source: Mumbai Mirror

Both the films, *Angrez* and *Angrez 2*, capture the mismatch of these two groups and the comedy that erupts from the encounters and confrontations between them. The confrontation in the film *Angrez* starts with an altercation in an Irani cafe near Charminar where the NRIs are chased out by the Old City people. The Old City residents seek them out for revenge, and from there, hilarious situations between them are created. *Angrez 2* starts from the same point where Angrez ends; they accidentally come face to face with each other in Old City. The frenzy of revenge of Old City people begins, bringing in the same hilarity by playing out the clash of differences between the two groups – the Old city neglected and the NRI representing development and globalisation.

The places where the two groups meet become violent zones when two different cultures come into contact. Such conflictive spaces are characterised by anxiety and ambiguity (Sibley, 1997). In *Angrez*, the globalised and educated software employees are able to outwit the backwardness of the dim-witted Old City people, and they also get punished for their transgressions. In this context, Michel de Certeau's comparison of "Concept City" with "City of experience" is useful. Concept city is where elites reside and look down upon the people in the margins. Concept city is the city where the *Angrez* reside. City of experience comprises spaces occupied by people in margins, who are invisible and carry out grassroots social practice – the Old City residents. The meeting point of both the spaces sees conflicts which are captured in cinema (Prasad, Realism and Fantasy in Representations of Metropolitan Life in Indian Cinema, 2007). This concept city is also the new city where the new corporate conglomerations emerged – in case of Hyderabad it is the 'Cyber City' or the emergent business and financial centre that is slowly expanding to other spaces by consuming the villages into the growing city of Hyderabad.

The software employees feel helpless when they are confronted with Old City people on their turf like the Old City streets and Irani cafes. The new city residents avoid going to the Old City and other spaces which could be occupied by the marginalised and poor. This is how the new city middle-class alienate themselves - in air-conditioned offices, villas/apartments, high-rise buildings, posh cafes and malls keeping out the noise, pollution, poor and anything that is associated with "lower" tastes and culture (Mazumdar, 2007). These spaces occupied by the middle class are

homogenous and standardised spaces, like the offices, gated communities, high rise apartments and spaces of consumption, designed in a specific way to cater to tastes and comfort of a certain economic class who have aspirations of belonging to the global. This homogeneity and standardisation of the middle-class spaces that globalisation facilitated, in the case of Hyderabad, have erased the regional and local histories to create a kind of '*placelessness'* (Bilal, 2015). The historic Charminar is no longer the icon of Hyderabad; it is replaced by the modern symbol of IT the Cyber towers! The *placelessness* that the globalised citizen in a city inhabits, is the new urban anxiety of the undesirable (Mazumdar, 2007).

The Old City residents keep trying to venture into any space though it is clear that they are unwelcome and that they might get insulted. The desire to belong to the spaces of the elite, be comfortable and respected is evident in the tales that the character Salim Pheku keeps spinning in both the films. In both films, the Old City people are powerless when they confront the NRI group in their apartment building in Banjara Hills and office space in Hitech City. In *Angrez,* the Old City people are perceived as bathroom cleaners in the IT office and as festival *chanda*[34]collectors by the apartment residents. They get beaten up by the apartment residents for looking like outsiders who do not belong. The undesirable attention that they get in these elite spaces always lands them into trouble. The women of the IT office are scared and find them ill-mannered and cheap.

Thus, the marginalised or 'others' have to compromise in the city by being content for the space that they are allowed to move in and use. They cannot demand more without grabbing the wrong kind of attention (AlSayyad, 2006; Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). Their confrontations are neutral when they meet at Golconda fort – a historical monument which belongs to neither the future (NRIs and Software employees) nor the present (the ever-present city people of the Old City) but a distant memory – a past or a heritage site now as a spectator. The monument as a spectacle and a witness is a space for the narrative to freeze, slow down to self-reflect or for momentous points in narrative to take place. The historical monuments and markers of the city in film firmly locates the narrative to that space. The NRIs and Old City communities spar

[34]Contribution collected from a colony people to for setting up a makeshift shelter to place the idols and other arrangements around in the colony for festivals like Dussehra, Ganesh Chaturthy etc

where the NRIs come out victorious, and the Old City people get beat up by the cops. The empty space with the absence of any recognisable local markers also performs the same function as the space of monuments, but the spectacularity and identities are shed as in *Angrez 2* when they meet in an unmarked open space of the city in the climax.

The other films, like *Angrez,* are a mix of buddy comedy and caper stories. Apart from *Angrez* and *Angrez 2*, they have protagonists and main characters who are from the Old City only, and different groups of the Old city are pitted against each other. The characters belong to the same class and mostly same religious community except for the villain that the protagonists need to outsmart who is a rich politician or a powerful local don in the films: *Hyderabad Nawabs, Gullu Dada series* (1, 2, and 3), *Salaam Hyderabad, Zabardasth and Half Fry*. Some of the exceptions are *Berozgaar* where they have to outsmart unemployment and homelessness, *Sabkee Bolti Bandh* where the villain is a ghost, and *Ek tha Sardar* which is a crime drama and not a comedy like the other Deccani films.

2.5.1. Locating Muslimness in the Old City

The rest of the films, after *Angrez* with some exceptions like *Angrez 2* and *Sabki Bolthee Bandh* are placed in Old City spaces, and the major narrative space rarely moves out of that space. The other city spaces, when represented at all, are transient spaces between narrative points. The architecture and built environment of the city, dictate a person's movements and this architecture privileging only certain groups of people, reflect the hierarchy and power structure in these spaces. The exclusions play out spatially in a social context (Hubbard, 1998; Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). These city spaces are breaks in the narrative or significant points to move forward the narrative of the cinema. The lovers meeting points are outside the spaces of the Old City, like parks, movie theatres, restaurants, and pubs. If the meeting happened in Old City streets or their houses, they could not escape the surveillance of parents and others. This may put a stop to their meetings and the affair too. The spaces of inner cities are defined by close-knit community structures, in *Angrez,* Aziz fights with the street kids, and in other films, parents know about their children's' movement in the streets from these networks. The globalised city with its crowd provides anonymity for young lovers from moral policing and constant surveillance. In a sense, the Old

City provides the familiarity of a known private world, while the rest of the city is unfamiliar but has the advantage of anonymity.

Subera Thobani when speaking about the imagination of religions as part of the nation's idea says, "*most of these religious traditions – and their communities of faith - are treated as modernizable (i.e., secularizable), with the singular exception of Islam"* (Thobani, 2014, p. 492). The representation of Muslim individuals in Indian cinema reinforces this view – the burden of proving that Muslims are not a threat to the nation is placed on them (Thobani, 2014, p. 493). In these films, the characters prove their patriotism and belonging to the nation in the narratives and sometimes break away from the plot narratives to accentuate their loyalty to the nation and its unity separately. In *Half Fry*, the fake baba played by Adnan Sajid Khan (famous for his role as Gullu dada in *Fun and Masti)* breaks the fourth wall and talks about the animosity against Muslims and that this communal divide across the world is happening because of USA's politics. He does not blame India and its people for the dominant discourse about Muslims as outsiders and possible threats to the nation, instead relieves them of the guilt of stereotyping Muslims and viewing them as the 'alien' other. The society and nation escape the burden of self-reflection, to engage in active engagement with the community, to start a dialogue with the possibility of an alternate discourse of inclusion of Muslims in the imagination of Urban and Nation. The film blames the USA, a foreign country, for the indoctrination of the Indians too, for the conditions and place of Muslims in contemporary Indian society.

In many films, the main protagonists keep stressing on their identity, which is Indian (*Hindustani*) first, and then anything else. In the film *Gullu Dada Thiree*[35], a reformed Gullu Dada attends Independence Day celebration at a school and gives a speech about the greatness of India and religious unity of India. Towards the end of *The Angrez 2*, the waring Old City people and the software people stop fighting when they hear *azaan* and *bhajan*[36] from a mosque and a temple nearby. People of the new city people talk about the ill-effects of fighting with Old City people and proclaim that they both

[35]Thiree is Hyderabadi way of saying 'Three'

[36]Azaan is the call for prayer in the form of song that is played by mosque at namaz times in the day. Bhajans are also songs sang in praise of Hindu gods.

belong to the city equally. This progressive thinking is heralded by the secular, educated, middle-classes of the country who bring a change in Muslims.

2.5.2. The women in these spaces

In films *Angrez* and *Angrez 2*, the women in the Old City are absent except as voices from behind the curtains and doors of the houses or as objects of desire who need to glance at the men once. The presence of women in the new city is visible; they are in offices, pubs, and restaurants. The women in the IT corridors and pubs are always warned about their transgressions by the married woman employee in their office. The women are confident and know how to find and claim their space outside their homes. The working women who maintain a 'good image' at home but know how to party and have fun outside are the ideal women for the NRI men and progressive male employees of the IT industry. This is reflected in the matrimonial ads by Indian and NRI men who state "*...looking for a bride who is traditional but with a modern outlook...*"[37]

The women who tend to transgress are policed by reminding them that they are *Hindustani Aurat* (an Indian woman). There are numerous instances in the films where the hero polices the heroine to dress appropriately or to control her sexual desires using the word "*Hindustani Aurat".* Women are called *maal* (desirable object), item, *cheez* (literally means an object). They refer to their girlfriends also as *maal.* In *Gullu Dada Thiree* when the heroine is in trouble, Gullu dada wants to help her. But when his henchmen try to talk him out of it, he says, "*Bachchiyan sirf chedney keliye paida nai hui, waqt aaney par bachanabhi padega*" (Girls are not born just for teasing; when the time comes they are helped out also). Non-Muslims see the image of a Muslim woman in Hijab as the symbol of oppression who needs to be saved from both the religion and problematic Muslim masculinity. In the Telugu film *Paisa (*2013, Krishna Vamsi) the hero saves the heroine from being sold to a Dubai Sheikh, and in film *Bombay (*1995, Maniratnam*)* the hero saves the heroine from her oppressive family. The heroes in both these films help the Muslim women to shed the hijab. As a counter to this discourse, in Deccani films, the saviours of the Muslim women are Muslims themselves. None of the films analysed for this chapter depict inter-religious

[37]Indian express article published on May22, 2011, *Super Grooms for Super Brides*

romances; they find love and marry in the same religion. In *Fun aur Masti* film, one of the protagonists Johnny, a Christian from Old City, loves Rosie, who is also a Christian. These transgressions are not an easy topic to be dealt with in a comedy genre films that cater mainly to the Muslim audience. The absence of inter-religious marriages is telling of the tense communal relations in the city of Hyderabad and especially the Old City.

Women in Deccani films are just a distraction, and they are seen as conquests to teach the woman's rich father a lesson. *Hyderabad Nawabs* story is about two men, of whom one sells cinema tickets in black, and the other is unemployed by choice. *Salaam Hyderabad* has three friends who are in love with girls from rich and lower-middle-class families. The films' subplot is to marry them by either cheating or to outsmart the girls' fathers. There are many films which employ this subplot of a rich girl falling in love with a poor boy, and the resulting face-off between the girls' fathers or villains who vie for the heroine's attention and the poor heroes. There are certain actors associated with the films who keep starring in all the films, like Aziz Nazer, Adnan Sajid Khan, Mast Ali, RK, but the heroines keep changing with each film. The lack of established actresses for heroine roles in the films is due to the patriarchy of the Old City and the male-dominated nascent Deccani film industry. There are not many Old City women who act in films. The regular actress Preeti Nigam was said to be "able to portray herself well as a Muslim"[38]. Like Telugu and Tamil films, the Deccani films revolve around the male hero, and the heroine does not have much of a role to play. The films usually end with the poor hero united with the rich heroine, and it is assumed that they lived happily ever after.

2.5.3. Playing with Stereotypes

Stereotypes result in typification and also construct a place/position that the ones stereotyped can talk from and be talked to (Tolson, 1996). Stereotypes are limited, and the ways the characters typified cannot be anything else except with the limited traits and opportunity. These are negative images that are detrimental to the groups who are stereotyped, as their representation stands in as the reference of the 'other'

[38]https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/Dollywood-films-get-Dakhini-stamp/articleshow/53715692.cms

groups/communities/individuals represented (Hall, 2000). The rise of marginal humour as the comedy produced about marginal groups who are discriminated, alienated, oppressed, marginalised; and the added personal and physiological dimensions of gender, sexuality, poverty contributes to further alienation and discrimination. The objectification of certain communities and individuals who are different as "*an object is clearly a carryover from the psychological landscape created under"* history of colonialism, slavery (John, 2013, p. 347)

Racial, ethnic or religious ideologies, which further the stereotypes of race, ethnicity, and religion are naturalised through comedy (Park & Gabbadon, 2006). One of the first black comics, Richard Pryor, during the end times of segregation and racial tensions, appropriated the stereotypes and tropes played by blackface actors and performed subverting them (Weaver, 2010). The Romanian Jews during Nazi occupation used comedy as a form of resistance. There is always a confusion of using stereotypes to subvert one's position and offer social critique (Bryan, 2015). As it might contribute to the strengthening of stereotypes and be detrimental to one's race, ethnicity, gender, and community. The subversion of stereotypes can either successfully empower or sometimes further marginalise. Comedy is not easy to read and determine how the stereotypes are used – positively or negatively, as they overlap and are fuzzy.

The stereotypes of the Old City - poverty, being loud, crassness, and 'aggressive Muslims' - are used and subverted in the films. The films try to employ the same signs and symbols of discrimination in their humour to create a reverse discourse. The reverse discourse should consider how the text "*simultaneously play off and play on the existing stereotypes*" (Weaver, 2010, p. 32). In the films, *Gullu dada one*, *Berozgar* and *Salaam Hyderabad* the problems related to the money lender, unemployment, and menial jobs are dealt with in humorous ways. There are jokes on their appearances and hygiene which are often stereotyped about the communities of Old City. The communal tension, anxiety, and mistrust associated with the Old City and the powerlessness against vagaries of economic and social situations are embodied.

One can see an example of reverse discourse in *Berozgar*. The film opens with two men running on the road in heavy rain, and they stop at a store where the store owner is closing. They look at the store greedily, the mis-en-scene and build-up suggest they want to loot the store. Once the store owner shuts down and walks away, the audience

sees more people joining them and the two men jump towards the empty place in front of the store and set up a make-shift bed with gunny bags they are carrying. They have successfully beat other homeless people for that night and found a place to shelter themselves from rain and to sleep. They open food packets that they got from a temple nearby, to eat. Many other films show the different kinds of experiences of poverty of young men and their mediations. Mark Eaton (2013) describing such characters and films says that *"...films about young people whose apathy, aimlessness, and lack of ambition, are portrayed as a form of civil disobedience, if not a coherent philosophy*" (Eaton, 2013, p. 330). Their casual attitude to the rules, order, and authority is a form of rejecting society's constructs before it rejects them, such a person is a man, not a hero, who 'fits right here' in a time and a place. (Eaton, 2013).

Almost all the films of Deccani language are the story of "*Bildungsroman - a story of a young person (usually male) seeking maturity"* (Fischer, 2015, p. 239). They are also buddy films, also called as Homme-com films which include the *Bildungsroman.* In these films, the heroines have reduced roles and are stereotyped, and their roles revolve around their sexual status. In these films, women who are seduced are rescued, and non-heroines are disposed of. The disposable women are a regular trope in many home-coms (McDonald, 2013). Unlike disposable women, the heroines are placed above the humour and sexual satisfaction. Like in any buddy films, the hero and the friends display narcissism and overconfidence, which is again a mask for their insecurities and vulnerabilities which are elaborated in the next section (McDonald, 2013).

Catherine A John's (2013) analysis of Spike Lee's film *Bamboozled* (2000), which deals with racial humour is relevant to the communal and marginalised humour of the Old City, Deccani language and Muslims of the city of Hyderabad. Catherine John concludes with a list of the director Spike Lee accomplishments drawn from the analysis of the film:

> *(i) He satirizes the industry's exploitation of racist stereotypes for profit; (ii) He comments on the type of black humour that becomes popular; (iii) He allows the socially conscious viewer to have a laugh at the expense of the politically naive, benignly racist consumer of black humor; (iv) He satirizes the black response to the white commercial exploitation of black humor and culture; (v) He also addresses the ingroup issue of colonization or seeing oneself through the eyes of dominant society* (John, 2013, p. 358).

Likewise, the Deccani films tried to achieve some of the things listed above, if not all. The black humour is the humour of marginalised Muslim spaces stemming from their poverty, and the dominant groups are the other communities, especially the Hindu Upper Caste community. The change in the discourse has come about after the police action in 1948 and later with the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956, which saw a shift in political power from the Muslims of the Old City to the Upper caste Hindus of Coastal Andhra who migrated and settled in Hyderabad.

2.6. *Potta:* Beyond the Flaneur in the City

Walter Benjamin (1985) in introducing the Flaneur, says that the petit bourgeois and bourgeois of Paris spend a leisurely life, where it passes by and through many events and places. This is where the Flaneur came into existence and also due to the arcades that came due to modernity and capitalism. The street is the flaneur's home. It is all about "seeing without hearing" – a characteristic of a big city. Never before modernisation, had people spent hours staring at each other and sat and waited together in silence when in buses, trams, trains, elevators, etc. A Flaneur could be a detective, a social monster, and a person with peculiarities, an adventurer, an explorer and a lover (Benjamin, 1985).

Flaneur stands in protest to divisions, specialisations. *"Flaneur shares the situation of the commodity and surrenders to the intoxication of the commodity"* (Benjamin, 1985, p. 55). For Flaneur everything is for him, the streets, arcades, commodities, are there because of him, they derive meaning from him, they will be what he wanted them to be. If anything is inaccessible, it is because s/he is not interested in it. It is the celebration of shared isolation in the crowds. Flaneur though intoxicated is self-aware and conscious of the powers which are not shared. So, he masks it and flows with the crowd (Benjamin, 1985).

It is suggested here that in Deccani cinema the flaneur does not truly exist, but there is a figure that goes beyond the European image and even 'a post-modern flaneur', borrowing the term from Maaz Bin Bilal's (2015) study of the flaneur in the cinema of Delhi. A flaneur is a silent observer who is part of a crowd and does not wish to draw attention. His gaze is the dominant mode of control in the city streets, and he seeks control only through it. The crisis of masculinity and anxiety of femininity is silently endured and not expressed in any way except by objectifying the female

presence in the urban space. Here, the study suggests the *potta* as a possible figure of the flaneur in the context of the Old city. The *potta* is not part of the crowd, and on the contrary, they wish to be identified as someone above the crowd. They perform excessively with gestures and language. They draw attention to themselves by the clothes they wear, bright and printed shirts that open till their chest, and the netted vest is visible. They tie a kerchief around their necks and wear knock-off branded sunglasses over their head, not on their eyes. Excessive hyper-masculinity and misogynistic performances mask their masculine anxiety towards femininity and their fragile masculinities, often going out of their way to tame the women.

Naseeruddin Shah in the Bollywood film Hero Hiralal (1988) plays the first cinematic representation of a '*Potta*' in Hyderabad city. He is the quintessential *potta*, one of the icons of a city. Like the Bombay's tapori, Hyderabad's trope is *potta* (the plural is *pottey*). The performance in language, gestures, and the dress is vital in being and becoming *potta* (Mazumdar, 2007). The kerchief in the neck, cap and the knotted shirt over a vest has been a symbol for the *tapori/potta* which has been replicated by Amir Khan in *Rangeela* (1995, Ram Gopal Varma). *A*nd in *Ghulam* (1998, Vikram Bhatt), he changes the attire to leather vests, gloves and knee length boots but retains the cap, stubble and the language. The *potta* speaks in Deccani like the "*tapori*" who speaks Mumbaiyya. It is through a performance that the *potta* traverses the city, subverting the order and authority of the city through his gaze and existing between the crisis of poverty and urban anxiety, and the ordered, and wealthy city, thus, "*creating spaces of resistance*" (AlSayyad, 2006; Fischer, 2010; Mennel, 2008; Tolentino, 2001; Mazumdar, 2007; Certeau, 1984). Another cinematic representation of the Hyderabadi *potta* was by Govinda in *Wah Tera Kya Kehna* (2002). It was from the Deccani film *Angrez*, that the figure of *potta* flourished in cinematic imagination. The authentic Hyderabadi experience rests in the *potta* (the ordinary man of the street), the underrepresented and the misrepresented in the cinematic city.

Performance, sharp street humour, street language, fragile masculinity, disdain for the wealthy and anxious of the women in public places are important markers of a Flaneur (Mazumdar, 2007). Humour is also used as resistance to order- building obsession of modernity (Weaver, 2010). The spectacle apart from the city is the women who are subjected to the *potta*'s gaze. The bike thief, seller of fake medicines, fake *baba*, scammers of *Gullu Dad Thiree*, *Fun aur masti*, *Half fry*, *Salaam Hyderabad*. are

> "…*at once the criminal figure of the noir city film, as well as the perfect post-modern Flaneur, who lives in his stolen"* goods and moments "*always on the street without a fixed address, observing everything without being a part of it. At the same time, he inhabits the multiple worlds of simulations as he lives the life of a film hero-thief in his world"* (Bilal, 2015, p. 504).

The *potta* too, like the flaneur, is the product of a cosmopolitan culture of an urban street. In *potta'*s performance, Language and politics are intertwined, the power contestation happens on the "*terrain of language*- either if it is *talking down or upto, of patronising, respecting, ignoring, supporting"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 46). When Ajju and Laddu in *Zabardasth* were being swindled by the village don and police, they say that they are from Hyderabad. If they want, they could even resolve the Kashmir issue. They warn them not to tell them – *Hyderabadis* (Hyderabad Dwellers) – the directions to get to Charminar. To wander the "culturescape"[39] of the city, in the *ruins of the modernity* as a have-not but still survive, retain a sense of identity and resist to be contained by the ordered space is the essence of the *potta* (Mazumdar, 2007)[40].

The description of Bilal's (2015) post-modern flaneur of Delhi and the Tapori of Mumbai is authentic to their respective regions, as is the *potta* of Hyderabad. The *potta* is the product of a specific urban space, where history, identity and marginality intersect to create this figure. While there are similarities between the Tapori of Mumbai, the post-modern flaneur of Delhi and the *potta* of Hyderabad, it is the differences that are more meaningful as they reflect the urban/local/regional particularities. The *potta* can only be found in the urban scape of Hyderabad's Old city.

The flaneur observes everything by flowing with the crowd but not being part of it. But *potta* is immersed in himself, and instead of observing from afar, he inserts

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[40] Here, 'culturescape' is defined as "*the circulation of intertextual network of visual and aural networks makes urban landscapes to culturescapes. In culturescape, temporal movement is represented as pastiche combination of the here and now, the past and the future, the global and the local"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 48)

himself into situations. The figure of *Potta* survives on attention and performance. A flaneur is like a chameleon blending in with the surroundings, staying inconspicuous in the shadows, as mentioned above the criminal figure in a noir film. "*Potta*" does not reside in shadows, and the cinematic city is not noir but reflects his personality teeming with colour and light. A *potta* is self-aware, performs with this awareness, and the street is his stage which acquires new meanings. Exclusionary practices of a globalised neo-liberal city, which left out both, the Muslims of Old City and the Old City itself out of its developmental agenda. It is possibly from this exclusion and erasure of the Old city, that the figure of the *potta* emerges in the Deccani films, in an effort to reclaim ownership of the city and make visible the identity of 'Muslimness' that had been ignored.

2.7. Summary

Deccani language is the crux of representation of the marginalised Old City, particularly as seen in Deccani films. The rise of assertion in a region when a community is pushed to the margins, and be able to reclaim a place on the cultural map of Hyderabad, is possible through language. Language which signifies the *tehzeeb*, dialect of a space, association with Islam in Hyderabad and the confluence of different linguistic cultures of the whole Deccan region, has found representation in Deccani films. This reclaiming of language and identity occurs in opposition to the changes brought on by globalisation, which Lefebvre called the demise of Old Cities networks that further pushed it to the margins. In the spatialization of Old City and its inhabitants as the 'other', region, language, space and religion merged in the *potta,* as a symbol of resistance. The figure of *potta* with use of wit, humour, knowledge of the streets of the city and command on the street language makes him one-up over anyone. Sometimes they fall into the trap of their over-confidence but get back onto streets with new vigour and the improved skills. *Gest*, a concept put forward by Bretch, constitutes the combination of gestures. *Gest* is applied in social context through gestures and creative use of language, and when the authority is subverted. Certain gestures and performance of *potta* are exaggerated to mask the inferiority complex arising out of the anxieties of being poor and marginal. The *potta* is part of a youth culture that challenges propriety on the streets, which tries to discipline its gestures and performance.

One of the ways to read the city is on the streets, and narrow lanes of the Old City through what is called the *utterance of the city. "The language of the city"* is specific to each city and is not just the spoken word, but it is "*in discourse, gestures, clothing"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 49) (Lefebvre, 2000). The consumption of signs in the city is as varied as *happiness, satisfaction, power, science and technology,* and here, language acquires *an exchange value* (Lefebvre, 2000, p. 115). Hyderabadi Urdu or Deccani is the urban language of a secondary system and a language of connotations (Lefebvre, 2000). The films *Angrez* and *Angrez 2* depicted the materiality of spatial exclusions of Muslims of Old City in comparison to Hindu upper middle class. The rest of the films represented the observable but intangible economic, social, linguistic and cultural spatial exclusions, but they also drew attention to the *tactics* to overcome the exclusions and subvert the push to invisibility. It is in such frames/moments, that the representation of Old City space changes from backward to a place of hope. The tiny aggressions of the Old City residents are rebellions against the cultural, social and political order that excludes and marginalises the youth. The class inequalities and contestation are also overcome with these small rebellions through an urban performance, where language becomes a marker /symbol of identity and visibility of the marginalised.

The stereotypes of the youth of Old City as unemployable and unsuitable for the neo-liberal markets has been subverted, they are now content with inclusion in the low-level government jobs, and as cab drivers, that signifies inclusion in opportunities offered by the neo-liberal city. The decadence associated with Muslim space is used to self-reflect on poverty and lack of opportunity, neglect by the State through comedy. The marginalised Muslim spaces are egalitarian and thrive on the active community and informal networks existing in the Old City. The spaces of encounters are filled with tensions and confrontations between people of the same class and as well as different classes. The performance in these confrontations and conflicts is to dominate and occupy these spaces.

The protagonists tell stories about the streets of Hyderabad and the activities they could or would do. Their daily exchanges start with a street name and food items, the markers of the city: Charminar, Hi-tech city, restaurants, tank bund, Necklace road are interwoven into the dialogues and narrative. In *Hyderabadi Nawabs* when one of the heroes, a black movie ticket seller is heckled by someone, he puts on a show, a

performance to escape the situation. It is similar to the scene of Amir Khan in *Rangeela* when he is caught by the police for selling movie tickets in black. Ranjani Majumdar analysing that scene says that the *"tapori"* performs by grabbing everyone's attention, puts on a show with unique gestures. The bike thief in *Gullu dada Thiree* and the fake medicine seller in *Fun aur Masti* use their street knowledge and put on a performance to do their usual business. The heroes of the films walk on the streets confidently perusing their surrounding and at the same time reclaiming the spaces denied to them. In *Angrez* and some other films, the heroes fight with the kids playing cricket in the lanes. The kids and heroes use the same language and gestures to assert their right on the street. It is a competition between the established *potta* and future *pottey* of the city. Like Benjamin says, the flaneur walking through the streets and encountering experiences and space pick up signifiers and create their own stories, inscribing meaning into the spaces they pass through (Mazumdar, 2007). Whereas the *potta* of Hyderabad goes beyond that and picks up signifiers, aggressively reshapes it for the present, though the moment is ephemeral and fleeting. Informed by the Literature surveyed and the Deccani films, a comparison of the Flaneur and Potta is presented in Table 2.1. This comparison summarises the similarities and differences between them.

Table 2.1: Comparison of Flaneur and Potta

Flaneur	***Potta***
Blends with the crowd	Strives to stand above the crowd
Anxiety from the presence of femininity is masked by nonchalant but subjected to gaze and objectification	This anxiety is countered by gaze and objectification, but the women are made aware of their objectification by the performance of hyper-masculinity and misogyny
Suffers from lack of confidence but masks it asserting control over spaces, separation from him and the space he inhabits	Suffers from narcissism, asserts control over space by embodying the space

A figure of shadows and noir city reflected in composed gestures and sombre clothing	A figure of brightness and colour in the city which reflected in clothing and gestures
Silence is the main staple of a flaneur to remain inconspicuous	Language is important to perform and especially the local urban language – the language of the city (Deccani)
Assumes no particular role a silent observer and desires commodities and luxury	Assumes as many roles as possible to acquire the desired commodities and luxury

The erasure of Hyderabad's history has been traumatic for the Old city and its largely Muslim population. The formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh that saw large scale migration of the educated upper castes from coastal Andhra into Hyderabad complicated the social demography of the city. With globalisation, Hyderabad became a contested urban terrain of different cities nested in a hierarchy –the Old City, Secunderabad, Hyderabad and Cyberabad, with the Old City at the lowest level in terms of development priorities and resource allocation, as well as cultural recognition. The transition from the Nizam's state to AP, from Telangana to Andhra region, from 'Urduness' to 'Teluguness', from socialism to globalization, can be understood as a continuing politics of domination and exclusion in Hyderabad's contemporary history. It is against this troubled narrative of a city and its people, that the Deccani films emerged as a comic protest to assert, connect and reclaim the fading memories of Hyderabad's past. Deccani films forced a gaze on the Old City and its culture through reviving the Deccani dialect that had at one time belonged to both the city and the region and been an intrinsic motif and carrier of its culture. This chapter would like to, therefore, argue that in the context of Hyderabad, a critical reading of Deccani films provides a useful lens to capture the intersections between region, religion, language, identity and exclusion.

Chapter 3 – Gendered Cinematic City: Women in Hyderabad

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the local Hyderabadi language films and the spatiality that informs the Muslim protagonists located in the Old City of Hyderabad were discussed and analysed. In this chapter, the gendered spaces of Hyderabad in the films of Tollywood and Bollywood are analysed. The chapter tries to uncover the patriarchal structures that both overtly and covertly categorise the city spaces as masculine and feminine, thereby restricting and controlling the mobility of women in these spaces. The tussle between modernity and tradition, and women's struggle to be relevant and find a space in the city are dealt with in the films discussed in this chapter. In this discussion of feminine and gendered spaces of the city, the discourses of the films are constructed in the interiors of the domestic space of homes which are assumed as natural space for women to inhabit. This domestic space has been a space for women for decades due to social norms. The city which tries to exclude women, they find a space in Cinematic City of Hyderabad in some Bollywood and Tollywood films. This chapter is divided into three sections; the first section is an analysis of Telugu cinema from the 1980s and 90s decade, the second section analyses Telugu films from 2000s and the third section looks at Bollywood films. This chapter analyses 10 Telugu films (Tollywood) and 7 Hindi films (Bollywood). All the films are selected year wise, based on the criteria that the main narratives play out in Hyderabad and have important roles for women.

The dominant discourses in all these films are discussed and elaborated, to perhaps open up more questions and offer themes for further research. The politics of urban space is dissected by looking at representations of what the city offers to the women and how the female characters perceive the city spaces. Have these perceptions and the city in relation to the women evolved and changed through times? If it did, then how did it change for women and in what ways it changed women's access and relation to the city? How do women from different backgrounds of class, caste and religion experience the city? By answering these questions, it is hoped to map the exclusions and inclusions of women in Hyderabad city.

The relationship of women to the city is fraught with risk, and movement of women in the city takes the form of negotiation requires thinking about safety, mainly from sexual violence, among other dangers. Many feminist geographers in their ethnographic research in urban studies and study of urban films observed that women's presence in the city is obscured and pushed to the margins:

> *"Feminist studies of urban geography view the urban as a key spatial scale through which gender is experienced and organized, and as a conceptual structure within which social and economic dimensions of human life can be examined together... ...Feminist urban studies have established the criticality of gender to investigations of cities and urban life"* (Kishore, 2015, p. 2).

The urban space is not available to women as it is to men (Orban, 2001). The access that men have to the city is curtailed for women. The cafes, streets, corner tea shops and cheaper bars and theatres are masculine spaces. The time and spatiality also dictate their navigation and presence, for example: empty streets (even in the day time), night-time (almost all the city spaces), unlit pathways, and even presence of too many men (Ganesh Chaturthi procession, *Numaish*[41], local concerts, and single-screen movie theatres on release date of a big star's films). The way the city is traversed, perceived and used is different for women and men. The films are analysed here in terms of how they deal with gendered spaces and their politics of exclusion. The relation of women to the city is heavily biased and gendered (Mahoney, 1997; Massey, 2005; Cowan, 2000; Fischer, 2010); and some of the spaces become intense moral realms. In spaces that are perceived as masculine, a woman's presence invites censure and anxiety. The oft used phrase in popular culture, *"what is a girl like you doing in a place like this"*[42] reflects the normative rules of im/morality of the presence of women in certain spaces. The city is out of bounds for women for leisure or purposes of pleasure, the appropriate dress code and performance for different public spaces

[41] *Numaish* is an annual exhibition of goods, food from all over the country and includes festivities and fun activities. It is equivalent of a fair in western countries.

[42] This phrase has been used in many Hollywood films and also there is also a song "what a nice girl like you is doing in a place like this" released in 1968 by Jim Ed Brown.

and times of day matters to women more than to men (Orban, 2001; Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011).

Women are objects in the city, to be gazed at, controlled and objectified by the male gaze and the gaze of the keepers of urban society's moral fabric. In the modernity of the urban space, the separations of real and virtual, objectification and empowered, consumers and creators are blurred. Women's presence in these ambiguously separated urban spaces of modernity consistently redraw and traverse boundaries; hence, the modern urban spaces are in perpetual transformation. Women are objects of desire and objects of the city to be gazed at by phallic powers (Edwards, 2008; Tiller, 2015; Dreyer, 2005). The gaze and the city are internalised by the women inhabitants to navigate the city and to be safe (Lee, 2005). The gaze which dehumanizes and objectifies women successfully bounds the sexual desires/impulses of women in the city (Dreyer, 2005); the excess of sexuality and moral decay is placed in the figure of the sex-worker as respectable and good women should not be on streets (Haaland, 2013; Edwards, 2008; Tiller, 2015). The urban gaze which desires women in city space, would rather have the women avoid such gaze by staying indoors as it also considers women in the city spaces as a distracting nuisance who bring in moral decay in these spaces with their presence.

The body of city and body of women are equated and interrelated (Grosz, 1996); both are mapped onto each other and subjected to the male gaze (Bose, 2008; Boccuzzi, 2000; Fischer, 2010). On the relation between bodies and cities, Elizabeth Grosz in her paper *'BodiesCities'* states, "*The city is one of the crucial factors in the social production of (sexed) corporeality"* (Grosz, 1996, p. 381). What Grosz means is that the built environment, order and organisation provides context and coordinates to produce corporeality 'socially, culturally and discursively' by linking unrelated bodies. The body, with the constant flow of *'images, representational systems, art, and media, is redefined, re-inscribed, re-explored, and reformed*' in the city and also, the city is transformed by the body according to the "*demographic changes*" (Grosz, 1996, p. 386). Demographic changes in the population of a city by age, birth rate, migration, life expectancy, quality of life, employment opportunities and so on have social and economic implications in the cultural fabric of the city. The body and city are rewritten and redefined with these transformations.

The urban space reflects spatial dichotomies based on gendered constructs of private and public spheres (Goheen, 1998; Cowan, 2000; Gleghorn, 2010; Fischer, 2010; Dreyer, 2005); rationality/scientific temper and emotions of space (Aitken & Zonn, 1993; Sharp, 2009; Sibley, 1997); varied experience of urban space for men and women (Valentine, 1989); the ordered, civilization and constructed space is masculine and the unordered, indeterminate, labyrinths, nature, spaces of nurture as the feminine of the city (Fischer, 2010; Lukinbeal, 2005). The gendered separations of urban space and the restricted navigation of women through the spaces are "*spatial expression of patriarchy*" (Valentine, 1989, p. 389). These separations put women at a disadvantage. These feminine and masculine spaces have associated gendered connotations. For example, the feminine spaces of nurture and nature are seen as positive, where family and abundance related to reproduction and peace is symbolised; on the other hand, chaotic and unordered spaces of femininity symbolise the anxiety and violence that feminine presence rouses in public spaces among men and society. These chaotic and labyrinth-like spaces are a staple of the genre of noir films in the depiction of femme fatale and shadows, with conflicted male protagonists handling the crisis of masculinity in the overwhelming modernity of the city.

The chapter deals mainly with questions of home and urban space (outside). To understand how urban homes are part of the urban milieu and how ideologies of city spaces are articulated inside a home, 'structuration theory' of Anthony Giddens (1984) is deployed. Exploring urban homes is equivalent to exploring cities, as housing is a major part of the city where the majority of living takes place, familiar and familial bonds are found, a unit that reproduces the city, and it is the smallest and close-knit unit of the city; in other words, an urban home is a *locale*. To support the argument, Giddens (1984) defines locale as: "*A physical region involved as part of the setting of interaction, having definite boundaries which help to concentrate interaction in one way or another"* (Giddens, 1984, p. 375). The locales can be a nation, state, city or even rooms in a house. "*Thus, a private house is a locale, which is a 'station' for a large cluster of interactions in the course of a typical day. ... But the various rooms of the house are zoned differently in time as well as space" (Giddens, 1984, p. 119)*

Many scholars have studied the changing house structure from the nineteenth century and its effect on life and sexuality. For Giddens, the walls in a house contribute to zoning and regionalisation. The rooms of a house are so designed that the encounters

do not intrude upon each other. The façade is a transition zone between "face and front" is not real as the real is hidden inside or behind it. "*The study of day-to-day life is integral to analysis of the reproduction of institutionalized practices" (Giddens, 1984, p. 282).* The spatial structures of a locale have to be studied in a 'context':

> *"…'Context ' involves the following : (a) the time-space boundaries (usually having symbolic or physical markers) around interaction strips; (b) the co-presence of actors, making possible the visibility of a diversity of facial expressions, bodily gestures, linguistic and other media of communication; (c) awareness and use of these phenomena reflexively to influence or control the flow of interaction."* (Giddens, 1984, p. 282)

Giddens talks about social identities in the context of space-time arrangements in relation to the 'markers' which are mostly gender and age (bodily attributes). These markers in a space, influenced by the position and the time, deal with rights, obligations and sanctions.

3.1.1. Women in Indian Cinema

In this chapter, the first section deal with the home as locales which for women becomes an arena to battle politics, economic and cultural practices in everyday interactions in and out of the house. Before going into the specifics of the representation of women in the city, it is useful to understand the roles of women in popular Indian films. In Indian cinematic narratives, men play a major role, but women too have an important role, albeit restricted to the patriarchal norms and under a tacit social contract between cinema and audience. The film *Andaz* (1949) is about how modernity is bad for Indian women, and the idea of a free and liberal woman is the antithesis to an Indian woman. The film *Awara* (1951), directed, produced and starred by Raj Kapoor, has a scene where the heroine is shown in a swimsuit. She is slapped in the next scene by the hero, which she accepts without questioning, and falls at his feet beseeching him to slap her more. The eroticism is positioned in the image of the heroine, but censured immediately by the hero for her transgressions. The hero is not only a role model for the society but an agent of patriarchy protecting the honour of women. The hero in films like *Awara*, *Shri 420*, and *Baazi* can go down the wrong path, but can also recover his virtue (Vasudevan, 2000). The heroine cannot transgress the social codes, and the morality is located in the female figures of heroine and

especially the mother. Vasudevan (2000) says that the Bollywood social films of the 1950s rely on 'manipulation of women in narrative transactions' where "*...such a manipulation actively divests women characters of modern, professional attributes which they exhibit, placing them as objects of exchange within the generational transaction"* (Vasudevan, 2000, pp. 116-117).

Bollywood opened up new cinematic landscapes to explore women's subjectivity, politics and desires in the year 2012, with films - *Kahaani, English Vinglish, Ishaqzaade.* The shift in the ideological underpinnings of many films after the year 2012 was triggered by the 'Nirbhaya' incident (gang rape of a young woman in a bus in Delhi in 2012 that killed her), especially romantic films like *Queen (2013), Highway (2014), Neerja (2016), NH10 (2015) Bareilly ki barfi (2017), Tumhari Sulu (2017) Manmarziyan (2018),* and lastly, *Pink (2016)* which tackle the issue of sexual violence head-on. These films invest in the spatiality of the locales, and the characters are formed by the films narrative space. *Kahaani* is filmed in Kolkata and the much-celebrated festival of 'Durga Ashtami' forms the backdrop of the narrative. *English Vinglish* and *Queen* is the journey of homely and meek women from Indian patriarchy (Mumbai and Delhi) to empowerment in USA and Europe, respectively. *Bareilly ki Barfi* is about a small-town girl resisting the social codes and claustrophobic space of small town to be a free-spirited woman. *NH10* and *Highway* are road film genres with women as the leads, but the journeys take divergent paths. In *Highway,* the upper-class girl finds herself released from her past trauma of child abuse and the journey on a Highway becomes a metaphor of her journey to form her subjectivity. *NH10* subverts the notion of urban sin and rural innocence through the depiction of horrors of small-town patriarchy in honour killings. *Pink* is a direct allusion to women's safety in urban Delhi post-Nirbhaya incident, and the shift of discourse on sexual violence in Delhi. As discussed in the literature review in the first chapter, the role of women in Telugu films in the 1970s after the social films of the 1950s and 1960s, became secondary to the hero's star image and character arc. Tollywood narratives of women continue to be derived from the same patterns of male machismo and female subjugation. As observed in the previous chapter, even in the local Deccani films, women are invisible, disposable, or made to fit in the image of a good "*Hindustani aurat*".

In the coming sections, the separation of masculine space and feminine spaces emerges as stark, and this separation evolves with the economic and cultural changes. The zenana[43] of earlier Muslim homes manifests in new forms. Hyderabad, an invisible city till the 1980s in the Telugu films, erupts onto the narrative spaces of films post 90s – steered by globalisation as a masculine space, centre of administration, economics and political power. By and large, women are confined to the domestic sphere in the 'aspiring global city of Hyderabad', though new opportunities open up for women in the public spaces. This is reinforced in Telugu cinema, where the role of women is always as the second sex, because they are a spectacle and when they appear on the screen the narrative freezes. Women in cinema are objects of desire subjected to the male gaze (Mulvey, 1989). On the roles of women in cinema, Laura Mulvey says that "*…film has depended on voyeuristic active/passive mechanisms. Women, whose image has continually been stolen and used for this end…*" (Mulvey, 1989, p. 18). She further adds,

> *"Woman then stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning."* (Mulvey, 1989, p. 6)

As Mulvey points out, like the secondary role of women in the film, the same process is in place in the imagination of the city and placing the women in that space. Commenting on that "*.....Reinhold Heller invokes a gendered interpretation of Modernist Utopia by arguing that it was 'conceived and generated for and by men, with women serving subsidiary roles as "companions and helpers…"* (Dreyer, 2005, p. 6). It is films which can represent the intertextuality of women's urban experience as "*films which map urban dynamics and anxieties, they offer valuable insights into how women as cultural practitioners negotiate and interpret cities"* (Gleghorn, 2010, p. 2). Women and the public space in the city are incompatible, and Torun Haaland (2013) cites Janet Wolf's point that this "*incompatibility of gendered distribution of the space"* restricts women's movement (Haaland, 2013, p. 598). Gill Valentine

[43] The part of the house for the seclusion of women present in Indian and Iranian Muslim households

(1989) defines public spaces as *"the space we share with strangers, people who aren't our relatives, friends or work associates"* (Valentine G, 1989, p. 389).

3.2. Women in the Telugu Cinematic city of the 80s and 90s: Sexual Violence, Domesticity and Resistance

Telugu cinema started from 1921 with the silent talkie film *Bhishma Pratigna* directed by Ragupathi Venkaiah Naidu, and after ten years the first talkie *Bhakta Prahlada* directed by H.M. Reddy was released. Hyderabad city is absent in the early Telugu films until the creation of Andhra Pradesh and emerges as an important locale only from the 1980s (as discussed in the first chapter). A section on 'Women and Cinema' in a report from a workshop conducted by Anveshi, Hyderabad, in association with Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore in 1999, on '*Telugu cinema: History, Culture, Theory'* put together articles on Telugu Cinema in print media including Telugu weeklies and Telugu film magazines, which this introduction draws from. The articles discussed a range of issues pertaining to Telugu cinema, its location, business, film technics and technicians. It also discusses women in film and their roles from the beginning of the Telugu cinema till 1999. The articles reflect the contemporary ethos of their times, providing insights on the women in the films, and as well as roles of women in films.

The newspaper and magazine articles translated and re-published from the 1940s berate the films and women too. They believed that women who act in cinema are not "family ladies", but are living in sin. In the article '*The Decline of Female Stars'* written in 1954, it is identified that there is a lack of good roles for women in cinema and that films are 'male-oriented'. The articles written in 1970s, list out the kind of women shown in Telugu films, the common role for women being : 1) heroine – docile, pretty, under constant threat of sexual violence (but saved in the nick of time), ; 2) hero's mother/sister/sister-in-law – filled with compassion, self-abnegating, her whole life is devoted to the hero; 3) vamp – in shiny and tight clothes, morally compromised, sexually desires hero, dances with erotic abundance in bars, clubs etc. and mainly to titillate the audience ; 4) female comedians – not important to narrative, usually paired with male comedian/hero's sidekick, used for comic relief by insulting and abusing them (sometimes self-inflicted). By 1990s, the articles lament on the decline in morals and in the representation of women. These characteristics of each

female trope in the films are not necessarily negative or a poor portrayal, they are used to reflect the contemporary ideology of society at large regarding women in everyday life.

The literature on women in Telugu cinema lacks in the representation of the city and its importance in women's everyday life and how it shapes them and vice versa. It is important to record or analyse the representation of day to day life of women in the city, as their multiple identities and the processes that shape them– especially the 'contestation and constitution of gender' can be more clearly understood. "*The everyday is the alternative starting point for a rewriting of the female subject into knowledge…* (Kishore, 2015, p. 3).

The urban in the cinematic imagination of Tollywood was for very long the city of Madras (now Chennai) as it was the cultural centre for all the four southern language cinema industries. This was due to Madras being the administrative and economic capital under British rule. Many studios were established, and the filmmakers, technicians and actors settled in Madras and made it home for the Telugu film industry and its fraternity. The Telugu film industry took many decades to move out of Madras completely. The government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) provided subsidies in 1970s to set up studios and housing schemes for the Telugu film industry's fraternity, which gave an impetus for relocation. After Chennai, the urban imagination of Telugu cinema moved to towns and cities (Rajahmundry, Vijayawada, Vishakhapatnam) in coastal Andhra Pradesh, as Hyderabad due to its history of Nizam rule, was still seen as a city separate from 'Teluguness[44]'. In the handful of films that were set in Hyderabad, the roles of women were marginal. Films that showed the characters relationship with the city and how their lives are defined by the social and economic milieu were few. With the dominant stakeholders –actors, directors and producers in the film industry coming from the landowning Kamma upper caste, the rural and coastal towns of AP were well represented. Films with women playing a substantial role were placed in big towns like Rajahmundry, and Guntur, and cities like Vijayawada and Vishakhapatnam, all in coastal Andhra Pradesh, from where the

[44] The 'Teluguness' is defined by dominant Upper peasant caste Kamma groups who had the economic, political capital and as well as cultural capital as they are dominant group in Telugu cinema. Their 'Teluguness' is associated to the coastal Andhra region, its culture and dialects,

Kamma groups originally came and hence were familiar with the culture and cartography of those regions.

There have been studies of women in cinematic cities of Paris, London, Hongkong, Bombay and Kolkata that discuss the gender articulations of urban spaces (Aitken & Zonn, 1993; Bose, 2008; Cook, 2005; Edwards, 2008; Haaland, 2013; Lee, 2005; Tiller, 2015). The literature on the representation of women in and of spaces, places and regions, gives insights into the difficult relationship of women with the city. The contexts of the urban space and modes of traversing the city by women, reproduce the spaces, its meanings and bring out the hidden anxieties of a city. The agency that stems from the vulnerability of being in public and out of their 'natural' domestic sphere is debated. Many feminist scholars theorise this act of women being out in public as '*negotiating risk'* (Gilbertson, 2013; Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). Women in the Hyderabad city constitute half of the population (49% according to 2011 census data) and in recent decades, increasingly became active participants in the labour market, especially informal economy. The nuances of the restrictions and negotiations with the city spaces and performance of gender under watchful ideologies of patriarchy, social codes and skewed morality are observed in various forms in the cinema.

The absence of Hyderabad city significantly in Telugu cinema and the lack in the representation of women of the cinematic city of Hyderabad, changes with the film *Patnam Vachina Pativrathalu* (Chaste women in the city, 1982, Vijay Bapineedu). With changes in the economy and labour market from the 1990s with globalisation, there is a shift in culture and social systems as well, with women entering the job market and earning an income. This is seen in the films - *Pellichesukundam (let's get married, 1997, Muthyala Subbiah), Mr.Pellam (Mr Wife, 1993, Bapu), Aame (Her, 1994, EVV Satyanarayana)* –released in the 1990s, which indicated the change in the city milieu; women are now accepted in public space but under strict social codes. These films deal with issues of risk in public places, especially sexual violence, and anxiety of society over encounters with strange men and undesirable elements in the city.

3.2.1. The Flaneuse in the city (the 1980s)

One of the early films that represented Hyderabad city, and placed women in that urban space was *Patnam Vachina Pativrathalu* (1982, Vijay Bapineedu). Two women

married to two brothers harbour dreams about moving to Hyderabad, but their husbands do not agree. They run away from the village to the city and face hardships until their husbands rescue them. Of the two women, Lalithamba is not educated in an English medium school, nor is she a graduate, like her Sister-in-law Sridevi (figure 3.1). Lalithamba is obsessed with the city as she sees her childhood friend come to the village in a car, wearing expensive clothes and bringing gifts for all. Lalithamba schemes to manipulate and convince Sridevi by talking about the easy life of washing machine, running water and other facilities in the city. As soon as they board the bus to Hyderabad city, a man touches Lalithamba inappropriately. Lalithamba who does not have her friend's correct address in Hyderabad, walks the streets of Hyderabad along with Sridevi searching for her and exploring the city and in this process becomes the Flaneuse (a female flaneur).

Figure 3.1: Sridevi and Lalithamba; Source: YouTube

Lalithamba, who is audacious back in her village and with no knowledge of life outside the village, is unrestrained in her gaze and walk. Sridevi who is educated and knows about life in the city, is restrained and polices Lalithamba. Lalithamba's unrestrained gaze, her lack of awareness of the risks in public space for women can be viewed as equivalent to Walter Benjamin's Flaneur in the city (as discussed in chapter 1). Except for Lalithamba's character, there is an invisibility of Flaneuse in Telugu films. The flaneuse is an absent figure even in the writings of Walter Benjamin who first wrote of the flaneur, and nor is there a mention in Baudelaire's work, which inspired Walter Benjamin to define Flaneur. Baudelaire mentions women in the city, calls them - '*une passante*' one who is a passer-by, a female figure solely for the

pleasure of the male gaze. (Edwards, 2008). While both Benjamin and Baudelaire talk of the flaneur, they are silent on a mention of the flaneuse.

Talking about how the urban space real and imagined, is deemed unsafe for women (Flaneuse) Torun Haaland (2013) cites the example of the fictional character of Irene Adler, from Arthur Doyle's Sherlock Holmes' novels, who has to dress like a man to traverse the London streets. And that Virginia Woolf could not be out in London without a purpose suggests *"how oppressive social conventions and power relations continued to displace honest women to the domestic sphere and deprive them of any agency within the civic and mental life of the metropolis"* (Gleghorn, 2010, p. 597). George Sand walking in Paris in 1831 dressed as a man – talks about the "*non-existent role of flaneuse*" while Virginia Woolf walked on the London streets by creating a false pretext that she needs to buy a pencil which falls short of becoming a flaneuse (Mouton, 2001).

In *Patnam Vachina Pativrathalu* film, the women experience sexual molestations, attempted sexual assault, multiple threats to their lives and finally end up being trafficked. They face harassment at Sridevi's job interview and on the streets. While looking for Lalithamba's friend, they encounter a man who is caught cheating on his wife. The women meet a kind lady, but it turns out she wants to sell them to a brothel. They do end up in a brothel, and there Lalithamba meets her friend from the city who is a sex-worker at the brothel. All the women they meet in the city are either sex-workers or some con-persons. "*Like the prostitute—the only female urbanite Baudelaire and Benjamin grant any role of significance…as a metaphor for the larger commodification of the city"* (Haaland, 2013, p. 597). A couple who are the only good people in the city who help the women are from their village. Thus, the city is shown as an unsafe and immoral place for *pativrathalu,* which translates as chaste women; such women do not belong to the city. The film creates a binary of urban sin through commercialisation of sex, immoral living, rampant corruption, and debauchery in the day to day practices against rural innocence of devoted, domesticated women, and simple living and charms of the countryside/village.

Lalithamba with her nonchalance and lack of restraint takes control of the gaze, smiles back at strangers, and stops to takes full sensorial inputs of urban spaces. This performance and her attitude make her a flaneuse fitting into the Haaland's (2013) description. A flaneuse – like a flaneur strolls aimlessly, controls the gaze, the gaze is

not inward as seen in the case of the city women (here Sridevi), returns the gaze back to persons who gaze at her and her gender performance becomes irrelevant or non-confirmative in her role of flaneuse. Her gender performance becomes fluid, and the binaries of such performance become fuzzy. The flaneuse with irreverence to codes of gender performance and masculine spaces rewrites the meaning of such spaces she walks through. In the film, it raises anxiety in men, especially, and women as well, and it sometimes leads to conflict in those spaces. Sridevi is concerned with the behaviour of Lalithamba that it is not in accordance with the gender urban performativity. At the first instance of attack by men in a street, the women are forced to flee the space, but Lalithamba refuses to flee. She manipulates and moulds the street objects and winding lanes of the street as her weapons. She uses a pot at a water pump to attack them, uses her sandal to beat them up, while Sridevi stands worried and pleading with Lalithamba to run. Lalithamba relents and starts running but comes back in defiance which stuns the men, as she slowly picks up her sandal and starts running. Lalithamba is unperturbed and remains laughing throughout this sequence as she outsmarts them. This conflict and resistance to being controlled in a masculine space and defiance to act in accordance to set code is an act of rebellion to claim the city space for women. Space is no longer the same but acquires a new meaning, and so do the women when urban codes are challenged.

This is the first representation of flaneuse which is not seen in any of the other Telugu films analysed here. Lalithamba undergoes a transformation when she finds out that she is pregnant. She becomes careful, imbibing the lessons from Sridevi to perform gender within social conventions. It refers to equating the fulfilment and realisation of, womanhood to reproduction. Her mutinies, however small, transformed the spaces she walked through, and her attainment of 'complete womanhood' through pregnancy puts an end to it. Masculine spaces control women by arguing for the need to protect women from all kinds of dangers in the outside world. This argument is strengthened by locating honour in women's bodies, by domestication through the institution of marriage and then child rearing. She pays dearly for her transgressions when she has a miscarriage - the city is responsible for the violence and for the loss wrought upon her body. The film depicted both the possibility of a flaneuse and the improbability of a flaneuse, in the imagination of Cinematic City.

3.2.2. The 1990s

The films released in the nineties continued to keep the sanctity of marriage intact and its utmost significance in women's lives. But the women on the screen now demand equality, question the patriarchy, fight social evils and tried to aspire for ideal marriage and partners who treat them equally.

Fighting the System

The feudal from the rural is placed in the family in the urban space for women who are fighting for equal rights in this decade of the 1990s. The crimes committed against women are imprinted in memory, in news articles of dowry deaths, sexual assaults, and domestic violence. Films from the late 1980s and 90s like *Subhaleka (Wedding Card, 1982 Kasunathuni Vishwanath), and Srivaariki Premalekha (Love letter to Husband, 1984, Jandhyala)* tried to deal with those issues. The tension with feudalism continues in the urban space in the family and familiar surroundings of home. Post-globalisation the nation has witnessed the emergence of an individual where the social, family and gender relations get reshaped, and the focus from community shifted to the individual, where the individual's preferences, desires and freedom take precedence.

The women's movement in the 1970s and 1980s emerged in the cities in response to increased violence against women. These groups called for more feminist approaches to tackle women's problems like dowry, alcoholism, equal pay, equality in the division of labour at homes, the right to work[45]. As a fallout of the context of contemporary women's movements, protagonists in *Aame (EVV Satyanaraya, 1994), Mr Pellam (1993, Bapu)*, and *Pellichesukundam's (1997, Muthyala Subbiaya)* demand to be treated equally with men and question injustices in the patriarchal system. *Aame* and *Pellichesukundam* expose the injustice meted out to women and show how men benefit from a skewed institutionalised patriarchal system. Dowry, infidelity, domestic violence, stress on woman's virginity and purity are issues debated in the films.

In *Pellichesukundam*, Shanti (played by Soundarya) witnesses an attempt to murder, and volunteers to testify in the court. She is sexually assaulted the next day when she is returning home from work in the night. She comes home, and her father disowns

[45] http://azgaralimd.blogspot.com/2013/07/womens-movements-in-post-independent.html

her as his daughter, as she has lost her honour. She is provided shelter by Anand (played by Venkatesh) at his home, where trouble still follows her as she is a tainted woman (because of the rape) living with a man out of wedlock. *Aame* has won a Filmfare award for best Telugu film. *Aame* is a story of the middle daughter Ooha, from the three daughters of a government clerk who struggles to make ends meet. He also supports his eldest daughter's husband who is unemployed and is a lecherous person eyeing the sisters of his wife. Ooha is married to Srikanth whose father is a miser and demands dowry without his son's knowledge. Srikanth meets with a fatal accident on their nuptial night. Ooha is immediately sent back to her maternal place as she is a widow. As per the government's policy, she gets her husband's bank job, and the father-in-law takes her back to his place to grab her salary. Meanwhile, a man falls in love with Ooha and wants to marry her. The brother-in-law who wants the money from the bank job ties a *mangalasutram*[46] by force on her neck. The marriage is upheld by the court due to Ooha's family statements supporting her brother in law. Later, when the marriage is annulled, as she is ready to marry another man, her father-in-law tries to rape her but gets killed by her mother-in-law.

Both these films are hailed as women-centric and strong 'women oriented' films. In these films, the city women are working and seen navigating the city spaces through buses. They are never out unless it is commuting to the workplace. The space of a home is not insulated from the city, and the politics and socio-cultural shifts happening outside, influences the inside of a home. The docile and domesticated women of earlier Telugu cinema transformed to working women in many of the 1990s Telugu films. The myth of home as apolitical and protected space from the larger ideological, cultural shifts is shattered by perceiving these shifts at home. These cultural and economic changes of the city permeated the homes demanding a transformation in spatial ordering of home. David Sibley (1994) says the abjection of the locality and the nation invades the private spaces of the home. Home is not autonomous as conceived by many, but it also shapes and transforms in relation to the politics of location (Massey, 1995). Home is central to these films where the transformative forces of the ideological shifts in the society are entering into these private spaces.

[46] *Mangalasutram* is thread dipped in turmeric, and is considered a scared thread which a man ties around woman's neck to symbolise the marriage between the man and the woman.

The feminist movements in India had more visibility in the late 1970s[47] , and the 1980s with the Rameeza Bee and Mathura cases of custodial rape, dowry deaths, and the Shahbano case. This led to questioning the deeper problems of the patriarchal systems, with several protests in cities across the country, including Hyderabad, which was also an important locus of the women's movements that also spread to rural areas of Andhra Pradesh. The representation of the cultural, social and political changes in the Hyderabad city is represented in these films, where the urban woman questions the embedded injustice meted out to women and demand equal rights to work and respect. In *Pellichesukundam,* the discourse on sexual assault happens in cinematic city of Hyderabad, and the notions of blaming the rape victim and treating her life as essentially finished are thwarted. Shanti, in the film, continues working and marries the man she falls in love with and not the rapist as showed normally in Telugu films. In *Aame*, the disadvantaged position and treatment women as objects and burden in the institution of patriarchy and her value placed in her marital status and being a virgin are questioned. In *Mr Pellam*, the skewed power relations between husband and wife is exposed when the wife steps out to work. The illusion of equality in the modern institution of marriage is shattered.

Unsafe City and Homes

In *Aame* and *Pellichesukundam,* the responsibility to protect themselves is on the women - Ooha and Shanti, respectively. When they failed to do so, they are castigated. Shanti goes to the police station, which is a taboo place for a respectable woman to enter, to sign as a witness on a First Information Report. Later, she is assaulted on the street in the night when she is delayed at her office. She is admonished severely at both the times by her father; for the violence committed on her body, she is thrown out of the house. Here, the architecture of the city includes the built space of home and institutions like Judiciary and Police stations that are called "*pli"* - a concept put forward by Deleuze - a place which both liberates and entraps an individual (Ng, 2011). For Shanti and Ooha, home and the state institutions were more entrapping than liberating. Shanti performs her civic duty of reporting the crime, but for this transgression into the masculine space of a Police Station (a place for rough criminals and toughened police officers), she is sexually assaulted. The violence that she

[47] https://sol.du.ac.in/mod/book/view.php?id=1474&chapterid=1388

witnesses in the city space, invades her intimate spaces and haunts her as she is abandoned by her family, state and society.

The discourse on rape is largely placed in the streets (see figure 3.2). Urban streets are places of violence for women. After an incidence of violence, the streets subject women to even more violence for being there in the first place and second, for failing to protect her honour. The city streets come to a standstill as the debate rages on when Shanti remains silent, and Anand alone sermonises, thus uncovering the hypocrisy of urban society. Shanti is rendered silent, as a woman who lost her honour, lost her right to defend herself as she knew the risks of entering a police station, filing an FIR against the murderer, and being in the city at night. Shanti broke the spatiotemporal (being in masculine spaces of a police station and in the city at night) and gender performativity (involving herself as a witness for a scene of a crime) norms. She paid for her transgressions in the eyes of society and herself. Gendered urban spaces provide a unique experience of both private and public space for women compared to men, and it is interesting to note the gendered structures of both spaces, and how it regulates women and their bodies.

Figure 3.2: Pellichesukundam, streets an arena for discourse; Source: YouTube

For a woman, their reputation and safety in the city are a priority for society, state and institution, rather than for them to be a law-abiding citizen and excel at work. The bodies of women become symbols of honour for family and society/nation. A space acquires meaning by the people who inhabit it, especially women. The presence of women in a space becomes highly gender-coded moral realms, be it a home, street or a city. The conduct of women in those spaces imparts the spaces morality or immorality. Despite the individual agency and autonomy of women, they are rescued

from the violence on their bodies and mental torture both at home and in streets, by progressive men (like Anand and Vikram, as demonstrated by Anand fighting for Shanti and Vikram fighting with his family and her family to remarry a widow). The appropriation of women's liberation by men, by literally taking away their voice (in *Pellichesukundam*) and then rescuing them from draconian patriarchy to a softer form of patriarchy, sometimes in the form of marriage, is an example of the benevolence of hegemonic patriarchal ideology that operates in the city.

For a woman, the threat of sexual violence in the city spaces is always on her mind when she leaves the space of home and steps outside. That the city as unsafe for women and that she would be violated outside of the home is predetermined and an accepted truth of city life. However, for Ooha and Shanti, the space of home also becomes hostile by disowning Shanti as she is sexually violated and Ooha's body is sexualised by the men in her home (at both her maternal and in-laws' home). The anxiety of the impermanence of a home, of family, and as a result, society is always present for a woman. For both Ooha and Shanti, home is where security and nostalgia are replaced with betrayal and trauma. The spaces of the home are usually seen as protected, as a refuge, a safe haven, fulfilling, reassuring, positive, autonomous, free (Sibley, 1997). But this is not true for urban women, and the analysis of two films validates the arguments of feminist geographers that the home is not a place 'of rest and repose' but "*a place of work, a place of conflict, a place of entrapment. Bammer suggests that 'home is….place of dark secrets, fear and danger, that we* (women) *can sometimes only inhabit furtively" (Massey, 1995, p. 41).*

Right to Work and Equality

Mr Pellam is about a woman's right to work and right to an equal partnership with a man in marriage. In *Mr Pellam*, Jhansi is a housewife, and she goes to work after her husband loses his job when he is framed for embezzlement of money at the bank. The husband starts taking care of the household chores, and the wife goes to work, which causes disagreements and fights between them. *Mr Pellam* won a national award for the best feature film in Telugu and two Nandi awards for best actress and best film. Bapu is an auteur whose earlier film *Pellipustakam (1991)* dealt with marriage, with the message of the importance of mutual trust and respect in a marriage. Bapu is also a painter, cartoonist, and with Mullapudi Venkata Ramana's dialogues, story and script, they capture each frame like a painting and close to realism. He is known as

one of the ‘class’ directors along with K Viswanath who is also known to make clean movies devoid of commercial elements like the sexuality of women or crassness that other films depict (Srinivas, 2009).

In *Mr Pellam*, Jhansi is the smarter, calmer and stronger person and these traits are also problematic as she endures her husband’s aggression and apathy patiently, and serves his every need no matter how ludicrous. When such behaviour and reaction become increasingly frequent after she starts work, she retaliates. When her Husband loses his job, and she goes out to look for a job, her husband discourages her by talking about harassment at the workplace, on the streets and buses. He challenges her that she will quit her job in a week. Here the dominant discourse about the dangers and risks for women who venture out to work voiced by the man, is similar to the results of ethnographic researches on working women, that conclude that office buildings are perceived as dangerous places for women. It is assumed to be a space for wayward and ambitious working women, and it is the good girls who are saved or manage to be safe (Fischer, 2010). It is largely due to the protection provided by men, thereby giving women no agency.

With roles changing in the house, the dynamic of the home space changes drastically (figure 3.3). The way the home interacts with the surroundings changes and also it changes the association of children with the house. This change in the house and the new meanings being rewritten is established in a song by the husband, “*Mummy poye daddy vache, elakapoye, pillivache. Idheykotha kingdom”* (Mummy has gone, and dad has come, the rat has gone, and the cat has come. This is a new kingdom). The urban characteristics of a house observed in analysis of the film are; 1) it is a rented house, 2) school is far away from the house, 3) commute to work is far, 4) TV and Phone are not luxury items but essential items of an urban household now, 5) a man involved in domestic chores is acceptable though not a norm 6) take away from restaurants or eating out is common. These observations of the house signify its urban location in a post-globalisation era.

Figure 3.3: Mr Pellam, Husband sharing the burden; Source: YouTube

In all the films analysed apart from *Mr Pellam*, a working woman after marriage willingly gives up her job and assigns herself to domesticity. When wives are working, husbands in charge of traditionally feminine role feel insulted and confused like in *Kshemamga Velli Labamga Randi* film released in 2000. The film deals with the right for women to work, but it is crass and overt in the way the men oppose the right of women to work. It normalises domestic violence, male-aggression, and these fears stemmed from women being economically empowered. Such behaviour, in the private and domestic sphere, is *'influenced by the politics and societal mores of the outside especially in the case of domestic violence'* (Gleghorn, 2010, p. 7). Women who finish a shift at the office have to come home straight to deal with chaotic homes and verbal and physical abuse unleashed by male vulnerabilities. They have to restore the balance of the home by assuaging and nursing the hurt male ego of the husband and the needs of the kids, meals, and so on. These women, after working long hours at office, come home to work on their second shift.

Families from the tradition of joint families have shifted to nuclear families, where the men with wives and kids settle in the city for jobs and away from their parents in the village. They leave a feudal life in the village and envision a new life of modernity of consumerism, aspiring to be the upper-middle-class. This consumerism of the middle-class is closely related to the urban spaces and is captured in films. The men buy TVs, mobiles, tape recorders as status symbols, and when faced with protests from wife, men silence them. In *Mr Pellam*, when Jhansi questions her husband's purchase of TV, he asks her to leave the economics of home to him. In many Telugu films, when wives demand TVs, Phones, Refrigerators, and Coolers, they are shown as selfish and obsessed with ephemeral and material possessions. In *Subhalagnam* (1994, S V Krishna Reddy) film, the wife is shown as obsessed with material comforts and

riches to the extent she ends up selling her husband for money and losing her marital bliss. However, it can be argued that the obsession of women with material possessions, possibly distracts them from the 'unbearability' of living in a home dominated by men (Lewis & Cho, 2006).

This consumerism is questioned and not encouraged in the traditional setting of a joint family where the basic needs of the whole family are prioritized over the individual desire of consumption and luxury items. But in nuclear families and especially in the urban settings, consumerism is celebrated and encouraged. The changes within individuals by changes in the family setting in urban spaces is called *psychogeography* by Guy Debord which means 'the impact of the city on its inhabitants' (Dreyer, 2005, p. 3).

These films reiterate that while home is perceived and assumed as the natural physical setting for women, which has been mentioned in the first chapter, it is an alienating and '*repressive instrument'* (Lewis & Cho, 2006, p. 83). The architecture of the city which includes the layout of the suburbs, functional zones, and other housing colonies are designed for men to work, relax, and to help them commute, and does not consider a woman's movement and her access to the employment or recreations (Cowan, 2000). While commute to work is far for both men and women, most men own private vehicles while women with no mobility of their own rely on public transport. Even when men use public transport, it is not as difficult as it is for women who face harassment and eve-teasing in the buses and streets. They also face the possibility of missing the bus and have to risk walking or waiting for the next bus late in the evenings. With an increase in working women, there is now seen the emergence of a new category of men who are affected by the wife's employment and have to share housework. In reality, the burden on 'new men' is to be present or available for the child, not so much because of increased housework or the normal child rearing (Hanson & Pratt, 1995).

The arguments of western literature on women in cinematic cities does not fit in the Indian cinematic city of the 1980s and 90s. Western arguments are centered on the image of flaneuse and transformation of city spaces by her interaction with the city at leisure and the anxiety of men in those spaces (Edwards, 2008; Gleghorn, 2010; Haaland, 2013; Lee, 2005; Mouton, 2001; Orban, 2001; Tiller, 2015). The domestic sphere of western households in cinemas overlap in the separation of spaces and

interaction in these spaces. The struggles of women in western domestic spheres are not as stark as in Telugu films, as urban households in the West are equipped with all modern amenities and comforts.

Susan Hanson and Geraldine Pratt (1995) in their book *'Gender, Work and Space'*, note that the distance that women of other races travel is equal to the travel time of men of the same race and more than that of white women. In the Indian scenario, it is caste and class that define the relationship of women with the city. In the film, *Kshemamga Velli Labamga Randi*, the caste of three women friends/neighbours is stressed, emphasizing they are from lower castes in their conversation with the Brahmin neighbour. They find work far away from their homes along with the Brahmin woman (she lost her caste privilege when she married a lower caste man). Their work is in the feminine occupation of tailoring at a textile company for low wages, which reinforces that *"... gender division of labor has a spatial expression ... received some play in descriptions of the global economy; spatial clusters of predominantly female employment are created when firms seek low-wage female labors in particular places"* (Hanson & Pratt, 1995, p. 107). Though a city offers anonymity, yet we find that caste continues to be operative on the few occasions it is included in the narrative. Most often, the tendency in films is to paint a society from the perspective of the upper castes, the aspirations and lived realities of the lower castes are hardly portrayed from their viewpoint. This is a major absence in Telugu and Bollywood films.

Representation of women in Telugu films has changed over the years. The films discussed in this section set up the tableau for working women to be normalised and also helped in part to understand the stereotypes regarding women and their place in their homes and their roles as caregivers. Working women and women with higher aspirations are a norm in the cinematic city of Hyderabad, but whether the narrative spaces of Hyderabad enables the women to further their careers and fulfil their aspirations, is debated in the next section.

3.3. Hyderabad "City Girl": New City and New Modernity

The Tollywood films in the 80s lacked in representation of Hyderabad and women in the city. The narratives of films in the 1990s moved to Hyderabad, and so did the women and their representation in the city increase. The women in the 1990s films

were married, and the struggles with domesticity, patriarchy and the injustice meted out to them in this patriarchal system were the common themes represented. The access to the city was not easy for women and was limited to work and domestic chores. By late nineties, Hyderabad ushered in globalisation and earned the name of "Cyber city" replacing the old name "City of Nawabs". The then Chief Minister, N. Chandra Babu Naidu focused on bringing the IT revolution to Hyderabad by offering impressive business prospects in the form of cheap land, infrastructure, tax breaks and other opportunities to Multi-National Corporations (MNCs). This made Hyderabad a favourite city for corporate investment, but a skewed development followed, which is discussed in the following section. This section analyses six Telugu films released after the year 2000 and one film from Bollywood, released after the liberalisation of the Indian economy opened up the markets.

Post-2000s, after the film *Kshemamga Velli Labamga Randi*, the struggle for women to have careers and equal status in a marriage is assumed to have been addressed, and declined, at least in terms of representation in Tollywood. The new age girl arrived with the right to work, to study and other basic rights that were denied to her predecessors. The palimpsest of women in the city can be explored and studied in the films of the 2000s and how these films depict women, where career and their desires take precedence over marriage and being homemakers. The precursor to the women of the 21st century was laid by the role of Anu in film *Tholiprema* (First Love, 1998, A Karunakaran) who wanted to be a scientist, got admission into Harvard University as a researcher and inspired the hero - Balu portrayed by Pawan Kalyan to pursue his dreams. Women increased in the urban workforce and white collared jobs, moving out of their homes to pursue higher studies; this is called "*token equality*[48]" (Kishore, 2015). '*Token equality*' refers to the fact that women are no longer confined in their home spaces but venturing out for career, pleasure and love. But they still have not achieved the complete freedom in terms of mobility and access to the city that men enjoy.

[48] Women are offered Token equality. Though women are in workforce and progressing in all walks of life. They still face discrimination at home, office spaces and outside, wage gap, burden of household chores and child rearing. They experience missed career growth and opportunities, because child rearing is still seen as women's domain. Though enjoying freedom, they are still surveilled and controlled under name of protection and safety

The films released in the decade of 2000 in which women had substantial roles and became popular are *Kushi* (Happy, 2001, Suryah), *Allari* (Mischeif, 2002, Ravibabu), *Anand* (Happiness, 2004, Shekhar Kammula), *Anukokunda Oka Roju* (Suddenly one day, 2005, Chandrasekhar Yeleti), *Bommarillu* (Dollhouse, 2006, Bhaskar) and *Happy Days* (2007, Shekhar Kammula). The majority of Telugu films invest highly in hyper-masculinity and star power of the male actors. Out of all the films released in this decade, these are films that gave visible representation for women with their screen presence and character almost equal to the male actor. The selection of films for this section also includes *Hyderabad Blues* (1998, Nagesh Kukunoor). In this section, *Tholiprema*, a film of the late 90s, set a precedent with the start of new thinking about romance, marriage, careers, tradition vs modernity and freedom of women within the city. In *Tholiprema*, there are two main roles of women, the sister of the hero and the love interest of the hero. Both of them have ambition, the sister is training to be a doctor, and the love interest is working hard to become a scientist. They both are never told how to behave nor are their movements controlled. While the men are shown as unemployed directionless youth whose only goal is to find a girlfriend, these two women are strong, confident moral authorities. The sister stops her brother from doing mischievous things or from stirring up trouble, and the heroine inspires him to follow his dream of becoming a cricketer. In many Telugu films on the city, in the climax, the hero and heroine realise they are in love at the airport terminal, train or bus station, the hero or heroine leaves the airport or bus or train to reunite. But in this film, the heroine professes her love to hero, but continues on with her journey to Harvard for higher studies, promising to come back to him after she finishes her studies. They are women in control of their lives, capable of independent decision making. This is a departure from most Indian films, where women are portrayed as subversive and sacrificing. This raises the question of whether globalising Hyderabad by opening up opportunities for women, enabled such a transformation.

Drawing from Tejaswini Niranjana's article '*Cinema, Femininity and Economy of Consumption'* (1991), we can argue that the films of this decade repackaged femininity, which is driven by consumerism brought on by the new liberalising economy. Hyderabad became one of the early metros attracting MNCs and foreign direct investment, and this brought changes in the way people consumed, sought

entertainment – aspiring to be global citizens. Vivian Lee (2005) says that the modern girl is the desirable object for men, in fictions created by men, "*the passing woman in the city is the mobile image of unfulfilled desire"* (Dreyer, 2005, p. 2) and "*for capitalist modernity with all its seductive allures of commodification, consumption, and entertainment. . . . [She is] a prominent figure in the landscape of the male protagonist's desire, and ineluctably becomes constitutive of what he is as a man of desire"* (Lee, 2005, p. 134). Like the paradoxes of modernity, the city girls symbolise the pulls and tugs of the modernity and those are inscribed on their bodies (Lee, 2005). Their bodies become symbols of modernity and as well as culture, they espouse modernity by the way modernity is consumed in the form of brands - in clothes, presence at coffee and food chains, and malls, and even particular streets and they separate themselves as being respectable by "being seen" in approved places and behaving according to the urban gendered codes which are rooted in tradition and deeply moralistic. Women are aware that they are constantly observed during these performances and activities of consumption and behave accordingly so that their presence would not induce anxiety or conflict in those spaces.

The women in the films chosen in this section are mostly younger and single. All the women in the films belong to the upper caste, and the economic status ranges from the middle to elite class. Here, the modern woman is the middle-class woman who is "apparently privileged in every way other than gender" (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). Talking about the middle-class woman, in '*Why Loiter?*' (2011) the authors opine:

> *"The middle-class woman is, in fact, implicitly central to ideas of Indian womanhood as the symbolic measure of many things. It is her education and employment that becomes the measure of a family/community/nation's progress. Her clothing and visibility in particular places become a marker of desirable modernity... she becomes the canvas on which narratives of modernity and honour are simultaneously written"* (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011, p. 23).

The middle-class woman who is also of a higher caste is more desirable as observed in *Anand* and *Hyderabad Blues*. The image and cultural politics of upper caste middle-class women (See Aitken and Zonn, 1993 where they talk about the circulation of the

politics of middle-class white male in Hollywood films) are sustained through these films, especially in the films of Shekhar Kammula, which is discussed later in this section. Her presence in the city and on the streets is celebrated but also oppressed, with fears of risk of public spaces for women, as her honour is more valuable and sacred as *"the "new" woman has become the subject of capitalist desire as a consumer, as well as the subject of a middle-class panic about changing sexual norms"* (Gilbertson, 2013, p. 155). Amanda Gilbertson (2013) based on her fieldwork on middle-class women in Hyderabad, points out the problems and burdens that they face in maintaining the respectability and keeping up with globalised modernity, which dictates their everyday practices. In this decade, the ideological and political flow between the outside and inside is still intact, but there is newly found interiority, and the neoliberal city created 'privatised public places' for the women to occupy like malls, cafes, private transport (Gilbertson, 2013). In the last section of the chapter this new cultural trope – a product of redefinition of femininity and modernity - in the form of "city girl", that is represented in the 'clean' films is analysed, and discussed elaborately.

3.3.1. Of Lovers and Dreams

Kushi, *Anand* and *Hyderabad Blues* can be loosely categorised as films under the genre of romance. The heroes and heroines of these films meet, become friends, there is a mutual attraction, but because of some misunderstandings, they grow apart, finally to get together in the end. These are called youth films by S. V. Srinivas (2009), which is 'story-less' with no flashbacks and villains but has a 'simple twist' and is marked by 'absence of complicated stories' (Srinivas, 2009, p. 218). All the female protagonists are strong, independent and well educated. *Anand* is a debut film for the director Shekhar Kammula which was a commercial release and successful. Shekhar Kammula grew up in Hyderabad and went to the US to study and work for some years before coming back to direct films. Shekhar Kammula returned to India after the globalisation and his films represent a nostalgia for the pre-globalisation era and its traditional mores. The Hyderabad city in Shekhar Kammula's films reflects a longing and fond remembrance of the traditional and pre-globalised, and pre-consumerist Hyderabad.

Anand released on the promise of being different from other commercial films whose characteristic features were hyper-masculinised heroes, overly-sexualised heroines,

and over the top emotional, melodramatic and actions sequences that are the norm in Tollywood. *Anand* marketed itself as "a film like a good coffee". This film remained a benchmark for many other films that came after it. Telugu cinema that is 'clean' and simple with no or little sexualisation of women and important roles for women are compared to the film *Anand*.

Hyderabad Blues came earlier than these films and was also by debutante director Nagesh Kukunoor. He also grew up and studied in Hyderabad, and lived and worked in the US for many years before coming back to India to pursue film making. He brought his nuanced understanding of the changed Hyderabad that is still rooted in the traditional; the struggle of an NRI to fit in the space between global modernity and tradition. The film is semi-autobiographical, and the character Varun Naidu that he plays in the film reflects his personal crisis of home and belongingness. The film was well received by both critics and audiences and went onto become a commercial success.

All three women protagonists in these films have experienced loss in some form at a younger age or later. Madhu (from *Khushi)* is abandoned at the marriage altar, Rupa (from *Anand)* loses her whole family in a car accident when she is young, and Ashwini (from *Hyderabad Blues)* loses her father. Like the Hyderabad city which endured floods, witnessed Telangana rebellion, and suffered communal violence, the women carry the losses they have suffered into becoming who they are. The women and city in these films are desirable yet feared, flawed yet perfect, and strong yet vulnerable. The men subject the city and women to their gaze, drawn in by their beauty and fragility, and get repulsed the next moment by their minor flaws and their tenacity. In the famous scene of *Kushi* where Pawan Kalyan as Sanjay Sahu stares at a picture of Madhu in a drunk state: he first admires her beauty, then chides her for her obstinacy and picks flaws in her face. In *Anand* and *Hyderabad Blues,* the men complain about the prudishness of the women but admire and respect them for the same behaviour.

As mentioned earlier, caste enters the narrative in insidious ways, in *Hyderabad Blues* the caste of Ashwini becomes an issue, as she tells Varun that her parents disapprove of them as 'she is a Brahmin and he is a 'meat eating' Naidu'. In *Anand*, her Brahmin caste is subtly woven into the narrative emphasising the desirability of such middle-class ethos and a girl belonging to the 'purest' caste. Rupa, the brahmin, is disgusted by the chicken shop when she goes to buy meat for Anand. In scenes showing her

upper caste, *Keerthanas* (devotional songs in Carnatic music) always play in the background, and she also teaches Carnatic music. The desire of men is placed in women who are 'pure', and that purity is associated with the Brahmin caste in comparison with meat eating castes and lower castes who are associated with pollution. A 'pure' woman denies her sexuality, is able to evoke desire in men but deny them, and does not eat meat as meat-eating is unwomanly and impure. The middle-class Brahmin woman is pious and is a traditional upholder of religion, customs and rituals. In the Telugu film, *Yuvakudu* (*Young man*, 2000, A Karunakaran), the hero compares women eating meat to women demons in Hindu mythology, and non-meat-eating women are compared to flowers and soft things in poems.

The lead pairs in these films are seen hanging out in restaurants, parks, theatres. In *Hyderabad Blues*, they take a rickshaw ride, meet at her clinic. In *Khushi* and *Anand*, the pair drives around in a car. In *Anand*, they drive around the city in the night through the Hi-tech city, stop at Durgamcheruvu (a lake), a temple, and tea shop (figure 3.4). The city is no longer inhibiting, and the woman has access to the public places as long as she is in the right company – a group of friends (can be mixed company too) or female company, or when working. Ashwini asks Varun to not to come and pick her up from her home for a date as she is scared that her mother or even their neighbours will see her. Despite this caution, her mother confronts her and talks about the rumours among neighbours. Rupa gets upset with Anand when her ex-fiance Rahul tries to humiliate her in front of her colleagues, and when Anand comes to defend her, and Rahul asks if Anand is her boyfriend. Though there is a mutual attraction (where they both have a romantic dream song about each other), Madhu from *Kushi* insists that she and Sidhu are friends and not in love. The anonymity that the city offers to people is sometimes lacking for women and women tend to be careful not to be seen with a man near their localities for fear of being accused of being in a relationship. Even if seen with a man, the relationship is defined as friendship and limited to it. These are some of the ways in which the modern city still inhibits women both from within the social structure and in outdoor spaces.

Figure 3.4: Anand and Rupa in the night; Source: YouTube

The city provides space for men and women to interact, which are called 'erotic zones' (Hanson & Pratt, 1995). Erotic zones are sexually charged and mostly associated with lower-class/caste women or 'loose women'. In *Mutamestri* (1993, Kondandarami Reddy), the hero and heroine are lower caste. The heroine's interactions with Hero are overtly sexual in nature for which she is admonished by the hero. In many films of Chiranjeevi, the second lead is a pick pocketer or bartender, whose occupation indicates from lower class, declare their love for the hero but her affection turned down for the first lead from respectable family. The spaces of club and streets where dancers in Telugu Cinema, like Silk Smitha, Jyothi Lakshmi, Jaya Malini, Disco Shanti and now women in item numbers clearly belonging to the lower class and caste perform, are erotic zones. In the film *Khushi*, a class mate of hero and heroine desires the hero who embodies the 'cabaret dancer' and her presence in spaces transforms into erotic zones. The representation of loose women and their spatial practices in the city are discussed in the section, Good girls and Bad girls. This space was hitherto excluded to upper-middle-class women, and the access was to only working-class women who are from lower classes and castes. In post globalisation cities, these spaces become available to the upper caste, middle-class and bourgeoisie women. With their presence, the spaces acquired a new form of anxiety and fear. The spaces were earlier erotic and immoral zones where the 'good women' (read middle-class) had no place or purpose for being present. But with the growing presence of 'good women', these spaces need to be made safe and free of erotic encounters. This burden of transforming an erotic space (only in their vicinity) into a neutral zone of encounters is also placed on women. The anxieties of the women regarding spaces are about the

threat of sexual overtures by eligible bachelors. It is interesting to note here that the middle-class women in the films look down upon every other woman who does not belong to the same homogenous group as her in terms of class, dressing and conduct, which implies lower caste women.

The city both enables and restrains women from establishing romantic relationships with the men they are interested in, and the same city provides space for men to freely interact with other women, who might thwart their possible romantic liaisons with those men. This balancing act of saving themselves and the men they like in the city frustrates the women. The city retains the older traditions and also embodies modernity (Giddens, 1991). The youth, especially women, struggle to satisfy the traditional and global demands of a city which are sometimes in conflict and incongruous. That this tension takes a toll on them mentally, is depicted in the films, as when they finally lash out at the men they love violently and viscerally. Hence, the new spaces women occupy inadvertently divert from being neutral liberating zones to spaces marked with mental trauma and hysteria. The men are not restricted in any way in the city, and they have space, literally and metaphorically, to be honest about their feelings and emotions at all times, without the fear of being judged. The women clearly lack this option.

Women are comfortable with sexuality inhabiting "*a liminal space, a site both of empowerment through transgression and containment through regulation*" (Bose, 2008, p. 35). So, there is an imaginary line that they draw for themselves that should not be crossed, and they protest and scold their lovers if they cross it. These boundaries, abstract or physical, become the moral boundaries that are articulated in gender subjectivities. The consent and the agency of the women's body are their own, and the women stress upon this, which the men find trivial and silly. The suspicion and objections to unnecessary objectification and touch are also seen as women being conceited and prudish. There is a tussle between modernity and tradition in the narratives with constant negotiation and compromises with growing globalisation and consumer culture (Vasudevan, 2010; Mazumdar, 2007; Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). The desire of women, to be modern and carefree but not be labelled anything other than as a respectful, good girl and to trust the men they love and nurture a close friendship gets restricted by the tradition and the patriarchal system, rendering them helpless. Women are responsible for protecting themselves from men. But men are

absolved from transgressions and their predatory behaviour. It is in the city that we see this contestation between modernity and tradition at its sharpest.

The city-bred men who are not overtly macho and hyper-masculine like in other films are violent only when they are pushed. They do not mind being dominated by women as long as they are allowed to be overly protective and possessive of the woman. They are also aware that they are chosen over men who are loud, hyper-masculine, violent and domineering. Films set in villages often do not deal with broken marriages, and relationships as do films on women in the city. In the metropolis of Hyderabad, even the gaze of strangers is censoring and controls the women's behaviour effectively. For women to be able to access the city freely, their reputation has to be clean, and that is the thin rope that they have to walk on for limited access to the city. This is in agreement with Kishore's (2015) assessment that women are forced to act according to the gender normative structures to gain urban mobility. Women know what they want now, with some compromises they have to navigate the city and personal desires within the confines of societal restrictions and patriarchy. These limited possibilities have opened up for women in Hyderabad post globalisation.

3.3.2. Bommarillu: Masquerading Naiveté

Bommarillu is a story of Sidharth who feels claustrophobic and unhappy under the overprotective parenting of his father, and his only two main goals are to marry a girl of his choice and start his career on his own terms. He falls in love with a 'quirky', and happy girl Hasini whom his father first rejects but in the end agrees to their marriage; also, realising that he has to let his children live lives on their own terms. Hasini is friends with her colony kids, street '*chat bandi'* owner, a server at an Irani cafe, ice-cream vendor and everyone in their college. This is elaborated here, as this childishness and her actions are important to understand her relationship to the city.

Hasini is a mix of '*Manic Pixie Dreamgirl'*[49] and '*Born Sexy yesterday'*[50] female tropes found in Hollywood films. Like Manic pixie dream girl, she has no serious

[49] Manic Pixie Dream girl coined in 2007 by film critic Nathan Rabin who has no aims of her own but to fulfil men's lackluster life with happiness and colour. There is no character arc for this trope but for the purposes of the man to find himself and happiness.

[50] Born sexy yesterday female trope is found in Sci-fi films of Hollywood where a woman is literally born yesterday as a fully grown adult but no idea of the ways of world and society but she has incredible powers. A lonely, broken man finds her and shows her the ways of world teaches her how

goals in her life, but to have endless fun and get as much as possible out of life. Like, Born Sexy yesterday trope, she also does not understand the ways of gender performativity and social codes. She ventures into masculine spaces of Irani cafes, at midnight to eat ice cream, gets down a running bus, and plays on the streets. She does not understand the obvious sexual overtures made by men whom she calls her friends. She is taught by Sidhu not to trust men and not be friendly. He successfully manages to retain her innocence and playfulness through reducing her encounters with men.

Her quirky, childlike behaviour with no restraints becomes a problem when she moves from her house to Sidhu's house for a week. She starts to feel the social restrictions that she never even felt outside in the city, in the house, which is structured on strong patriarchy under his father. Unlike a 'Manic pixie dream girl' who is for the purpose of only the man, she transforms and changes the relationship dynamics of the family. The character of Hasini illustrates that affluent families are more restrictive and protective of their women than women from the lower class. Despite Sidhu's best efforts, Hasini refuses to change and breaks up with him and leaves. In her monologue of breaking up with Sidhu, it is clear that she is aware of the social norms and gender roles expected by society and the city. She masquerades naiveté and acts irreverently to subvert the system and go unnoticed or be forgiven for her transgressions to gain access in the city. Masquerading naiveté enables unrestricted access to the city and for pleasure and loitering. Masquerading naiveté allows women to be free from gender performativity codes of urban space by refusing to understand the sexually charged conversations, social conventions to engage in conversations, confront the issues of gender seriously – it calls for a disavowal of femininity. Masquerading naivete uses the figure of 'child-woman to undo/transgress the restrictions of femininity and masculinity. Though masquerading naiveté avoids confrontations of gendered politics, it provides an understanding of gender divisions of space. For women in the city, freedom is possible through trade-offs with compromises on restrictions and controls.

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to behave meanwhile protecting her from people taking advantage of her innocence and also inadvertently teaches her to fall in love with him. This trope fulfils a desire of patriarchy which wants control over an innocent girl.

https://youtu.be/0thpEyEwi80

3.3.3. Good Girls and Bad Girls

Studying, working, partying, and living by girls in the city, are celebrated in ways that they can negotiate: wearing both western and Indian clothes, having friends both male and female, stepping out of the house for work, college, to eat out, go to movies. But there is a thin line between a good girl and a bad girl. The good girl and bad girl (a vamp) dichotomies exist in many films and for many years. The good and bad girl of the city finds a parallel in the analysis of *Geetanjali* by Tejaswini Niranjana (1991) – as good and bad products of modernity. The good girls and bad girls are pitted against each other as city vs village, westernised/Indian, modernity vs traditional. As modernity is celebrated in all aspects of life and city, women of the city walk on a thin rope of modernity attempting a balancing act.

Sahasra is the protagonist in the film *Anukokunda Oka Roju.* She faces trouble at home from her stepmother whom her father marries after he divorces Sahasra's mother. Her friend Swetha is shown as the bad girl who wears short and revealing clothes whereas Sahasra wears long skirts and loose full sleeved tops and sometimes Salwar kameez. Swetha forces Sahasra to come to a party where the men and women are doing drugs, kissing, and dancing intimately. At the party, Sahasra refuses to drink alcohol and then she is offered a soft drink laced with Rohypnol by Swetha's friend and boyfriend, which she accepts. The soft drink is laced with Rohypnol which is a psychoactive drug that leaves the drug consumer in a stupor, puts them in a long deep sleep, and they wake up with no memory of the time under the effects of the drug. Sahasra wakes up a day later with no recollection of what happened the night of the party and the next day. She tries to unravel the mystery of the one night and one day that went missing in her life, with the help of a cab driver and a police officer.

The mistake of Sahasra to go to a party with the bad girl puts her life in danger. The risk acquires spatiotemporality of night time and its places like parties, dilapidated, abandoned buildings and strangers' cars. The first crossing of this spatiotemporal boundary of these spaces puts her at risk. Hence, the spatiotemporal transgressions are inscribed on her body, which, with its presence, transforms safe spaces to dangerous spaces. The city is unsafe and hostile for the good girls who overstep the lines and commit transgressions. The familiar city and places become uncanny and dangerous. Sahasra is attacked at a theatre, in a hospital parking lot, in a market place at Secunderabad, and at her friend's house. It is in the city that the safety of women

who break the rules is at risk in public spaces, a moving car, bus, streets, theatres, parking lots and even spiritual centres become dangerous and life-threatening.

Allari is a film about teenage crushes and romance, a coming of age story. Ravi and Aparna live in the same apartment and are best friends. Aparna is studious and industrious whereas Ravi is a daydreamer and obsessed with girls. Ravi falls for Ruchi who recently moved into the apartment complex. Aparna is a good girl who wants to be a doctor. She wears t-shirts and jeans, but Ruchi wears miniskirts and shorts. The city decides who could be the good girl and the bad girl by the length of a girl's clothes. The city does not care if the girl is not wearing traditional Indian wear; western wear is acceptable as long as it does not reveal much. Like Sahasra in *Anukokunda Oka Roju*, Aparna wears no makeup while the 'bad girls' Ruchi and Swetha wear makeup. In Hyderabad city, makeup is acceptable as long the women's makeup is not loud. This performance in clothing, makeup and interactions for women are expected of girls from young age. In the film *Allari*, the girls and the boy are teens. The urban spatial training of gender performativity codes is imbued in girls from childhood, which apprises them of binaries of good girls and bad girls.

Happy Days is a college romance set in an engineering college in Hyderabad. The group of friends consists of four girls and four boys. Each of the four girls is typified and categorised in the film: the desirable good girl, the tomboy, the misunderstood girl and the bad girl. The boys are also of four types: the flirt, the nerd, the good guy, and the selfish guy. There are no bad boys in the film, just boys who are growing up and finding themselves. The film is a quintessential urban film that reflects the urban lifestyle of college students. The categorisation between the good and bad girls and its consequences, is always more clearly etched in the film narrative, when compared to that of good and bad boys.

3.3.4. The "City Girl"

The fight for equality with men and the right to work, domesticity vs tradition has been settled in the neo-liberal city. For the married women, lower-middle-class women, poor and Dalit women, issues like dowry, rape, sexual harassment, discrimination, domestic violence and work-home balance has been side-lined and confined to the parallel cinema (almost non-existent in Telugu films) to deal with, films now focus on the with coming of young, single and confident middle-class and

upper caste women. They do not have to fight hard to study further or marry the person of their choice. They wear clothes that they are comfortable with, go out to cafes, pubs, malls, cinema with boys and can be friends with boys, invite them home. Commenting on this phenomenon, Ghosh and Shahani (2000) say the strong, free, independent women are the product of consumer capitalism, that came in a big way with globalisation.

> *"The ease with which this 'new' but 'Indian' woman can reconcile the conflicts between modernity and tradition diffuses the actual conflicts and struggles that women as a class have to confront and overcome. ... the image of the highly individuated woman is derived primarily from the urban educated middle-class career woman. She serves as a model not only for consumer products but also for citizenship"* (Shahani & Ghosh, 2000, p. 3814).

There is a city girl trope that is being normalised, which is of a middle-class girl who is comfortable in both western and traditional clothes but nothing too skimpy or short and too revealing. A 'mind map' of the city is always imprinted on the women/city girl for negotiating the city space and for safety. The spaces engender women's performance; women also mark the spaces in their mental maps - a 'spatial vocabulary' that is implicit in navigating the spaces (Kumar, 2016, p. 160). A city girl draws 'Laxman Rekha' herself and keeps the family and strangers happy. She does this to be able to access the spaces without restriction from others.

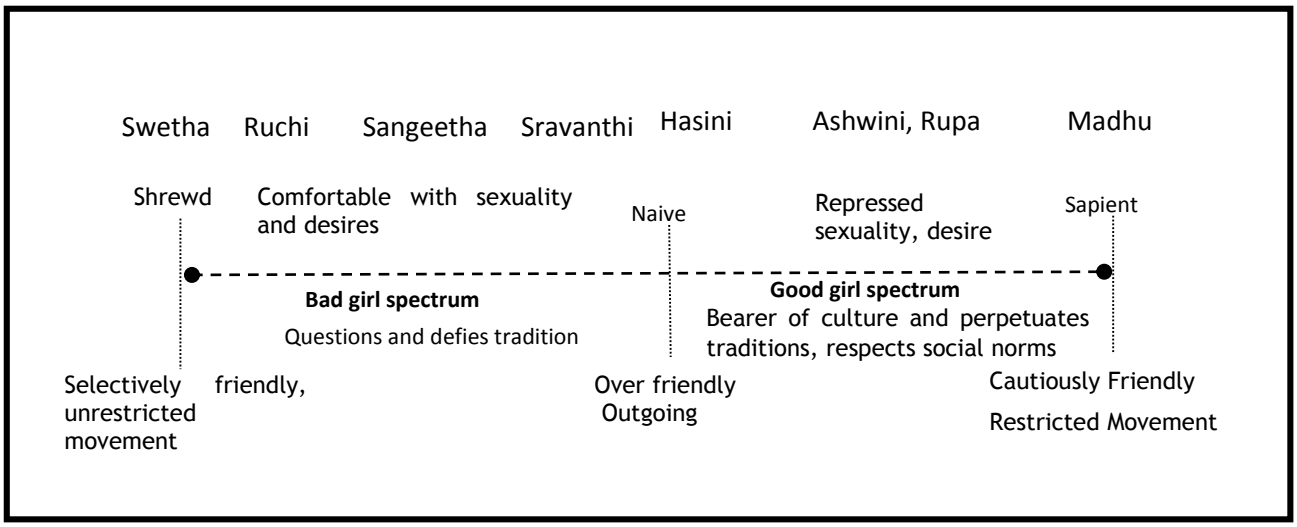

Figure 3.5: Spectrum of Hyderabad City Girl

In the above figure (figure 3.5), an attempt is made to plot the characters of various women portrayed in the selected films. The right-side spectrum is the good girl, and the left side is a bad girl. The example of a simpleminded, overfriendly and gregarious girl is Hasini from the film *Bomarillu* who hates maths classes and bunks classes, is friends with the ice-cream man, roadside tea seller and everyone else she meets. The sapient and cautiously friendly girl is Rupa from *Anand* and Chitra from the recent film *Pellichupulu (2016, Tharun Bhaskar).* Madhu is in denial of her desires and feelings towards the hero in the film *Khushi.* This spectrum summarises the discussion on the representation of women in Telugu films after globalisation. While globalisation has opened up spaces for women in the city, these come with 'terms and conditions' – the label of good girl/bad girl in society is stereotyped in these films. In '*Why Loiter?'* authors say that it is a morally corrupt and unwise woman who seeks fun and pleasure (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). However, this study would like to suggest a caveat on this statement. An unwise woman (like Hasini) can be changed and taught the ways of behaviour in the urban public space, but a morally corrupt woman (Swetha) is incorrigible and beyond repair.

As a city, the nostalgia of yesteryears and the youth, beauty is replaced by new attractions of modernity. As mentioned in the previous part of this section, that the modern woman/city girl is symbolic of the city in the narratives. A 'nativized' modern city, a global city with technological and economic advancements, but rooted in traditions and past social mores, is internalised and carried by the city girl (Lee, 2005). The good city girl will never declare her love to the man she is attracted to, until he proves his love consistently in different ways or with a grand romantic gesture of heroism/sacrifice or until pushed to the point of losing him. This is not a city girl trope, but a trope found in many films where the girl has to fall for the hero no matter what the past aggressions of the man are. Her conflicted feelings are because of those aggressions which she 'forgets' with a single grand romantic gesture from the hero.

As long as the girl is accompanied by other good girls, parties are at a cafe, or even a pub is safe. The middle-class female body is a marker for gendered safe and respectable spaces. The stratification of spaces and implicit restrictions are for her own protection (Kumar, 2016). There is self-regulation, and an imposed control by colleagues, fellow students to avoid strangers in the city space as "*most girls have mental images of places where strange men may approach them instilled at an early*

age" (Valentine G. , 1989, p. 386). The city girls dwell in the transient spaces outside their houses in the veranda/courtyards or the inside of the open space of building complexes and elevators, parking spaces of buildings, colleges, travelling in buses, local MMTS stations, bikes or cafes and restaurants. The aspiration of women to be out of the home, coupled with the anxiety when they are outside on the streets which are dominated by men, force them to occupy the middle and safe spaces like the ones mentioned above. They walk on the streets, but it's not like the flaneur, they walk with a purpose and towards a destination. The spatial experience of the city for a woman is different, and even if the woman takes the role of 'Flaneuse' the gendered city has different spatial practices for different people (Haaland, 2013). For example, Hasini, by masquerading naiveté and through the process of disavowal of gender performativity codes, tries to be in the city as a flaneuse.

As long as one fulfils the necessary character traits of a good city girl, they find love, and it is this city of Hyderabad that provides them space and opportunity to fall in love. This is can happen as long as the city girl has an approach that is "*balanced, limited, restrained,"* with "*appropriate levels of modernisation and globalization* and pursue a relatively *commodified romance" (Gilbertson, 2013, p. 123).* This optimism about changing trends for women in the city is reflected in the city in all the films except *Anukokunda Oka Roju*. The women are shown to being friendly in the films, they follow appropriate levels of modernization, so as to not be perceived as backward. They are shown as outgoing and participating in the cultural scape of the cities with the new forms of entertainment, fashionable by consuming recognisable brands in clothing, cafes, restaurants, malls etc. The places of romance have shifted from the earlier public parks, lakeside, in desolate rocks and empty tracts of spaces to new sites that emerged with globalization like, malls, coffee shops, pubs and other consumer-driven spaces.

An urban milieu is a contradictory space for modern women with the double burden of being the modern girl who also upholds the traditional values. The good modern girl always waits for the right guy to get intimate with, but it would not go beyond a kiss, as premarital sex is still something only a bad modern girl would do. The patriarchal structure is repackaged and refurbished in a consumerist culture and woman are paraded as equal and free while the same old values continue to be reinforced.

The city girl has her own vehicle, a bike which can take her anywhere she wants. If she is riding for the pleasure of taking in the city and enjoying it while being outside, it is always with friends. If she does not have a bike of her own, she takes the bus or relies on her friends. She never travels alone for the pleasure of it or spends time alone at a cafe, park, temple, mall, market, cinema etc. Hasini too who had seemed to subvert all the spatial gender norms, does not go out alone. It is implied and tacit in the film, that she is capable of making friends anywhere, so she makes new friends at the new space she inhabits. The time when Sahasra is alone in the night outside in *Anukokunda Oka Roju¸* she narrowly escapes sexual assault and murder and that night traumatises her for many weeks. The nocturnal city spaces are especially masculine. When the city girl is alone, she invites unnecessary male attention, like in *Kushi,* and *Happy Days*.

To summarise, the city girl trope is a spectrum where there are no lines blurring between good and bad girls of the city. In the films analysed, there are a few definite characteristics that separate the good city girl from the bad city girl. There is a not much difference between Sravanthi from *Happy Days* and Hasini from *Bommarillu*, the only difference is that Sravanthi's reputation has been sullied because she is friendly with new men and Hasini's reputation is safe as she masquerades naiveté, as one who does not have mental capabilities to understand the risks of being friendly and trusting with new men. The city and women are both enticing and desirable, but both also induce anxiety and panic regarding violence and degeneration, due to their modernity. In Telugu cinema the women in love can occupy certain spaces only with the hero. The independent relationship that women share with the city becomes minimal.

The control over city and women through the hero's gaze is symptomatic of the triumph of the traditional social mores, where the Telugu film hero is the moral guardian of the city and hence, its women too. The hero reveals to the urbane heroine that her modernity and freedom is a farce and a risk to her own safety, reputation and honour. The women are placed in the city, but only for the purposes of the hero's pleasure. Too much access to city's modernity is counterintuitive to her femininity and traditional feminine values as depicted in *Jalsa, Dookudu, Govindudu Andari Vaadeley, Magadheera, Athadu, Dhee, Cameraman Gangatho Rambabu* and many more films released after the 2000s. The good city girl trope is repeated in many films,

like *Godavari, Ala Modalaindi, Tholi Prema, Yem Maya Chesavey etc,* where the girls in the city are helpful, kind and put their lives at risk to help others. This is contrasted by the image of the bad girl who keeps to herself, is selfish and does not help anyone.

3.4. Bollywood's Hyderabad and the Muslim Women

The Telugu films discussed in the earlier sections through the 80s till 2000s have a glaring absence of Muslim women. The representation of Muslim women in Tollywood is non-existent, and not a single character representation of a Muslim woman is present in the films collected. With a considerable population (>45%) of Muslims in the Hyderabad city, Tollywood with its dominant Hindu upper castes portrayal has erased the Muslim image adding to its marginalisation and non-existence in the popular imagination of the city. In films like *Khadgam* and others where the narrative focuses on terrorism, the Muslim is shown as threatening and an aggressive fanatic Muslim male who is pitted against the good 'Indian' Muslim. In Bollywood's imagination of Hyderabad, the Muslim exists but is placed in a regressive space and confined to backwardness. Shyam Benegal, a native of Hyderabad, brings out the contestation and claims of the groups who are undesirable (Sex workers and Poor Muslims) in nuanced ways in *Mandi* (Market, 1983) and *Well Done Abba* (Well done father, 2009). The problems that Muslim women face -the practice of bride selling and the complex issue of triple talaq – are depicted in *Bazaar* (Market, 1982, Sagar Sarhadi) and *Nikaah* (Marriage, 1982, B R Chopra). The recent movies *Bobby Jasoos* (Detective Bobby, 2014, Samar Sheikh) and *Daawat-E-Ishq* (Feast of love, 2014, Habib Faisal) are located in the Old City and give more agency to their women characters.

Hyderabad city is a curious mix of old Muslim- medieval urban spaces and modern global urban space. The city of Hyderabad in the imagination of mainstream national cinema (Bollywood) is a 'City of Nawabs', reminiscing about the past glory (like Lucknow). The depiction of the Old City, as lagging behind Hyderabad's development in terms of economic and physical infrastructure is the dominant image in the films. The city appears to have moved on from its past engagement with communal riots, this is now less focused, unlike communal violence events like the Mumbai riots, Sikh riots, the partition of India, all of which claim screen space in mainstream Bollywood. With globalisation, the city marked by diversity, multifunctional spaces became

monochromatic and ordered which suits the aspiring middle-classes and upper middle-classes (Hubbard, 2004). The new IT capital city became the Hyderabad for middle and upper classes, not the historic Old City.

3.4.1. Muslim Women of Hyderabad in the 1980s

Mandi is a satirical film on the societal hypocrisy regarding morality and its view of sex work. Rukmini bai (played by Shabana Azmi) is Madame of a brothel in the cramped backstreets of Hyderabad. With political pressure and protests from women's organisation, they are forced to move to a new location in Moula-Ali. Rukmini bai is the maternal figure with a big heart who has a soft corner for Zeenat among all her girls. Zeenat (played by Smita Patil) is a virgin, and Rukmini keeps her protected. Zeenat falls in love with the son of a rich municipal corporator who also happens to be Zeenat's father. With duress from society and constant marginalisation, the brothel's sex-workers choose to look out for themselves and throw Rukmini bai out; and Zeenat who unwittingly falls in love with her step-brother and commits suicide after finding out the truth.

The city of Hyderabad in the eighties is marked by vast empty tracts of land with rocks, a distinct feature of the topography of the region. *Mandi* opens with a skeleton of a dog; pans to a vast empty land covered in grass, and rocks everywhere, to two men talking in a dilapidated structure. A voice describes the place:

> *"...this is a very cursed place. The first time it rained was 12 years back. A river is 2 miles away. Everywhere there are rocks and rocks. If you try to dig up a well, there is no water. No one stays close by or comes to this place..."*

This vastness is contrasted by the next scene of a huge house (a brothel) with open spaces within the compound walls, nestled in a narrow lane between merchants selling their goods and shanty shops.

The myth of Muslim areas as only located in Old City in the dominant narrative is challenged by depicting the development of Moula Ali, another area comprising a fairly large population of Muslim Community. The Moula Ali Dargah is on top of the three rocky hills, which is a sufi shrine for Saint Moula Ali, and the surrounding area has come to be known as Moula Ali. In the fictional narrative space of *Mandi*, Moula Ali is shown as empty first with only the shrine of a Baba Kadak Shah nestled between Deccan rocks. But with the arrival of the sex workers who are forced to set up their

shop in the vicinity, the area starts to see real estate development, and reconstruction of the famous shrine for Kadak Shah for which the Madame of the brothel, Rukmini provides monetary help. After the development of the locality, the presence of sex workers near a religious shrine that was built with their income, is seen as a problem and as stigmatising the otherwise well-developed locality, by the municipal board members. The undesirables of a city, which include poor migrants, lower castes, and prostitutes are pushed to the margins as the city keeps developing, as their presence causes anxiety and embarrassment.

It is the poor Muslims and sex workers in films of the 80s, who embrace Deccani language. Najma, Akhtar and Salim from the film *Bazaar* who move out to Mumbai do not speak Deccani language, but everyone else around them speaks in Deccani in Hyderabad. The wealthy Muslims belonging to the Nawabi status in *Nikaah* speak in Hindi or Urdu; there are no traces of Deccani in their language. It appears that they are untouched by the city outside and live in a bubble in the Old City. It changes with the 90s, where every person speaks Deccani with ease, and over the years in the films, the language is not just for Muslims residing in the Old City but for an average resident of the Old City. By 2010s, the use of language does not evoke crassness or comic relief, but emotions and identity are associated with the Deccani language.

The film *Bazaar* was based on a news story about child bride selling practices to older men from Gulf by poor Hyderabad Muslims of the Old city. Najma (played by Smita Patil) escapes her marriage to an old Dubai sheikh, elopes with her boss Akhtar to Mumbai. Her love interest Saleem (played by Naseeruddin Shah) who is poor comes to Mumbai finding work as an editor and as a poet in an Urdu magazine. Akhtar, a struggling entrepreneur, makes a deal with his boss Shaukhat from Dubai that he will find him a bride in return for an investment in Akhtar's business. Najma, on the promise of a better life and marriage with Akhtar, agrees to find a bride for his boss. She finds a girl Shabnam whose poor mother is willing to sell her off to the boss for money. Najma later finds out that her brother Sarju and Shabnam are lovers. On the wedding night, Shabnam kills herself by consuming poison, and Sarju is heartbroken and devastated. Najma realises her mistake too late and leaves Akhtar to go back to Mumbai with Saleem.

In *Nikaah*, Niloufer and Haider are from the same college. Haider, who has no knowledge of Niloufer's engagement with Waseem – a nawab, falls in love with her.

Niloufer marries Waseem, but there is constant trouble in the marriage as Waseem is a workaholic. On one such occasion after an angry fight, Waseem in a fit of rage, divorces Niloufer by uttering 'talaq[51]' three times. After the divorce, Niloufer finds work at Haider's office. She falls in love with Haider and marries him. Waseem now a changed man and still in love with Niloufer misunderstands that Niloufer got married to Haider so that she could divorce him and remarry Waseem according to the Sharia law and writes a letter to Niloufer urging her to divorce Haider soon. Haider finds the letter, invites Waseem and gives permission for a divorce to unite them both. On hearing this, Niloufer admonishes them both for treating her like a property and chooses to live with Haider only.

Bazaar provides scenic relief with a background of rocks and vast open lands. A mix of urban spaces, infrastructure marked with granite rocks and vast empty lands and what these spaces offer to its citizens are signified in the narrative. Many of these films use the spaces, landscapes, interiors to establish the mood of particular scenes. The films *Bazaar*, *Mandi* and *Nikaah* make the home as natural settings for women, and they have access to open spaces, to play and relax in the backyards, gardens and in the confines of their homes. Shabnam and her sisters in *Bazaar* play hopscotch in their backyard. In the same film, Najma is found relaxing under a mango tree in her backyard and sometimes reading a book. In *Nikaah*, the heroine lounges in her courtyard and balconies. But the same women when outside have a sense of urgency to get home and do not stop to lounge or relax anywhere. In *Mandi*, the sex workers show no interest in the outside world and are comfortable in their space, and relax in the courtyard of the brothel. They are not conscious of proper behaviour that is expected from other women, and they roam in the brothel as men come and go. It is important to note here that the culture and the identity of the city are not just outside – in the streets, open spaces, public spaces, but also inside, in private spaces as well, which was discussed in the introduction of the chapter.

Each woman depending on her class and occupation, perform gender differently even in a space as private as a home. Niloufer in *Nikaah* and other rich girls in *Bazaar* use the front garden space to lounge, and they are often with their mothers having tea and

[51] 'Talaq' is an Urdu word for divorce. According to personal Muslim law, a man can divorce his wife by uttering the word 'talaq' three times

reading books. The poor girls in Bazaar, they play and read books (figure 3.6 and 3.7), but the mother is never with them as she is always busy with household chores, and sometimes the girls are also called to help with household chores. The poorer households have zenana and '*purdah'* for young girls to stay behind when the house has visitors. The young sex-workers in *Mandi*, neither lounge to drink tea or read books nor play games that girls usually do. They take a break from serving the men by throwing the saree away from their bosoms, exposing midriffs, they gossip and if they have more time on their hands, work on their special skills of dancing and singing. They are not surrounded by nature nor a backyard garden but an open space which is also used as a bath and for other utilitarian purposes.

Figure 3.6 & 3.7: Bazaar (above) and Nikaah (below); women in backyard

The open spaces of the city are places for resolutions, inspiration and denote freedom to reflect on personal and societal problems, and to love (Mennel, 2008). It is these 'empty spaces' devoid of meaning and identity that provides a space to refigure themselves and their surroundings, question their morality and define it; these spaces acquire meaning and it is where possibilities of debate and conflict resolution are

possible (Mazumdar, 2007). Saleem and Najma talk at length about women and their place in society, how marriage is another form of slavery. Confessions of love and rendezvous for lovers happen in open spaces, on terraces, amidst nature and in backyards. The closed spaces are where the businesses and illegal events take place. Marriage proposals which talk money, the prospects of buying a bride happen in a closed space, in tight frames of narrow lanes and a single rock taking up the whole screen suffocating the edges of the screen. Women are abused, forced into marriage and locked up – in closed domestic spaces. It is the home which is threatening to women while the open spaces are liberating.

The Old City's quaint houses are fairly huge with backyards, high compound walls and small blue doors providing entry from the back yard. The morphology of the Old City, its built environment and architecture is very different from the rest of Hyderabad and this has shaped its use of space both inside a house and outside in the streets. There are no new apartments in the Old city, only old independent houses with a garden and open space. The claustrophobic built environment of Hyderabad, is absent in the imagery of the Old city residences of the 1980s. Class distinctions also decide the size of the open space and its use in the Old city. The women are confined to the homes, play in the backyard or rest in the backyard. There are families, who lost their wealth and Nawabi status, have nothing but their family and family house which is in ruins. There are other families who are rich and flaunt their Nawabi status living in much bigger and palatial houses, as represented in *Nikaah*. The poor and rich Muslims at either the end of the class spectrum, do not interact much with each other or other communities. The intimate interactions outside their families are only with other Muslim communities in the same class, and their friendships are also confined to the same group. In *Mandi*, the interaction is more diverse. The composition of the brothel is itself diverse, with sex workers from different walks of life and faiths who live together as a community.

In films of the 80s, Hyderabad city is suffocating and restraining, for women and men equally. It is a poor and lesser city than Mumbai. It is shown as a patriarchal and decadent city that people are moving out of. For Saleem and Najma, it is Mumbai which offers them freedom and escape from the economic burdens (for Saleem) and patriarchy (for Najma). In *Nikaah*, Niloufer goes from one patriarchal system to another less restrictive patriarchal system, which is a small win for her agency and

choice. The imagination of Hyderabad changes with globalization – as a vibrant, modern city of opportunities, that now sees a rise in the number of young migrants coming into the city in search of jobs.

3.4.2. The Muslim Women in the City after Globalisation

In *Well Done Abba*, Muskaan Ali (played by Minisha Lamba) helps her father, Arman Ali (Boman Irani) to outwit the corrupt officials and get them tangled in their own web of corruption and highhandedness. Muskaan's outward nature and feistiness brings her father to town to discipline her by getting her married. Shyam Benegal avoids the stereotype of placing Muslim protagonists and characters which frequently happens in Bollywood films. The Muslim family is not in the Old City but lives in a slum in Chikkadpally. While the father ignores and indulges the demands of a bribe from government officials for digging a well for him, the daughter admonishes him for offering the bribe and the official for demanding it. Her behaviour and her unfettered movement through their slum and different places are rebuked by her father, and her aunt and uncle alike.

When Arman's twin brother Rehman's wife gets arrested, Muskaan demands to go to the police station, but her father stops her saying that police station is not a place for young girls to go. She still visits the police station where her father is mistaken for Rehman and thrown into the cell. Rehman (her uncle) makes plans to get Muskaan married off to a Sheikh when her friend Sakhina gets married off to a rich Sheikh. But her father changes his mind when it is found that Sakhina is abused and abandoned after only a few months of marriage. He frowns upon the growing intimacy between Muskaan and Arif Ali, who owns a mechanic shop. In the film, the Mayor of Chikadpally is a woman who is shown as having no power. Her husband acts as proxy Mayor in her place, by instructing her on whom to favour and give projects, and what kind of slum development plans need to be approved and put forward.

Though the women in this film are educated, aware, and in a position of political power, their movement, interactions, decisions are still controlled by the men in the family and dictated by society. Though her education and her awareness about the legal system and law[52]also helped Muskaan to help her father beat corruption and

[52] Muskaan with help of Arif files an RTI to get the information on all the constructed wells

succeed to get the well dug up, more importantly, it helped her in getting married to the man of her choice. It is not just the economic condition but also the social conditions that do not let her pursue a career. The city has nothing to offer to Muskaan, a poor Muslim girl living in a slum – neither parks, proper transportation, higher education nor job. But she found an opportunity to choose a good husband who will let her study and fund her studies which happened because of her education, confidence and courage which ironically in the city, are undesirable traits in a woman.

Bobby Jasoos and *Dawat E Ishq* are Bollywood films in 2014 that brought Hyderabad city and the Old City in focus in the mainstream films, after a long gap. Bilquis aka Bobby (Played by Vidya Balan) and Gulrez Qadir Aka Gullu (Played by Parineeti Chopra) belong to lower middle-class Muslim families where the fathers work in a government job and live in the Old City. Bobby has dreams of becoming a private investigator, which is disliked by her father. Gullu has dreams of making it big in shoe designing, which is supported by her father, but he has no means to send her to a fashion school or start a shoe designing business. Bobby and Gullu do not hesitate in going to any place, to defy patriarchy except when it comes to their fathers.

For Muslim women, the anxiety in accessing public places is double: one, they are women in public and two, they belong to a minority religion (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011). This double burden is embodied in the form of dress (hijab, burqa or salwar kameez), language (Deccani language) and food. For almost unfettered access like the non-Muslim women in the city, Muslim women need to disembody their 'Muslimness' and from Muslim spaces. This disembodiment is explained in the coming paragraphs. Between Bobby and Gullu, Bobby could not get much education, cannot speak good English, and does not care about fashion, the world or boys. Gullu has education in English medium and speaks fluent English, informs herself with western trends, is interested in boys and wants to pursue fashion designing in the US. Gullu can be at ease and at home in different spaces, from her Old City locales to her job as a sales girl at a shoe shop, swanky coffee shops and five-star hotels, while Bobby's comfort world is largely limited to the Old city.

Bobby is good at her job as a private investigator, easily travels through Old City locales and is familiar with the locality. The only time when she steps out of the locality is to investigate her rich client in five-star hotels; she is dressed up in a georgette sari, puts on makeup, leaves her hair open but is still stopped from gaining

entry to the hotel when she starts speaking in the Deccani language. She is allowed to enter when she is joined by a local TV anchor who speaks in English. Gullu, who works in a mall at the shoe shop as a salesgirl, picks up the language and social skills in such spaces. When she and her father pretend to be a rich Emirate family, she is able to fit into the role, but her father fumbles. Bobby, due to her job and restricted entry to certain places, disguises as a man on many occasions. Even though the city tries to pull back women with strict rules of patriarchy and a woman-unfriendly built environment, women like Bobby and Gullu grab the opportunity to make much of it, devise ways – Michel de Certeau(1984) calls it '*poaching*' – to make the city work for them and make the city little more inclusive with visibility of women in streets, Irani cafes, five star hotels, as private investigators and travelling alone.

In the post 2000s films, the city embraces the Deccani language; women fight for their place in the city. The city is marked by diversity; the languages are not just restricted to Deccani; it includes Telugu and Hindi. Shettys, Reddys, Sikhs, and other groups of the city are represented, with a space in cinema. Muslims in the Old City or other places in the city are not cut off from other communities, and the influences and acculturation of different groups, and the Nizami culture are represented in the narrative. The narratives do not dare to extend the mixing and friendship of different communities to marriage alliances. Bobby's friend, who falls for a Hindu man, it is revealed in the end that he is a Muslim. These women break the stereotype portrayal of Muslim women of the Old city as domesticated, exploited, lacking agency and confined to the 'Zenana'. Such a transition may have been made possible by the influences of globalization that have reached the Old city, though slowly.

3.4.3. The City for Muslim Women

The religious markers of Muslims in Bollywood's depiction of Hyderabad and its Muslim population, the skull cap and hijab/burqa are not seen in the representation of Muslims of Hyderabad. They were only a few instances where a woman wore a burqa. The Muslim women dress in salwar kameez with the dupatta often on their head when outside. The rich and middle-class Muslim women wear plain coloured salwar kameez fitted tight to their bodies, like Najma and Niloufer. The poor and lower-middle-class women wear printed salwar kameez and loose fitting like Bobby, Shabnam and her

sisters, and Muskaan. Only Gullu from Daawat-E-Ishq who is more westernised wears western clothes, Kurtis and rarely wears the dupatta. Men in professional jobs or who are rich wear pants, shirts and sometimes suits. The poor Muslim men stick to the kurta.

Food plays an important role in Hyderabad and Muslim culture in the later decade of 2010. The dishes which quintessentially belong to Hyderabad originated from the Muslim communities. It is an amalgamation of Persian cuisine with Indian spices and cooking styles. In Bobby Jasoos, Bobby is seen on the street eating kebabs and demanding boti (Goat's intestines) from a street vendor. The film is set during Ramzaan season where the Old City is famous for food on the streets, available throughout the night. The iftar of Bobby's family shows the elaborate spread of food and the whole family meets to eat. It also reveals the conflicts between Bobby and her father, the hierarchy of father over the family of women is clear. Bobby takes her family to different Biryani places for her investigation and the family is overjoyed at prospect of eating Biryani outside. In *Daawat-E-Ishq*, when Gullu breaks up with her boyfriend, she takes her upset father to eat Biryani. Biryani and the restaurant space outside give them a break from their daily reality and grief. Post globalization, Hyderabadi food that is associated with Muslim culture, has a national and global recognition– Haleem, kebabs, Nahari, Biryani. There is now a growing market for Haleem and Biryani nationally, and also globally among the Muslim and Telangana diaspora.

In films of the 80s, the Muslim communities are shown to have networks among themselves that helps them survive. They form a close cluster in their poverty, depending on each other to find suitable matches and support during family events. At the other end of the spectrum, among wealthy Muslims, friendships with other communities exist but do not go beyond the business and workplace. In *Mandi*, the Muslim sex workers have no family or friends outside their brothel because of the lack of support from society and their statuses as outcasts. The sex workers from diverse religious backgrounds form a close-knit group and live like a family under Rukmini Bai along with the household help Tungroos.

3.5. Summary

The geography of Hyderabad takes on different meanings in the films. The city in the films always has pleasant weather, and the harsh summers of the Hyderabad city are largely absent. The rocks and empty tracts of lands covered with grass, are shown as an uncanny and dangerous place in *Anukokunda Oka Roju,* but transform in other films as a backdrop for romantic songs. In *Anand,* it rains very often, or it is winter where the characters keep saying, "*it is very cold today, is it not*?" The slums, abandoned houses, dilapidated structures, under the bridges, out of use public wells, the crowds, claustrophobic spaces of Hyderabad city shown in *Anukokunda Oka Roju* are absent in other films. The danger on Sahasra's life in the city is haptic in the way the city is framed, the threat that can come from anywhere and anyone is captured in the shots from the top which shows the vast Hyderabad space and the crowds surrounding her.

In the 80s cinematic city of Hyderabad, the city space is inaccessible to the respectable Hindu women in regional representation. Hyderabad city in the national gaze is located in the Muslim backwardness of Old City, but the Muslim women from these spaces despite the backwardness are depicted as having agency. By 1990s, the home as a safe haven for women is questioned and the films uncovered the violence on and trauma of women in the familiar spaces of the home. The change in the labour market and feminist movements gave an impetus for women in the cinematic city to step outside the home to participate in the new economy.

The increased presence of women in the urban public space is not reflected in the representation of women in the city; in fact, it has declined. The reasons for this are the revival of 'mass films', in which the imagination of urban women in Telugu cinema leave much to be desired. The films, from post-2000s, are a departure from the fights against the institution of patriarchy and descend into comfortable consumerism and misconstrued notions of equality of freedom. The process of globalisation has witnessed the emergence of the city girl who navigates the city in a balancing act of keeping up the global image of modernity while rooted in tradition. This has brought out the interesting mediations of self-censoring and gender performative urban codes. The navigation of women in Hyderabad city is embedded in negotiations and compromises, enmeshed in tradition and modernity, where

Muslim women still struggle to find their rightful place. Among women, it is the middle-class Hindu women who are privileged both in the films and in urban space, as they symbolise modernity, tradition and desires of the city.

The city appears to be a hostile and dangerous space for working, single or divorced women. Women are divided into the good and bad girl, and sexualized; both the images in the public space are seen as a threat to the male (Mennel, 2008). The elite women prefer to stay indoors surrounded by affluence and symbols of wealth or in select safe private spaces.

> *"The spatial topography of public spaces is a reminder that the city is conflictual – the street is a site of contradiction, inequality and violence. The interior counters this perception through a hyperstylisation of space and light, objects and furnishings, mood and mise-en-scene"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 129)

The natural setting for women is the home in the films of early 1980s and 90s. The time for relaxation chatting is in the courtyards (verandas) of the small individual houses. In *Bazaar*, *Nikaah* and other Telugu films women are seen lounging or reading books, playing in their backyards. The courtyards are spaces of ritual and passing of traditions for women from the older generation to the younger generation (Niranjana, 1991). In *Bazaar*, Mehendi[53] function of Shabnam happens in the backyard and rituals of bride making happen in the courtyard in *Anand.* The ceremony associated with a widow in *Hyderabad Blues* happens in their courtyard where Ashwini's mom is stripped of her marital status. It is in the courtyard that a new bride is filled with symbols of joy and colour of marriage; in the same courtyard, the same symbols are stripped away for a widow.

From the 2000s, the constraints on living space are felt when women lose the luxury of backyards, with high rise apartments and shrinking size of houses where there is no room for a courtyard or gardens. The high-rise apartments are visible everywhere in cinematic representations in films of post-2000s.

> *"In JG Ballard's novel High-rise (1975:35 – 36), life in a high-rise urban apartment is described as follows: 'A new social type [is] … being created*

[53] A ritual where the new bride's hands are decorated with henna before marriage.

by the apartment building, a cool, unemotional personality impervious to the psychological pressures of high-rise life, with minimal needs for privacy, who thrive[s] … like an advanced species of the machine in the neutral atmosphere." (Dreyer, 2005).

The topic of the home being the natural setting for women through the decades, the dominant discourse remains the same, labelling a woman who prefers to stay inside a home as good and women who desire to be out in the city on the streets alone as bad. The films reflect the same social mores. Women are seen as homemakers and men as the head of the household, the setting of the home is segregated into the gendered spaces, like the kitchen and courtyard which are the feminine spaces and the bedroom, living and dining rooms the masculine spaces.

In modern homes, the women when at home, are in transient places of the common lobbies and parking lots of the apartment complexes, near the windows representing the fluidity of outside to inside, and in the verandas if there is one because:

"The degree of freedom that men of the house enjoy negates and cancels out the freedom of the women and their desires. The patriarchal authority in the homes does not let the women have the ownership of it though it is considered to be 'appropriate' place for women" (Gleghorn, 2010, p. 306).

With the commodification of neoliberal city, the malls and markets, movies - legitimised the street walking and opened up new spaces for women. Women are still weighed down by the past social norms, inside and outside the city. Many studies focus on how neoliberal policies and its deregulated governance is affecting the urban landscapes and offer a critique of the uneven spatial development and distribution of capital through private investments and the creation of capital-intensive economic zones. The studies agree that social exclusions have increased and are seen in new forms that still privileged the male.

Women are venturing out and not conforming to the segregation of the spaces and the practices, gender roles ascribed to them. *Mr Pellam, Pellichesukundam,* and other films do break the stereotyping in their narration. The changes that women's presence brings in the public spaces is significant and urban geographers have emphasized this. While women still do not enjoy their right to the city, one certainly observes their growing presence and a sense of ownership of belonging to the city. It is hoped that

films through a more nuanced representation of women in both private and public spaces, will contribute to changing the discourse on urban spaces, including Hyderabad.

Chapter 4 – Uncanny and Dystopian City in Cinema: Violence and Poverty in Hyderabad[54]

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the cinematic representation of women in gendered urban spaces and the spatial relationship of the city with women as seen in films. This chapter deals with the dystopian representation of Hyderabad city in a set of selected films. The dystopian cities in western films are usually represented in science fiction and noir cinema. The dystopian city is associated with violence and squalor, with various forms of exclusion and marginalisation playing out spatially. There is an absence of films in the science fiction genre in Telugu cinema. The few sci-fi films that do exist in Telugu cinema include *Aditya 369* (1991, Singeetham Srinivas) and the recently released film *Antariksham 9000KMPH (*2018, Sankalp Reddy). This chapter analyses five Telugu films *Siva* (1989, Ram Gopal Varma), *Khadgam* (Sword, 2002, Krishna Vamsi), *Pokiri* (Vagabond, 2006, Puri Jagannath), *Vedam* (Philosophy, 2010, Krish) and *Paisa* (Money, 2013, Krishna Vamsi).

Suketu Mehta's '*Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found'* writes about the gritty underbelly of the corrupt and underworld of Bombay in his search to find out what makes the city. In this book, the city is made up of the street vendors, fanatics, bar girls, film personalities, police, planners, hawkers, tourists and gangsters (Mehta, 2006). City life that is as disparate as the above actors comes together to write the city in/onto its spaces. This is the characteristic of modernity of the city, which is fast-paced and has interconnectedness (Alsayyad, 2000).

Dystopia exists alongside utopia in the cities. Alongside the 'utopian impulse', the dystopian destruction exists in a city; dystopia is called the alter ego of modernity (Merrifield, 2000; Huat, 2008). Utopian impulse, a concept ideated by Frederic Jameson is the desire to become an ideal city by transcending the existing social systems. Scholarship on city and cinema states, that the uncanny networks and

[54] A part of this chapter which is analysis of film *Siva* was published in Urbanities journal which was cited at appropriate places. The citation for the article is Krishna, D. (2017). Uncanny and Dystopian City: An Analysis of Siva. *URBANITIES-JOURNAL OF URBAN ETHNOGRAPHY*, *7*(1), 122-137.

dystopian underside of a multi layered city can be discovered through cinema (Alsayyad, 2000; Mazumdar, 2007; Fu & Murray, 2007; Baeten, 2002; MacLeod & Ward, 2002).

Marginalisation and violence, among other things, produce a dystopian city. "*The unsustainable city is always the dystopian city, always a city on the edge, on the edge of a social and ecological precipice"* (Merrifield, 2000, p. 483). This is not to suggest that dystopia does not exist in rural spaces but the arts, popular culture and literature tend to characterise the city as a dystopian place, as an 'alienating and hostile place' (Alsayyad, 2000, p. 270). Many cinematic representations of Western, Asian, and World cinema and literature construct a nostalgic image of the rural, which is a space of purer and simple times. The urban dystopia is distinct in that it is marked with architecture, where the built environment controls space (Dyckman, 2002, p. 321). The architecture creates "spatial forms" that dictate movement and exclusions. However, Manuel Castells, while countering the accusation – that urban space creates unequal social and economic relations and ecological degradation – says *"that these spatial forms only intervene in already existing social and economic relations"* (paraphrased) (Dyckman, 2002, p. 323). A sense of community is often absent in the urban space, and there is a tendency towards individualism. But the urban can find rural inside it in the case of India. In contemporary cities, every citizen experiences some form of exclusion (Simmel G. , 2011). If the poor are excluded by top-down controls and urban planning, the elite exclude themselves out of fear and security (MacLeod & Ward, 2002). The morality of the space is not innate but imposed and maintained with effective technologies of surveillance and control, which also evokes dystopia and uncanniness.

From the literature on cinematic and literary cities, the closely related notions of uncanny and dystopia arise out of the same conditions, sometimes one causing the other. Uncanny is an exclusively urban phenomenon in the representation of cities (Eckhard, 2011). Freud too associates uncanny with the city; he compares the un-readability of an unconscious mind with the un-readability of the city (Kuberski, 1990). Uncanny can be defined as:

- Rootlessness, nothingness
- when private becomes public,

- when something gets exposed stripped away for its interiority
- When familiar becomes strange
- When memory is materialised, where present can show the past
- Un-representable
- Prevalent in art and architecture (Eckhard, 2011; Dziuban, 2014; Vidler, 1996)

The uncanny has been present since the advent of *modernity because* "*a reflexive 'defamiliarization [is] central to its programmes for artistic reinvention"* and continues in postmodernity too due to the *"self-reflexivity, pastiche, intertextuality or the blurring of fact and fiction"* (Eckhard, 2011, p. 13).

Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) analyses the gangster films in Bombay/Mumbai and maps the uncanny city, exploring the dystopia that lurks beneath the surface in the urban spaces. In her book, '*Bombay Cinema: City as Archive'*, the chapter Gangland Bombay deals with "*the relationship between space and the uncanny through a ritualistic fascination with death that seems to constantly stand in the way of happiness"* in the analysis of Parinda (1989, Viddhu Vinod Chopra) (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 151). In the same chapter, she explores Ramgopal Varma's films *Satya* (1998,) which maps out the 'residual city' and *Company* (2002) where the "*exploration of space… is fluid and almost virtual"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 151). Like the notion of uncanny, dystopia is also an urban phenomenon where the anxiety in the present about the future is envisioned in the form of a space that is decrepit and devoid of humanity. Dystopian city's main features are: increased surveillance and control; failure of welfare state which takes on paternalistic role invading individual's privacy; widening wealth gap between poor and rich in the capitalistic economy (Mennel, 2008; AlSayyad, 2006; Lefebvre, 2000; McArthur, 1997; Easthope, 1997). The other attributes of the dystopian city are alienation, history of violence and wars, sexual perversion, commodification and consumerism, isolation of communities and human beings, all of which also overlaps with features of the uncanny city.

The dystopian cinematic city of Hyderabad over the years has shifted its lens from political and administrative corruption to the underworld mafia and world of gangsters. The common element of the dystopia in cinematic city is the use of

uneducated/unemployed men for perpetrating violence, by those in higher echelons of power in both the political world and underworld. The nexus of elites, money and lumpen elements work the system in their favour. Dystopian cinematic city of Hyderabad is marked by violence and the street becomes the site for the violence to occur. The main actors (Hero and Villain) in dystopian cinematic city of Hyderabad, are equally violent and if greed drives the villain to violence, for hero the end justifies the means.

In many Telugu films where Chiranjeevi is the protagonist, he fights against the oppression of the poor and the corrupt systems. His film *Mutamestri* (1993, A Kondarami Reddy) is a story where the hero emphasises the state's interests in capitalistic ventures that profit the rich, but put poor in a disadvantageous position. Another film, *GharanaMogudu* (1992, K Raghavendra Rao) is mainly about taming the shrew but also as a factory employee the hero abused by the capitalistic greed, tames the owner of the car factory and introduces labour union and labour friendly policies. The car factory where they manufacture auto parts points to the detachment of the labour workforce from goods, they produce on the assembly line, a feature of the dystopian city. Telugu films by other actors Venkatesh and Nagarjuna also follow the same narrative of fighting the oppression of the poor and against treating the poor as disposables in the drive for development and capitalistic interests. The recent films represent the moral decay and sexual perversion of the dystopian city of Hyderabad with increased violence, infiltration of drugs, sex trade, real estate and drugs in gangster/mafia films.

In films, the struggles of the poor, who had close community and social relations, became individualistic. The class struggle, which was grassroots movement motivated by sense of social justice, splintered with each individual. The unionisation of poor strived to overthrow the social system. With dismantling of communities of poor and lower class, poor turned inward, looking to become part of elite by treachery or violence. The rise of Cyberabad and the increase of conspicuous consumption that has widened inequalities within Hyderabad, could be one factor to understand this.

Siva and *Pokiri* are gangster films set in Hyderabad city. Like most films in of this type, they are filled with recognisable paraphernalia, which marks the genre – cars, guns, nondescript buildings, factories, and urban backdrop (Mazumdar, 2007). Each film deals with different crimes and mafia from different standpoints, i.e. from the

perspective of protagonists. *Siva* connects to the urban anxiety and fear, *Pokiri* explores the rising crime and criminals in relation to the effects of globalisation on the growing urban spaces.

Khadgam, *Paisa* and *Vedam* deal with the range of issues and personalities mentioned by Suketu Mehta and Georg Simmel. The films *Khadgam* and *Vedam* adopt the narrative structure of people from different backgrounds in the city, with individual struggles and stories converging at a location at the climax. This chapter explores: the disparate networks of the city; how these connections present are invisible; poverty, and social exclusions. *Vedam* and *Khadgam* fall in the category of hyperlink or network films[55], *Khadgam* does not strictly adhere to the network film structure, but *Vedam* can be categorised as such.

The chapter begins with an analysis of the film *Siva*, directed by Ram Gopal Verma and released in 1998. *Siva* is one of the first Telugu films that used the city (of Hyderabad) as a central character in the story and represented the *uncanny* city; one of the characteristics of a city and its modernity which is discussed in later sections (Krishna, 2017). It was the film *Siva* which first captured the city of Hyderabad like no other film earlier did, with on-location shoots and no use of sets (except in songs), and the use of the spatiality[56] of urbanscapes.

4.1.1. Dystopian City of Hyderabad

Hyderabad's crime rate rank is 14 out of 19 metropolitan cities, in Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes, and it occupies the last but one place in Special and Local Laws (SLL) crimes[57]. Hyderabad's share of crime in India is 3.3%[58]. There is a decline in crime according to the statistics from the National Crimes Record Bureau. Hence, Hyderabad is considered one of the safest cities in India. This is in contrast to the representation of rampant crime in Hyderabad which is pervasive in commercial films

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[55] Network or Hyperlink films are films where there are many protagonists with their individual separate narratives which all converge in the climax.

[56] Spatiality: Anthony Giddens used the word spatiality and later many scholars defined and redefined the term. Spatiality is defined as how the spaces are structured by architecture in public spaces and private spaces, informal and formal use and segregation of spaces etc. It informs the power relations of different people and discourses set in that space.

[57] NCRB report, 2017

[58] *Hyderabad among safe cities*, The Hindu, 01 December 2017

with big stars. From land grabbing mafias to drug lords to corrupt politics and terrorist cells and attacks, everything finds representation in popular films with big stars. It is mostly the hero who individually or sometimes with the help of his friends takes on the network of terrorists, gangs, and mafia.

Hyderabad city is unique in its history and transition of power from the Nizams to the Indian sovereign state. This change of power was not smooth and was marred by violence. Hyderabad's genesis after India's Independence in 1947, was preceded by violence from communal forces, class struggle, and police action (Sherman, 2007). The violence slowly abated after Police Action in 1948, but with communal fault lines already in place. Parthasarathy (1997) differentiating between violence in a provincial city like Vijayawada and a metropolis like Hyderabad says, that one of the differentiating factors, is that while the violence in the former is caste motivated in the latter, it is communal clashes (Parthasarathy, 1997).

Communal tensions flared up in Hyderabad with the custodial rape of Rameeza Bee in 1978, and the city saw communal riots again in 1990, 1992, 2003 and 2010.[59] (Sen, 2011) (EPW, 2010). Hyderabad also witnessed bomb blasts in 2007 at Mecca Masjid in May and at Lumbini Park and Gokul chat shop (two popular landmarks of the city) in August, and in 2013 in the busy market area of Dilshukhnagar, in the eastern part of the city. These incidents scarred the city and engendered Hyderabad as a dystopian and uncanny city. The terror attacks of 2007 and 2013, coupled with the mistrust between communities as a fallout of communal violence, alienated the Muslims more than before, and the city space got more segregated '*completing the process of ghettoization*' (Contractor, 2012)(EPW, 2010). With the threat of communal conflicts and terrorist attacks, cities like Hyderabad and Bombay live in an atmosphere of fear and anxiety. Increasing alienation coupled with lack of employment opportunities and increasing consumerism but less upward mobility, youth gangs are sprouting across the city[60]. The locus of dystopia has been ensconced in these ghettos and inner cities which have become spaces of filth, poverty and backwardness. The films too place

[59] For detailed account see *Communal Riots in Hyderabad: Understanding the Causes* 2010 and Atreyee Sen (2011)

[60] Times of India, *Youth gangs on the prowl.* 8 November 2010

dystopian visions of Hyderabad in the inner city of Hyderabad, in the slums, many of which happen to be occupied by Muslim populations.

The dystopian city in cinematic imagination has changed over the years, from the anti-wealthy films (films were where the wealthy are held in disdain) of Chiranjeevi in the 1970s -80s, to the gangster films, terrorism films and anti-poverty films (representing individual struggles of poverty who hold the wealthy in awe and desire of possession) of the late 1990s and early 2000s, in response to the changing city. With globalisation and influx of skilled migrants, businesses, Foreign Direct Investments, the real estate in Hyderabad boomed with sharp increase in land prices, leading to the growth of land mafia[61]. Other gangsters took the opportunity to get into the real estate business illegally and through force and extortion. The Police encounters[62] of Aziz Reddy in 2008 who was a close associate of Chota Rajan and that of Mohammed Nayeem in 2016 is evidence of this. Both had built international networks, were involved in many criminal cases, had nexus with police and politicians, and had their headquarters in Hyderabad[63]. Ayub Khan is one of the many gangsters whom the police managed to arrest[64]. There are new gangsters in the city who operate in the land mafia, do hire killings and other illegal activities[65]. Like any gangsters, the dreaded gangsters have myth and legends about them and their underworld life[66] (Mazumdar, 2007). These legends and myths about international networks, controlling the city from abroad and extraordinary cases of extortion, nexus with officials in the state, feed the narratives of the films. These myths are associated with the city and can thrive only in the city.

> *"This is the attraction which the city exercises for the professional criminal. Organized crime can hide out only in the wilderness of a sparsely populated countryside or in the wilderness of a densely populated city. But only in the*

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[61] The Hindu, *Lords of land grab rule in Hyderabad*. 04 June 2017

Times of India, *Land Mafia makes a killing in IT corridor.* 3 January 2017

[62] Encounters in India are used to describe the killings of suspects or persons by Police or Armed forces. The encounters are claimed to be done in self-defence.

[63] Times of India, *Rise and fall of B Company Boss.* 2 May 2008 & Nayeem, the gangster who knew too much, shot dead. 9 August 2016.

[64] The News Minute, *Murders, extortion, smuggling: Long list of 50 cases against arrested Hyd Gangster Ayub Khan. 27 December 2017*

[65] Times of India, *Ruthless Maha gang sheds blood in Hyderabad, three arrested*. 29 December 2017

[66] Times of India, *A gangster with a thirst for blood*. 19 June 2004

city can an underworld take shape that is larger in scope than organized crime, as it includes both the criminals and those engaged in illegal and antisocial practices." (Meyer, 1951, p. 478).

The corruption and violence in daily life and the 'blasé attitude' of the city is captured in the films chosen for this chapter. The perspective of the cinematic and people's imagination is the association of crime and corruption with the city. Hyderabad city, in comparison to the imagination of other towns and cities in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, is seen as the epicentre of corruption and crime. It is interesting to note, that Vijayawada and Vishakhapatnam have higher crime rates[67] and violence, corruption and abuse of power is more blatant in these cities compared to Hyderabad. This is also evident in the ethnographic study of Collective Violence in Vijayawada by Parthsarathy (1997). But in the cinematic imagination of Telugu films, it is Hyderabad that dominates in the cartography of crime.

If corruption and crime are associated with the city, crime is associated with the poor. The slums are seen as breeding grounds for crime, from petty crimes and bigger crimes. The slums are called *urban villages* and the slum dwellers *urban villagers* (Gans, 1962). The term Urban Villagers suggests that the people who live in the ghettos and low-income dwellings, come from the village and though living in the city, they work, perform and behave within the context of their rural milieu. Most films do not recognise that all lower income groups in slum areas are not migrants, a significant number were citizens of Hyderabad from the time of the Nizam state and therefore share a long history with the city. A large number of them are Muslims, and it is these rightful citizens of Hyderabad whom most Telugu films have alienated through linking them with crime.

Abdul Shaban (2008) in his article '*Ghettoisation, Crime and Punishment in Mumbai'*, states that it is the system which strikes on the already weak and vulnerable, socially and economically, with authority of state and legal framework. It is not just poor who take to a crime but also the rich, and the poor cannot continue in crime for long, if they are not supported by the rich (Shaban, 2008). But when it comes to punishment for the crimes, it is the poor who are picked up and bear the brunt. A narrative of crime and the poor, with ghettos mapped as crime spots, develops in media and popular

[67] http://crime-in-india.github.io/city-list/

culture too. Shaban (2008) puts the blames for 'lumpenisation' of the poor on neoliberal policies, withdrawal of welfare state and capitalism. In this context crime acquires a spatial aspect, "*'space' itself is being graded and labelled on the basis of attributes of its inhabitants and manifests the social products like crime bearing strong correlation with its spatial structures"* (Shaban, 2004, p. 217).

4.2. Gangsters of City

4.2.1. *Siva:* The first of the Gangsters

The film *Siva* was a hit, much beyond the imagination of its director and producer[68]. The film set a precedent for future Telugu films with the use of steady cam and sound design which were never used before as effectively as in this film. Since then, the manner of using a place as a backdrop to a narrative structure has changed; i.e. the narrative has a spatial aspect linking the stories to the locale. Many Telugu film directors after Ram Gopal Varma say their films are influenced by his films and especially *Siva*. Well, known directors Puri Jagannadh, TriVikram, Krishna Vamsi, etc. are some of the directors who made films that follow the trends set by Varma. *Siva* brought contestations[69]of Hyderabad city into focus, to understand and analyse the negotiations and lived experiences of the city (Krishna, 2017). The markers of the city do not just rest in its physical reality (Krishna, 2017), it is also in the stories, everyday discourse, art, symbols, and imagery and are constructed by images and representations (Lapsley, 1997, p. 187; Unni, 2011; Fitzmaurice, 2001). To understand the city to its fullest, the representations of the city in the film offer the reader an opportunity to unravel the "*hidden secrets, and notion of the uncanny of the city"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 40).

Varma introduced new filmmaking and narrating techniques in his debut film *Siva* (Krishna, 2017). His films are a departure from earlier films that were produced in Telugu film industry which are mostly socials and then 'mass films[70]'. Varma's

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[68] Surendra Yarlagadda and Annapurna Studios are the producers of the movie

[69] Contestations are the negotiations, struggles and compromises for power, access to space, production of meanings of space, everyday living etc. Hyderabad's contestations were cultural, political and economic assertions and claims to the city - between the local and immigrants, the Telangana and Andhra people, and the Hindu, and Muslim and other minorities.

[70] Mass films is an unofficial nomenclature of Telugu which have mass appeal where the genres are fused. The hero is central to the film than the story. The goal of the 'mass films' are to draw the crowds with entertainment.

oeuvre was precisely what the mass film was trying to resist. The narratives from homes and family moved out into the streets of the city. The narrative moved to the public sphere but at the same time was individualistic and personal. This was a clear departure from Telugu social films, 'message oriented' films and star-powered mass films.

Siva is the story of a college student who is new to the city. He witnesses the violence and exploitation of some students by fellow students who are active in college politics. The students who win the elections with the backing of local goons and politician do as they please, - disturb classes, harass women, and bully other students, canteen workers and teachers. In return for this support, these students help the goons in rioting and other illegal activities. The Student President is JD, who has the support of local gangster Bhavani (played by Raghuvaran) in nexus with the politician Machiraju (played by Kota Srinivas Rao). Siva stands up to the intrusions of outside rowdy people in student politics, and contests for the post of president in the student elections. When one of his close friends is killed, and his other friends are hurt in an attack by the local goons, he realises that the system that produces such criminals has to be rooted out, as the law is also in the hands of the politician. He says that "*if one JD or Bhavani goes, some other comes in their place*".

He quits college, leaves his family as they also come under threat and dedicates himself to wiping out the forces producing such people. In the process, his friends become his supporters, and they instruct the local shop owners, merchants, union workers of various factories to stop paying 'mamool' (illegal fine or tax) to Bhavani and his associates. Bhavani's empire starts to crumble, as Siva hits his main income sources, takes down important persons in the gang one by one and eventually, MLA Machiraju deserts him. For Siva, the enmity with Bhavani becomes personal when the latter kills his niece, and the film ends with Bhavani falling down an elevator shaft to his death.

In/visible City

The name of the place/town/ city is never mentioned throughout the film. It is only described in the film as part of the Nizam's dominion. The language used by the locals, the canteen worker, one of the villains is the Telangana dialect. It is interesting to note that it is characters that are from lower classes, poor or who play villains who speak

in the Telangana dialect (Krishna, 2017). The hero and his group of friends enjoy the college canteen worker's quirky narration of Ramayana - the classic Hindu mythological text always recited in "pure"[71] Telugu by the upper caste and the learned - in the local Telangana dialect. When narrated in Telangana dialect, it evokes laughter, in stark contrast to the hushed reverence the traditional telling of the story elicits. This speaks of marginalisation of a region and its language in representation (Krishna, 2017). Stereotyping Telangana people as either uncivilized, illiterate working class or the people always on the wrong side of the law in most Telugu films, was one of the causes for the rise of discontentment in Telangana and demand for a separate state.

The recognisable locales and specific places shown in *Siva* suggest that it is Hyderabad (figure 4.1). The chase of the hero and his niece on a cycle chased by the villains in a car is shot on Raj Bhavan road, Erragadda Bridge and Old City *basti* (slum) are easily recognized as Hyderabad. Many people recognise the theatre in the film as the Ganga theatre, and the final scene is shot in Swapna Lok complex. The college campus scenes are shot in Keyes High School, Secunderabad. The School is famous and right beside a hub of bus-stations. Almost all the buses of the city are connected to Secunderabad, and it is the main node connecting different parts of the city. The railway station is walking distance from the School. The School is surrounded by Irani cafes, bakeries, film theatres and other leisure places. 'Hotel Hilight' where Siva and his friends have lunch regularly at an establishment that continues to serve customers in Kukatpally area (Krishna, 2017).

[71] The notion of pure Telugu is either classical Telugu or the Telugu spoken by coastal Andhra, now Andhra Pradesh. Most of the literature, art, films and conversation in formal settings use the Telugu spoken by natives of coastal region. There were many instances where erstwhile Telugu film makers opined that Telangana dialect is lesser Telugu according to S.V. Srinivas (2013)

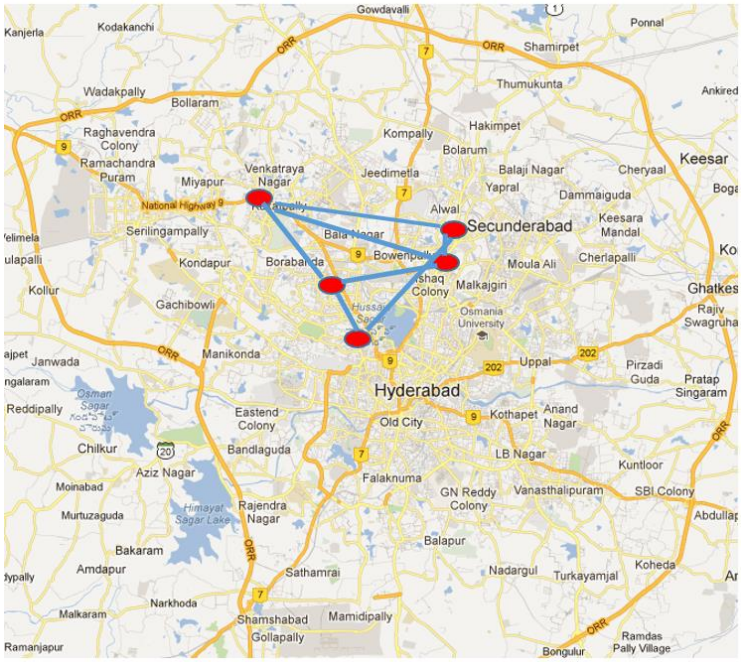

Figure 4.1: Siva's spatial interactions with the city

Even when the narration tries to generalise the setting of the place and make it appear as if the events can happen in any city or town, the recognisable locations of the city become part of the narration and cannot be effaced or separated from it (Nowell-Smith, 2001). The locales and spaces can be erased of its markers by bringing in a sense of 'placelessness'. In gangster genres this is observed in the use of ruins that can be anywhere and can also be in a recognisable street. The use of rundown and abandoned factories which cannot be recognised as what were once manufacturing units, get inscripted as a violent and crime-filled space. Recognisable markers of identification like Charminar or Hussain Sagar lake are not used in films, but identity is still conveyed through other markers of the city like language, physical space, food, built environment, and clothing. In support of this argument, Barbara Mennel (2008) in her book '*Cinema and Cities'* notes that the city depicted in the film, *In things to come* (1936) which she considers as London for her analysis, because it looks like London. On the same lines, the setting like Paris in *Alpha-Ville (1961,)* is Paris in her analysis, and the Paris in that film shows *no typical signifiers of Paris* (Mennel, 2008, p. 134). She goes on to say that one sees "*a familiar city in an unfamiliar ways through a narrative that is projected onto the cityscape"*. In the film *Siva* too, the typical signifiers of the city, its past, and the people are not shown and talked about.

Siva: The Migrant/Stranger in the City

It is stressed many times in the film, that the protagonist Siva, played by Nagarjuna, is an outsider. He migrates to the city as his brother is transferred to the city. It is the migrant who takes on the role of a stranger (Krishna, 2017). It is the stranger[72] in the city that defines the city, the separation, and the slow integration of the outsider, provides interesting perceptions of the city (Clarke, 1997; Mazumdar, 2007). A stranger is assimilated if the city groups no longer perceive him/her as the 'other', which rarely happens, as each stranger has their own subjectivity and history that sets him/her apart. If the stranger is of more value to the community like Siva (in *Siva* film) who has muscle power and courage, he is elevated to the status of leader but still remains an observer as an outsider. The categories of 'other' are embodied by an individual and re-inscribed strongly. If the 'other' tries to cross the spatial boundary, the attempts are resisted by protecting the boundaries fiercely.

Relationship of a stranger to the city is highlighted by David Clarke (1997) in his editorial introduction in the book '*Cinematic City'*. The stranger, Clarke says, is symbolic of the ordering of the city which is sometimes "annihilated" or "displaced" (Krishna, 2017). He cites the work of David Harvey, who calls the stranger's experience in the city as "*the transitory, the fleeting and the contingent"* (Clarke, 1997, p. 4). The stranger – Siva who arrives in the city and is new to the college, is appalled by the apathy of everyone towards the atrocities and disturbances caused by some students and political forces outside the college (Krishna, 2017). Siva initially moves around detached, observing the incidents of 'bad students' disrupting the classes, harassing women, and mistreating the canteen worker. As Bourdieu says, the city's modernity is overwhelming, and the sounds, the sights and the sensory stimulation of the city desensitise the citizen which George Simmel terms this as blasé attitude (Simmel G. , 2011; Mazumdar, 2007; Mennel, 2008) and David Harvey calls it *blasé indifference* (Baeten, 2002).

As the stranger becomes familiar with the surroundings, he learns to navigate the urban spaces (Krishna, 2017). The stranger is "proximate" yet "distant" (Simmel G. , 2011; Clarke, 1997); "*known and unknown, and charming and horrific"* (Mazumdar,

[72] For more on Stranger see literature review on stranger or see Georg Simmel's stranger in chapter 1

2007, p. 37). He had never experienced the desensitization, and violence has not yet become an everyday part of his life as it has for the city folks. When faced with repeated violence, he retaliates and responds violently by ripping out the cycle chain to beat up the miscreants which became an iconic scene of the film. To analyse the journey of Siva in the city, which is shaped by random events in the city, Ranjani Mazumdar's tropes are used to define the stranger and his rage in the city. Those tropes are of "*angry young man" and "psychotic"* and they help us to see how Siva – the stranger and a Flaneur becomes a gangster and how he traverses from an angry young man to almost become psychotic (Krishna, 2017).

Siva: Uncanny Urban and its Youth

Freud used the term Uncanny, originally from the German *unheimlich*, which translates to unhomely (Vidler, 1996) (McQuire, 2008). The familiar becoming unfamiliar and strange, the domestic is disrupted. This concept of *unheimlich* is placed in larger '*social and cultural implications'* (Eckhard, 2011). In Siva, the homes are virtually non-existent, except for Siva and Asha none of his friends is seen at home or in a home or talks about home. The interior scenes of Siva's home are not always pleasant as Siva's sister-in-law resents him and his brother is helpless in the face of her taunts. Siva's sister-in-law is harassed when she goes out to buy groceries. She complains to her husband that she is harassed and demands why they could not live in a good locality. The labels of bad and unsafe versus good and safe neighbourhoods are acquired by the economic status of people who reside in such spaces. The presence of eve-teasers and lumpen elements who harass women, local shop owners, residents to pay protection money mark the space as unsafe. The protection money that businesses and individuals pay is not for protection from some outside elements but protection from the same men who will destroy their property if their demand for payment is refused. The problem of harassment is not put on the perpetrators but on something abstract and uncontrollable as space (Krishna, 2017). The visibility and attention to the risk of harassment and sexual violence might be less in elite spaces but it also exists and happens in posh localities as well[73] (Krishna, 2017). Siva's

[73] https://www.hindustantimes.com/delhi/at-least-2-women-sexually-assaulted-every-day-in-posh-delhi-localities/story-O4qAWPRoPBET3amuipfC2K_amp.html

http://m.indiatoday.in/story/women-unsafe-in-posh-delhi-online-poll/1/153315.html

brother explains that rents are high in good localities and hence, cannot afford to shift because he has to save for Siva's education. This increases the sister-in-law's resentment towards Siva, and she openly scolds him for being a burden. Siva's sister-in-law, as a woman in the city, experiences incommensurable loss from unintended consequences from the actions of Siva and the city. She loses her only child as a result of vendetta against Siva, and her pain is inexplicable, 'unrepresentable' and disembodied in the city.

Figure 4.2: Siva with his Niece; Source: YouTube

Though he feels unwanted and a burden at his home, Siva is warmly received and loved by his niece Keerthi with whom he shares a strong bond (see figure 4.2). The other important character in the film, Asha is seen at home with her brother, only thrice in the entire film. Talking about home, McQuire (2008), says home is not just "*a physical structure but a place which instils a sense of cultural belonging and existential shelter"* (McQuire, 2008, p. 7). This comfort of the home is lacking for the young adults in the film; the literal home is hostile or non-existent or in the villages (Krishna, 2017). The college, streets and the leisure places are hostile too, as the danger of violence is always hiding beneath the surface. The cityscape is "unhomely", "derelict" and "dehumanised" and uncanny (Christdoulou, 2011, p. 44).

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m.timesofindia.com/city/mumbai/Mumbais-wild-west-Bandra-Kurla-Virle-Parle-citys-most-unsafe-areas/articleshow/17484597.cms

Uncanny and Urban go together in writing on cities in academics, popular culture and literature (Wolfreys, 2008) (Baeten, 2002). Uncanny is "*seeing from the place of other"* (McQuire, 2008, p. 9). Uncanny in urban is disorientation and spatial estrangement (Eckhard, 2011, p. 13); and the uncanny urban embodies one's desires (Christdoulou, 2011). With each act of violence, and disruption of order and the imposition of normative rules of urban space, the uncanny emerges (Krishna, 2017).

The film begins in a classroom, the lecture ends, and the students walk out of the classroom. The audience sees dangerous looking men outside the college; a student points them to another student who is talking to his friends. The men drag him, beat him and leave him on the street unconscious, as everyone else looks on. Siva's classmates tell him that as long they remain invisible, ignore and 'unsee' the harassment happening to them and others in college, they will be left alone in peace and they remain happy. All this changes with Siva's outburst.

The discussions of youth centre around watching a film or attending a lecture, passing the exams or topping it, and to love or to not love. For the friends of Siva, the first act of violence by a restrained, inward-looking, well-mannered and shy Siva (characteristics of Angry Young man as defined by Ranjani Mazumdar (2007)) is the first instance of the uncanny urban experience on the college campus. The stranger Siva is training his objective gaze of a stranger towards taking control of the urban space as a gangster. The uncanny urban space and its violence are hidden under the ordered and rational spaces, which was abruptly uncovered by Siva's act of violence (Christodoulou, 2011, p. 45). Hitherto safe streets, college campus and leisure places become nodes of violence, and the underbelly of the city marred by violence, corruption, and criminality is exposed (Krishna, 2017). Meetings take place in dark rooms and in cheap, sleazy bars of the city. The youth become part of these space and are in close contact with it and realise the city and the crowds are sites of violence (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 30).

The youth, in the film, work towards the hope of achieving a fair, equal, utopian city. The youth keep hoping the violence inflicted on them and the deaths of their close friends are the sacrifices in achieving an urban space free of all ills. This hope of youth can be termed as *Utopian Impulse*, conceptualised by Frederic Jameson (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 40). The fatal violence inflicted upon Naresh, the death of Mallik and Chinna, each meticulously violent and horrible, are slowly turning the uncanny urban space to

dystopian space. Frederic Jameson says that the utopian impulse fails to abolish death, that it robs the death of its sting. We can call that sting: the value attached to each death, the undying hope of youth that the death of their dear ones should not go in vain. Frederic Jameson further says that the utopian impulse for a city remains unrealised (Mazumdar, 2007). The hope of youth quickly turns into an urban nightmare.

Siva: The youth in the city

In the film *Siva*, the young of the city are represented as the makers of the city. The film was marked by the absence of any senior citizens. The oldest person belonging to the city shown in the film was around forty. The only senior citizens in the film were the Grand Mother of Siva's friend who comes from the village to the city to claim the body of her dead grandson; the political opponent to Machiraju who is killed and the politician Machiraju who appears a few times for a brief time and who also gets killed in the end. The city is no place for senior persons, and even if they do live in a city, they are in danger. Old age is symbolic of death, the older generation and their ways of living die out to give way to a new generation and new ways of living. Misery and death haunt the new generation who are exposed to more violence and urban decay. In *Siva*, the city is predominantly a space of the youth. Future of the 'city in ruins' rests with students like JD ('bad' student) and his gang who get involved with the local rowdy group. The bright future of the city rest with students like Siva ('good' student) and his friends, who are sincere in their studies, feel responsible towards the society and their family but occasionally bunk classes for some fun and films.

The agency for any change rests in young people who are below thirty, as the older people like Asha's brother – a police officer and Siva's brother – a government employee, are shown to be helpless (Krishna, 2017). As discussed earlier, the absence of the family is notable in the film. None of the young people's parents are present or even talked about. Siva lives with his older brother, and so does Asha. Orphan hood in Telugu films represents marginality where the hero claims no support from anyone, which means the hero is self-made and this struggle of gaining legitimacy on his own makes him eligible to be the leader of masses (Srinivas, 2009). The presence of family and older family members denote stability, but the absence of family signifies the unstable, lonely, misdirected and distressed lives of young in the city. The city is

oppressive, and the lack of stability for its young inhabitants of the city are characteristics of a dystopian city (McArthur, 1997).

The urban spaces are conducive for the young to form social relations beyond their families (Krishna, 2017). The stability not found in families is compensated for, by forming strong social bonds outside the family. The urban spaces are at the same time, threatening as the anticipation of any situation becoming violent or finding violence around the street corner is conspicuous. Like the college canteen, the hotels, ice-cream parlours, and the tea stalls become a place of establishing long-lasting friendships, loyalties through camaraderie and discussion of politics. With homelessness, the youth stand alone with lack of family, societal censures and support to curb the violence. Overtime this behaviour and violence gets normalised amongst the youth.

The youth is represented as accepting of all with no discrimination on the basis of gender, class, caste or religion, which seems utopian existing only in fictional narratives. It raises the questions whether the 'ownership' of the city rests only with youth and the other age groups are rendered to the fringes as mere spectators or victims/subjects of the changes that take place. A certain age group is privileged over others, as the hope and utopian impulse is placed in the children who are the future and inheritors of the city. The absence of older people in the city could be a response to the sense of disappointment and anger among the youth, that the former failed in making the city better.

Siva: Asha, 'Modern' Woman of the City

Asha (played by Amala) is introduced by his friend to Siva as the 'most active girl in the college'. She is a college student, a liberal young girl of the city and this is celebrated in the film, for a while. She enjoys the freedom and access to the city equally as her male friends and, speaks in Hindi sometimes (Krishna, 2017). She alone visits ice-cream parlours alone, and goes to the evening show at the theatre with male friends. She is seen at the bus stop and is comfortable at a gym, which is considered as a male domain (where only men are seen working out) (Krishna, 2017).

Her upper-middle-class status is reflected in her education, makeup, and dress, which allow her access to the typically male-dominated urban spaces (Krishna, 2017). Her upper-middle-class privileges her in the public spaces, and her confidence to venture in to these spaces is derived from her status as discussed in the previous chapter. Her

nonchalant and irreverent attitudes do not limit her even if the city ever tries to limit her. The city providing anonymity, endless opportunities, and entertainment, helps the aspiring and free-spirited woman to explore the city for pleasure and entertainment purposes as well.

Her modernity is reflected in the ease with which she carries western wear and also slips into traditional wear with no fuss. The modernity of the city girl and her freedom is clear when she replies to Siva's concern, that people might gossip if they rode a bicycle together (Krishna, 2017), *"Do you think it is the 1940s or did you come from Srikakulam forests?"* She is friendly with men and also women, she goes on dates with a boyfriend to a restaurant. This is a deviation from the depiction of women in Telugu films. Even in the films that came after *Siva*, the women meet their lovers in secret and are scared, and guilt-ridden. Asha has a casual and informal relationship with her brother, who is modern and liberal, just like her. The gender of Asha is never stressed upon, she is equal to men, and the representation of Asha in the film is empowering and positive.

This freedom and access end when she gets threats from the villains. At the beginning of Siva's and Asha's friendship, Asha tells Siva that she does not want to get married, as she hates cooking, household chores and other wifely duties (Krishna, 2017). After she marries Siva, under his protection she stays at home, is restricted to wearing sarees and transforms to the perfect housewife and hostess, doing the same things she said that she hated in a marriage. The freedom to loiter is not available for a married woman and more so if her safety is threatened. The only solution to ensure the safety of a woman is to get her married and then force her to stay at home. The dystopian city effects the people who are on the side-lines, as spectators, like Asha who is an average citizen. Her freedom and movement through the city are curtailed by coming in close contact with violence. In a dystopian city, women are affected and stand to lose more than men who perpetrate violence.

Siva: The City as Site of Conflict: Making of a Dystopian City

In the film *Siva*, the city in the day is shown in washed out colours by excessive sunlight; the heat is oppressive and blinding (Krishna, 2017). The streets are mostly empty, the crowds gather when violence erupts to watch the spectacle of violence in the urban space. The streets and other public places are the sites of conflict. Here the

display sites, like the college campuses, streets, Irani cafes, restaurants, and the shopping mall in the final scene become the sites of violence, unleashing the uncanny shock of urban (Mazumdar, 2007).

The college dropouts Siva and his friends acquire a legion of cars, guns and other weapons and appear to live comfortably (Krishna, 2017). The narrative does not show the source or the flow of money or resources to acquire weapons and material comforts. It is tacitly understood that they got money and resources through the same means as the villain and goons, but with no use of force and exploitation (Krishna, 2017). They happen to be on the right side of the moral binary, and hence, the means used for a steady flow of money and resources are forgiven and overlooked. The irony in the statement of Siva, "if we kill one JD or Bhavani, another Bhavani and JD will take his place" is obvious when Siva kills Bhavani and might eventually replace him. The protagonist Siva, similar to Ranjani Mazumdar's (2007) angry young man figure in the image of Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan from 1970s, fights for the good of other people like a modern-day robin hood.

There are only a handful of scenes of the city in the night, where gruesome murders or violence are committed, the horror is palpable, and the tension runs through every frame (Krishna, 2017). In the first night of the city depicted in the cinema, brutal violence is committed on Naresh, and the scene of his face being smashed on a boulder induces shock. This kind of violence and the eerie silence intermittent with equally horror-inducing background music breaks away from the conventional violence shown in earlier films.

Figure 4.3: Use of shadows and darkness. Source; YouTube

The film gets darker as it progresses and in the second scene of the night, a politician is killed. The days are still hot and sunny, washed out, but the night scenes and interior scenes get darker (Krishna, 2017). The cinema uses low key lighting and shadows to convey the narrative's progression towards the darker tone (figure 4.3). The scenes in the night display the murky side of the city spaces burgeoning into the urban concrete jungle with the ominous darkness of shadows lurking with the light (Mennel, 2008). Especially in the scene where the larger than life shadows of Chinna (friend and associate of Siva) being chased by the goons of Bhavani (anti-protagonist) on the tall walls of the apartment, captures the close proximity of violence to the citizens of the city, emphasizing that it is only the tall concrete walls separating the safe space from the violent spaces of the city streets (see figure 4.4 and 4.5). The quiet and safe world of the gated apartment complexes is contrasted by the violence outside their windows. The separation and closed world of gated complexes breed indifference to the outside world. This can be contrasted with the slum which is seen as open, unsafe and chaotic but involved with the street and outside. The city sleeps through the violence when the first act happens in a middle of a residential area, which is distanced from and unaware of the violence unfolding out on the streets (Krishna, 2017).

"*The city is haunted by death"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 151). The villain Bhavani is not seen until an hour into the film, Bhavani like Siva is restrained and marked with brevity. We witness Siva becoming as cruel as Bhavani and the film ends on an ambiguous note on whether Siva becomes Bhavani or not. With each death, Siva gets closer to becoming a gangster and the city moving towards dystopian city (Krishna, 2017).

Figure 4.4: Chinna running away from goons; Source: YouTube

Figure 4.5: Goons in the Street: Urban Violence; Source: YouTube

Hyderabad city is wary of immigrants, and though outwardly it is welcoming, the anxiety of what a stranger brings to the city is real. Many academic writings on this anxiety, blame it on the immigrants, who do not understand the culture of Hyderabad and are responsible for diluting it (Luther, 2006; Pandey, 2015). The communal riots that happened in 1978 and in 1990 (due to the repercussions of Babri Masjid demolition) were blamed on politicians and the dominating immigrants (Vithal, 2002). These immigrants from Andhra and other places who were not part of the history of the city, did not understand that Muslims belonged to Hyderabad, instead saw them as the other (Engineer, 1991). The communal riots increased in the 1990s, and riots broke out in recent years too (Kruizinga, H, 2008). This communal tension is hinted at when Siva's family is visited by some men wearing Tilak (Red powder put on

forehead – indicating Hindu religious identity) asking for donations to build Lord Ganesh's temple (alluding to building the Ram temple at 'Ayodhya[74]').

The assertion of identity and marking of differences is becoming more aggressive with increasing entry of migrants from different backgrounds (religious, cultural, linguistic, economic and ethnicities) (Krishna, 2017); and this is the ugly side of the cosmopolitan city. The more a city becomes diverse, the more differences arise and as a result, more conflicts and assertion of identities. This anxiety and suspicion towards the local by the migrant in the cinema are seen, where the local is illiterate and coarse, speaks in Telangana dialect as observed in the film *Siva* where only villains and lower-class people speak that language. The migrants are middle-class, educated with their families employed in the government sector. This cultural stereotyping and the suspicion of the locals by the migrants is played out in most films.

Sanjay Baru (2007), speaking at the Waheeduddin Khan Memorial Lecture, noted that Hyderabad is undergoing interesting changes around the time the film *Siva* released, i.e. in the 1980s. Earlier the agrarian surplus from the coastal areas was invested in Madras, Vijayawada, Vishakhapatnam, in Andhra region. From the 80s, the surplus was invested in Hyderabad and industrialisation flourished. Industrialisation happened through private investments and also, with the help of subsidies and facilitation by the State. There was distress sale of land in Hyderabad for many decades after the police action in 1948 and formation of Andhra Pradesh state in 1956 – as rich Muslims emigrated to the middle-east and other foreign countries, and the middle-class and poor Muslims to other parts of India where the Muslim population is large (Luther, 2006). This situation was taken advantage of by land grabbers, rowdies and politicians (Engineer, 1991). The chief ministers and other major ministers of Andhra Pradesh were mostly from coastal Andhra. The businesses and industries in the city were set up by these first-generation immigrants and upper castes from the coastal Andhra peasant class (Baru, 2007).

[74] The main issue about Ayodhya is that Hindus believe that the site of Babri Mosque is the birthplace of Ram and a temple was destroyed to build a mosque. Some sections of Hindus demand the temple be built on that location. This dispute became a cause for communal rife amongst Hindus and Muslims, and a cause for numerous communal riots. Right wing politicians keep bringing up this issue for political mileage

The wish of immigrant/stranger Siva and his friends in the films *Siva* who speak Andhra dialect to cleanse the city of its illegality and from its Telangana dialect speaking criminals, indicates the underlying prejudices and politics of the times. Hyderabad did not industrialise as early as Bombay, Calcutta and Madras but from the 1980s, the cityscape started changing with the changing economic, social and political processes (Baru, 2007). The final scene and the preceding scene of *Siva* are important to understand the global city that Hyderabad became and its transitioning towards a dystopian city (Krishna, 2017).

Siva's bond with his niece and love for her is symbolic of the innocence and hope that is still present in Siva and in the city. Siva arranges for his brother to get transferred to another town, distancing his family from the path of violence he takes up. His house with his wife Asha always teems with his followers who started as his friends. The house keeps receiving people with complaints and grievances, which Siva helps to solve. The moral lines between Siva and Bhavani, good and bad, moral and evil, are blurred with the death of Siva's niece, Keerthi. If the depictions of deaths in the film are unconventional in the Telugu films' narrative pastiche, the murder of a child is uncommon and almost non-existent in Telugu films before. When Bhavani loses everyone's support, he kidnaps Siva's niece, Keerthi. At the same time, an arrest warrant is issued for Bhavani. Upon learning that he has lost everything and will be jailed, he kills Keerthi not with rage but in a chillingly calm way (Krishna, 2017).

The fuzzy boundaries of "*the moral divisions between legal and non-legal, the legitimate and criminal"* in the city are attributed to industrialisation and is a "*reflection on dystopian forms in urban life"* (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 27). The city with industrialisation and globalisation has become complex, dangerous, and with the death of a child – the city becomes dystopian. The city transforms into a space of violence and revenge where only men are entitled to be in.

The fight between Siva and Bhavani occurs without a background score. The fight on the top of the Swapna Lok Complex (a shopping complex) uses the diegetic sound of the traffic below (figure 4.6) (Krishna, 2017). The shopping complex, traffic sound (honking of cars, revving noise of bikes and cars), surrounding tall buildings and an under-construction elevator (where Bhavani falls to his death) are some of the main markers of the city (Krishna, 2017) (Krishna, 2017). These are used in the climax fight

scene, which symbolises that violence and conflict have become part of the city and become inseparable in its imagination and representations (Mazumdar, 2007).

Figure 4.6: Final fight between Siva and Bhavani; Source: YouTube

Barbara Mennel, talking about deaths in the city in the film *Metropolis* says that after the fall of the villain from the top, the hero on top is now the head of the metropolis. In *Siva*, it is the migrant standing on top of a mall who controls the city now (Krishna, 2017). The violence in a mall and the everyday life below going on as normal is the "*Co-existing of Events*" (Narkunas, 2001, p. 156)The malls are the sign of urbanism, and growing consumerism that is transformed into the site of the final struggle to dominate (Krishna, 2017); and Mennel (2008) says, "*Contemporary urban development of malls is subversively portrayed with iconic horror as a site of danger"* (Mennel, 2008, p. 145).

4.2.2. *Pokiri:* Corrupt City

Pokiri director Puri Jagannadh was an assistant director to Ram Gopal Varma. Though the film is supposed to be reflecting the reality, its narrative style, and frames are phantasmagorical; the movements, events including fights are exaggerated. Puri Jagannath's films invest heavily in star image, and the narratives are set to be a spectacle for the sole purpose of the hero's machismo. His pictures are a mix of genres and mostly hero-centric, where the hero is either unemployed (*Idiot*, 2002; *Chirutha*, 2007; *Businessman* 2012) or in a stable job or comes from a respectable family (*Badri* 2000; *Amma Naana O Tamil Ammaiyi* 2003; *Super*2005) but both the hero tropes have

a penchant for violence and are marked with crassness. His films are images of extraordinary events interspersed with daily life.

Puri Jagannadh is one of the trios (Trivikram and SS Rajamouli) of directors who played a major role in reviving the genre of mass films (which is derived from and followed the same template of 'mass films[75]' from the 1980s and 1990s), but gave it an urbane style and characteristics. Puri Jagannadh's heroes follow the same prototype of the earlier mass films; they are rowdies or behave like rowdies. All the three directors' heroes have an excess of identity and excess of masculinity that the bodies cannot disincorporate. Their bodies are a symbol of machismo at 'ubermensch levels' that audiences demand, a persona which the heroes from NTR till Mahesh Babu, and Prabhas (in *Bahubali*) of contemporary times cannot shed even off-screen. Trivikram's heroes are different from Puri Jagannadh's heroes. The differences are: they are shown as urbane and stylish, and they perform 'lower class crassness', not to slight them but to show their ability to move into different classes (Srinivas, 2009).

Pokiri deals with the growing land mafia in Hyderabad, growing nexus between them and the corrupt police. Usually Puri Jagannath's films are what Srinivas (2009) calls mass films, and many of his films employ the trope of the male hero who is from the lower class, but some films show the hero as from a middle or higher class, but who have the elements of *urban rowdy* which is discussed in the later section (Srinivas, 2008, p. 7).

One of his earlier films *Idiot*, which was an unexpected hit has Ravi Teja as a hero who has earned the name of mass hero. He played the role of a lower-class male, with uncouth language and performance in obscene excess. He has come to be known as a mass hero from this film *Idiot*, where he is a college student coming from a poor family whose father is a constable. He gets involved in street fights and has crass and problematic sexist humour, living up to the eponymous title of the film. He takes on the police commissioner who opposes his relationship with his daughter. *Pokiri* follows the same tropes, but the hero is little more urbane, and the narrative focuses on the urban spaces as it deals with land mafia.

[75] See chapter 1 for more information or see S.V. Srinivas (2009)

Pokiri has one of the biggest stars in Tollywood, Mahesh Babu. It was one of the biggest hits and had highest box office collections till that year in Tollywood's history. The film title *Pokiri* translates to Hooligan in English. A cop works undercover as a gang member to root out the land mafia. The truth that he is a cop is revealed to the audience just before the climax as a plot twist. The opening scenes when the titles are shown, the camera follows a long-haired man from one dark room to other asking after the people, encouraging the men playing card games, telling the people who are watching cricket to have some 'chai' and asking one of his associate if the 'girl' (ambiguous as he says '*Adhi*' which could mean a girl or some object) that he brought from Nagpur is still alive or dead (here or gone, to translate literally). Except for the last conversation which also could be translated in many ways and not about a girl, others are innocuous questions of a sensitive and friendly boss to his employees, if the images are separated from the audio. But the dark rooms, the bodies and style of the men, the language used (Telugu and Hindi) shows something sinister and hints that the den is used for something illegal and the people shown are not ordinary citizens but deviants. To corroborate this, as soon as this scene ends a man says "land mafia" to another man. The growing city and growing demand for land gave the opportunity to lumpen groups to occupy land illegally or extort money from real estate developers.

Every scene involving gangsters happens in an abandoned factory or a shed. The rooms are dark and dingy, the furniture is broken and there are barely any proper chairs and tables. Sometimes the objects in the factory are used as furniture. The paraphernalia of the gangster film like guns, rundown buildings, factories, the urban backdrop is abundantly used in the film except for cars. Gangs are territorial and wield control over a certain area; the conflicts arise when one gangs' incursion happen into another gangs' territory. "*In a metropolitan city,….gang members usually belong to minority communities and lower castes.*" (Parthasarathy, 1997, p. 265). The gangs include unemployed, disenchanted youth who are hired, who work on foot to carry on the gang activities. The gangster's world is shown to be filled with perversion, sexual deviancy and cruelty. Only the higher-ups in the gang use cars, but even they ditch it for convenience of getting to a location by foot or escaping in the narrow streets (figure 4.7). They understand that the real controlling and transformative powers of an urban citizen are in walking through the city (Certeau, 1984). The gangster knows

the city's routes like no other commuter and his gaze controls the city (Mazumdar, 2007).

The city's empty streets are sparsely lit in the night, playing host to sporadic instances of violence. In some of these films, there is recognition of the names and localities, bringing in the experience of hyper-locality (Vasudevan, 2007). Hyper-locality brings in the uncanny nature of the urban spaces with everyday violence in the familiar localities. According to the Ranjani Mazumdar (2007), the gangster city is a reaction to the urban anxiety and crisis; violence becomes an alternative to the banality and decadence of the city.

Like the real gangsters Aziz Reddy and Nayeem who used to operate from overseas and control the illegal activities in Hyderabad, in the film *Pokiri*, Ali Bhai, played by Prakash Raj, controls the gang's activities from overseas. It is in cities that there would be a sophisticated network of mafia gangs who are connected internationally and rely on technology for their activities. The man in the film explaining to the new Hyderabad commissioner says that everything happens fast and only on mobiles. Apart from other technological advances, communication technology enables information transfer, and financial transactions happen in seconds making illegal activities easier. This is possible in the glocal cities, where the global works within local networks and the local is visible on the global through the use of technology and networks.

Figure 4.7: Streets in the film Pokiri. Source: YouTube

The Stylised Gangster

The hero Pandu in *Pokiri* is introduced with much fanfare; he is dressed stylishly but still maintains a kind of shabbiness (figure 4.8). He is the hyper-masculine urban gangster. The images of gangsters in contemporary cinema reflect the current political and economic ideology, where the future of nations and societies rests in reinvented masculinities, which have a modern outlook but are rooted in patriarchal traditions (Kuldova, 2014). This masculinity is represented against the character of a software engineer who is soft, in a stable job, romantic and non-violent, but is also a coward and a creep who vies for the heroine's attention and love. The software engineer himself later admits that girls these days like hardware people and not software people.

Figure 4.8: Hero Mahesh Babu's introduction; Source: YouTube

The introduction song celebrates this masculinity and the 'displays of masculinity' in the Ganesh Chaturthi celebration. The celebrations are not as overt as the violence in the streets but important to consider. As "*Ganesh Chaturthi… an urban-spatial practice is associated with … national mobilisation"* of Hindutva masculinities (Vasudevan R. , 2007, p. 231). In Hyderabad, the Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated to show off strength and exclude the Muslim populations. The CM, Marri Chenna Reddy personally received and started the Ganesh Chaturthi processions in the 1970s and renamed Mozamjahi Market as Vinayak Chowk and Hussain Sagar as Vinayak Sagar for the duration of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival (EPW, 2010).

Vishnupriya Bhandaram (2015) in her thesis on masculinities in Telugu cinema demonstrates with case studies and ethnographic research how the Telugu films are male-centric and invest in hyper-masculinity that borders on misogyny, aggressiveness and sexual harassment. The hero first sees the heroine and says "idhi enti? ila undhi?" (What is *this* and why is *this*[76] like this) and meets the vamp in the villain's gang and says "evathi idhi?" ("What is *this*?"). His vulgarity also comes from his background that he is a low-class rowdy who will engage in any illegal activity or inflict violence on anyone for money. As his true identity is not revealed till the end, he performs and embodies "*Pokiri*" for all intents and purposes and the revelation in the end that he is a cop is irrelevant and immaterial in the analysis of the film. It is a continuation of the rowdy as a hero in Telugu films from the 80s and 90s, where major stars played the role of urban rowdy to resolve the social and political crises. They acted as mediators between the state and citizens (Srinivas, 2008).

Srinivas (2008), calls such characters as urban *criminal or rowdy*, a departure from the earlier era of films but are now represented as an urban rowdy like Mahesh Babu as Pandu in this film. Here the rowdy does not work for the political and social causes, but they are hedonistic and show the limitless capacity to indulge oneself before turning into monogamous lovers and husbands (Srinivas, 2008), In this case, a responsible police officer. Srinivas (2008) says the urban rowdy being an orphan enhances his low-class status. Only one of his friends from his gang has a father, played by Naser, who keeps admonishing his son and the hero. Before the climax, it is revealed that he is the hero's father.

The urban rowdy Pandu has no qualms killing people and kills indiscriminately, but he refuses to hurt women and kids. Like any urban rowdy, he is annoyed by the vamp in the gang and tries to discipline her when she tries to seduce him by labelling her, "not a girl". He is established as a gangster with a moral compass, but there is no difference between the corrupt cop and other gangsters in terms of the indiscriminate killings and other illegal activities. Pandu's actions gain legitimacy when his role from gangster turns to that of vigilante when it is revealed that he is a cop.

[76] Emphasis added on *this*. In Telugu "idhi" roughly translates to that, is used for objects and for women too in a disrespectful way.

The film demonstrates loss of faith in the state powers, politicians, police and judiciary. Like Shaban (2008) who blames capitalism and its resultant increasing class division for the increase of crime, MK Raghavendra (2011) (2009) also opines that it is the withdrawal of the state from the society and *'from its own institutions'* after the liberalisation in the 1990s (Raghavendra, 2009, p. 16). Raghavendra (2009) goes on to say that the police act like private agencies. Similarly, in this film, the Sub-inspector works for the gangsters and in his own self-interest. The Sub-Inspector is morally corrupt who never works for the post that he is assigned to, instead sexually predates on Shruthi (the heroine) and harasses her family. This shows the loss of faith in the state authorities in Hyderabad and speaks of the social decay in the city, where the politicians, judges, lawyers, police and even news media work for the gangsters. Except for a sincere policeman Syed Mohammed Pasha Qadri, who goes on a tirade that the only sincere wing of the government is the police and admonishes the media and popular culture for fetishizing violence and their lack of ethics. Even he a law abiding and rule following police officer is helpless, but the police officer undercover who does not abide by the rule of law or police guidelines is successful by mimicking the gangsters. In the urban jungle, approaching the state apparatus is time-consuming and ineffective when compared to circumventing the state and breaking the law. The irony of blaming films for fetishizing violence and celebrating criminality is evident in a film which does the same. In the end, it renews the faith in the state and police when the gangster is revealed as a police officer.

Pokiri: Liminal Urban Spaces

The gangsters' control over the city relies on connectivity and networks of the city. The lovers meet in MMTS[77] and MMTS stations, empty stadiums. These urban spaces are transient and flowing (Vidler, 1991; Cidell, 2015; Vasudevan, 2007; Mennel, 2008). It is devoid of stability, and people keep flowing through these networks but leaving their mark and memories in brief moments of travel. The same way mobiles are used to communicate not just to conduct the mafia business but to foment romantic relations with the lover. Just like these transient areas and non-rooted technologies. The desire for a romantic stable life is disrupted with violence which conveys the shock of urban dystopia. The lovers meet at Golconda, where the girl proceeds to

[77] MMTS are local train networks in Hyderabad

profess love but is interrupted with gunshots flying into the air and '*the spectacle of the monument is shattered by violence'* too (Mazumdar, 2007, p. 169).

The lovers meeting in trains, train stations, streets, markets and monuments are liminal spaces, which could lead to a happy, romantic and stable life, but ends with either reaching the destination or violence. In the market and a mall, Shruthi is followed by her stalker neighbour that she cannot get rid of, the hero comes to the rescue by slapping him and getting himself and her trapped in the mall elevator. The elevator of a mall provides the illusion of privacy for a brief period of time amidst interruptions of sudden jolts and the lift free falling. The semblance of privacy and anonymity is shattered in a dystopian city with increased surveillance and government's intrusion into the private space of individual (in the guise of national security concerns)

The heroine of the film Shruthi is well-educated and does not have a father or a father figure, similar to the characters in film *Siva*. The father-like figures: the middle-aged software engineer who acts like a stalker, and the police who has to protect her as a citizen but is instead a sexual predator. Hyderabad city is like the heroine, beautiful, aspiring to be successful, modern (in dress and talks in English) and naive but needs to be protected from corrupt police officers and other illegal forces. The liminal space is embodied by the women in the urban, forced to carry the burden of social decay of the urban space. Like the city, as she is exposed to violence both by the mafia and police; her world view turns dystopic. The threat of an independent and urban woman is dealt by masculinity in Telugu film by showing her as vulnerable like in this film and in *Siva.*

4.3. Poor and Marginalised in the City

4.3.1. The Myriad Stories of Hyderabad

Much like the films, the city is a pastiche, fragments making up the urban fabric. The cinematic city is "*montage of fragmentary images"* (Huat, 2008, p. 3) as we see in the films *Khadgam, Vedam* and *Paisa.* Here *Khadgam* and *Paisa* both directed by Krishna Vamsi are considered as a single text in understanding the ghettoization of the Old City of Hyderabad. *Khadgam* and *Paisa* offer two different perspectives of the Old City, the former that of a Muslim and that of a Hindu. These films draw the personalities and characters explored by Suketu Mehta (2006) in his book on Mumbai. *Khadgam* and *Vedam* have a range of characters from the margins: Muslims, sex

worker, rural migrant as a kidney donor for money, aspiring actors, actresses, and directors, fanatic policemen, army men, corrupt politicians, rowdy and terrorists.

Krishna Vamsi follows Ram Gopal Varma's style in most films which are grounded a bit in reality. Krishna Vamsi's films vary from family and romantic films to drama/action films that are inspired by true events like Maoist insurgency (Sindooram, 1997), factionalism in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh (Anthapuram, 1998), issues faced by women (Gulabi, 1995 & Rakhi, 2006), etc. *Paisa* was based on the scams of Mining baron and BJP minister Gali Janardhan Reddy in Karnataka, and 2G scam etc. Though *Khadgam* has many characters from different walks of life, the main theme is terrorism and evoking nationalistic ideology bordering on jingoism through the film.

Krish, director of Vedam, debuted with *Gamyam (Destination, 2008)* which is about a journey by rich man to meet his lover; on this journey, he meets many people – a thief, a teacher at an orphanage, an ex-militant and a sex worker who change his perception about life. This film won Nandi award and Filmfare award for best picture. His second film *Vedam* has a bigger cast with major stars from Tollywood and Bollywood. Allu Arjun, one of the top male stars in Tollywood, Anushka, one of the top female stars from Southern India (Tamil and Telugu films) and Manoj Bajpai from Bollywood are part of the main cast. The film was a hit. The film is a deviation from contemporary commercial films. His films are prominent in messages of humanity and social responsibility, without spelling them out but woven into the narrative. Unlike the 'mass films' where social responsibility takes the form of vigilante violence, his stories are intense in the discourse on human fragilities. The films lack the binary of good and evil, but it is a journey of finding one's morality and humanity in a time of crisis. Hyderabad becomes a reflective and responsive landscape to their actions and provides spaces for playing out these moral and individual crises to negotiate and ultimately resolve them.

Khadgam is a story about three people - two friends: a Muslim auto driver Amjad from Old City and his friend Koti who wants to be a Telugu film star, and a police officer with extreme hatred towards Pakistan (it is revealed that his lover was killed by ISI agents). Amjad (Prakash Raj) gets arrested and victimised as a terror suspect due to his brother Azhar who goes missing for a year and returns after getting trained in Pakistan as a terrorist. Koti keeps struggling to land a role as an actor in the Telugu

industry. Radhakrishna is obsessed with terrorists and catching them. The three meet each other through the film and successfully stop a terrorist attack. The film was protested by both Muslim and Hindu groups. Muslim groups demanded to delete some scenes, and the Hindu groups counter protested not to delete the scenes which had some objectionable dialogues against Muslim community[78]

Vedam has five stories: about a poor man – cable Raju who lives in a slum and wants to move into a better social class; a handloom weaver and his daughter in law – who come to the city to sell a kidney to free his grandson from bondage of a moneylender Patel in their village; a sex-worker who wants to set up her own business, travels to Hyderabad from Amalapuram; and Rasheed who wants to leave the country as he feels alienated and discriminated. Their circumstances lead them all to a hospital, and they come under the attack of terrorists. They try to save people and also come to face their inner demons and anxieties.

Paisa is a story of Hindu boy Prakash in the Old City who aspires to become rich. He decides there are two ways to become rich; one is through corruption by becoming a politician and the second way which he decides is the easiest way, is to marry the daughter of a rich politician. He has three Muslim friends from which one is a girl Noor whose family is in debt with the local goon. As he hatches a plan to marry a rich girl Sweety that he meets, Noor is being married off to a rich Emirate Sheikh to pay off the debt to the local goon. Prakash rescues Noor from the marriage in a stolen car which carries a lot of money. The local politician and his goons wanting the money start chasing Prakash and his friends through the city. By the end, Prakash outsmarts them all and escapes with money and his friends to set up a garment store in Dubai.

These characters' association with the city and how each of them perceives, conceives and lives in the Hyderabad city is unravelled. The characters are some of metropolis tropes that Georg Simmel discusses – poor, sex-worker, stranger (migrant) and Muslims (other). The chapter attempted to understand the alienation and belonging in the urban spaces which are constantly under threat of violence (terrorist attacks). The uncanny is evoked in spaces by marginalisation and exclusions in the city is explored.

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[78] The Hindu, *Khadgam row comes to a simmer*. 29 December 2002

https://www.sakshi.com/news/andhra-pradesh/anantapur-court-quashes-plea-against-khadgam-movie-161961

Marginalised Cities

Urban geographers show how marginalisation plays out spatially. The ghettos, enclaves, slums are the different names for the spaces that acquired characteristics of and are defined by poverty, crime, dilapidation, deprivation, and garbage. These urban geographers who propose that the city's architecture dictates the mobility of the citizen and social structures, Caitlin Dyckmann adds that it also, "*helps to form subconscious identities and morality which informs the social relations"* (Dyckman, 2002, p. 317) (paraphrased). Hyderabad has the second highest poor population[79] most living in slums, according to the Census data 2011[80].

> *"13% of the population of Hyderabad live below the poverty line. There are at least 1,476 slums in Hyderabad with a population of at least 1.7 million, 66% of whom live in the core of the city that made up Hyderabad before the expansion in 2007. The remaining people live in 491 tenements. Nearly one-quarter of the slum-dwellers in the city came from other parts of India in the 1990s, with at least 63% having lived in slums for at least a decade. Around 30% of the slums have basic service while others depend on general public services from the government.*[81]*"*

The films *Vedam*, *Khadgam* and *Paisa* depict the spatial marginalisation in Hyderabad City. Amjad, Rahimudhin Qureshi and Prakash belong to the Old City from films *Khadgam*, *Vedam* and *Paisa* respectively and Cable Raju from *Vedam* lives in jubilee hills basti. Koti from *Khadgam* lives in Film Nagar, a lower-middle-class locality. The status of Rasheed from *Vedam* is from an upper-middle-class Muslim family though he lives in the Old City. The spaces recontextualised in the films can be explored to understand how the ghettos and enclaves acquire meaning through the unique everyday practices of the people. Marginalisation occurs at an intersection of class, caste, religion, occupation, education and gender, and space plays a crucial role where these identities and the resultant contestations, negotiations play out. Chua Beng Huat (2008) writes about the nature of enclaves and how films have the potential to counter the hegemonic discourse of the city says:

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[79] Deccan Chronicle, *Hyderabad has second largest populace in India.* 13 July 2017

[80] Times of India, *Steep rise in Hyderabad's slum population*. 30 August 2013.

[81] http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/hyderabad-population/

> *"Parts of the city come to be known to all as 'enclaves', such as ethnic enclaves and enclaves of disrepute, where multiple social deviances are concentrated with agglomerative negative imaginaries and effects. Such marginal spaces, however, are resources for filmmakers to project counter-representations and critiques of the mainstream imaginary of the city"* (Huat, 2008, p. 5).

Deriving from the descriptions of Liang (2005), the spatially marginalised are the citizens who are not on the state radar, for their development work within their unique networks of the city. The informal businesses, and the undesirables and marginalised within and out of the official institutions; they find a way to seep into the state institutions. The city cannot work without them, and they cannot survive without the city. It is the contemporary transgressors, *"the hacker, the migrant, the pirate, the alien and the squatter"* who redefine the city (Liang, 2005, p. 374). Marginality is not just about poverty but also intersects with the religious identity of Muslims in Amjad's and Rahim's victimisation, and in sex-worker Saroja's case, her gender and occupation bring other forms of exclusions in the city. The same notions of problematizing the ghettos, deprived areas, etc., exist from the 19th-century urban renaissance.

4.3.2. Urban Poor and Aspirations

It is a desire for social mobility that drives Koti – an aspiring actor; Prakash – a local model in Old City and Cable Raju who sets up cables in houses and collects cable money, to creatively work the Hyderabad city to realise their dreams. They all come from slums, Old City and Jubilee Hills *basti*[82]. They are defined by the spaces they come from and "*Poverty* is…. *both an ecological and spatial condition (in representation)"* (James, 1998, p. 34). "*Continuing the marginalization theme, the marginalization of individuals and groups is often made highly visible through spatial differentiation"* (Huat, 2008, p. 5) which is demonstrated in locating Cable Raju and Prakash in a basti but who woo a rich girl to be able to move up the social ladder (Huat, 2008, p. 5). The basti framed in the background in *Vedam*, and the Charminar as constant background in *Paisa* ties the subjects firmly to a location. Though the

[82] *Basti* is a local name for slum

presence of a city's architecture is on the peripheries of the film representation, it is the representation of the city's citizens with the city that intervenes in the mediations (Dyckman, 2002).

Vedam: Cable Raju of Jubilee Hills

Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills are one of the prime locations in Hyderabad, where the very rich live. As is the case with every prime location, these are adjacent to or surrounded by slums and lower-middle-class dwelling. Cable Raju lives in Jubilee hills basti. Cable Raju is desperate to get expensive New Year eve party passes for him and his girlfriend, as that party would confirm his marriage to the girl, securing his future into wealth. To pay the money for the tickets, he tries everything from chain snatching, to robbing money.

Cable Raju's Jubilee Hills basti is shown in montages, the claustrophobic housing, the people sitting on the road, the family life in a basti has no inside and outside, private and public; everything is public. Instead of panoramic views of the earlier cinematic cities, the images of the city that are frantic, dissolve into each other (James, 1998). The first words that Cable Raju says are "*deeni amma jeevitham*" (*curse this life*) which is a complaint about his life and its low status. These first words by one of the leads in the film set the tone for the whole film. This cursing of his life and trying to get out of it becomes his journey in the city. The local cable owner looks to nab his employee cable Raju who works for him and is pocketing the monthly cable bills for himself. Raju gives them a run by jumping onto the rooftops, scaling walls and chatting with some people in between. He knows the topography of his slum (figure 4.9) thoroughly. This slum and the city become what he wants it to be: a maze to confuse the goondas after him or a community to form familial relation; to find opportunities to meet his immediate needs. The city which becomes what one makes of it, is a residual city as used by Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) to describe the Bombay city in the film *Satya* (Ram Gopal Varma, 1998) and it is called by many names 'unintended city', 'kinetic city' (Mazumdar, 2007) and 'city of experience' (Certeau, 1984). This can be seen as claiming the urban space by the poor through thorough knowledge of the chaotic space of slums (Baweja, 2015).

Figure 4.9: Jubilee Hills Basti; Source: YouTube

Raju lies to the girl that he is also rich and successfully pretends to be rich. He is a flaneur, the *potta* of Hyderabad city. The role of flaneur being one or pretending to be someone else, a symbolic changing of bodies which Maria Beville (2013) calls a privilege. He stops at a roadside hawker who sells t-shirts and rejects each t-shirt by saying "noticeable" and then finds something he likes and says, "unnoticeable" which mean that no one would recognise that t-shirt as duplicate. Georg Simmel talks about the use of fashion to keep the lower class from infiltrating into their bourgeoisie spaces. He keeps shoes wrapped in a cover safely when he gets home, he uses branded cosmetics to maintain his looks like Clarins and L'Oreal, and he swiftly changes his West Godavari Telugu dialect to American English, and his body language transforms as each space he inhabits changes; these processes become his second nature. These processes "*…of borrowing, merging and adapting that take place in a globalized culture industry in which alienated youth all over the world find access to sounds and images to build a sense of identity"* (Fu & Murray, 2007, p. 283). It is a privilege that the Indian society bestows upon on fair skin. Raju's friend Ganapathi is never called by his name, but he earned the moniker '*nalloda'* (Blackie) or '*Bogu nalaaya'* (Coal faced fellow) because his skin is dark. Cable Raju is fair and has the privilege of pretending to be a rich person. Ganapathi has to settle for whatever life has to offer and cannot pretend like cable Raju to be something else as dark complexion is associated with the poor. Ganapathi and Raju comment on how rich people are very fair, to which Raju says that their sheltered life in ACs gives them that light skin. The girl that Raju is in love with also calls Ganapathi 'blackie' and is surprised that Raju

is associating with him. The marginalisation faced by dark-skinned people in India is nuanced and complex, which brings in the discourse on 'beauty', and regional stereotypes. This obsession with fairness is widespread and internalised as is evident from India's successful large market of fairness products. Apart from clothing and performance, dark skin carries many negative connotations associated with caste, class and region. The first marker of exclusions is based on the skin tone, as it is easier to judge someone by something visible.

The slum and slum dwellers survive in the informal economy doing odd jobs, singing Bhajans, providing refrigerating coffins and domestic services etc. This informal economy that influences and even changes the spaces and people in the current global flows, is termed as a kinetic city by Rahul Mehotra (2017). It is not just the people outside the "inner city" (which is used to describes slums, ghettos, enclaves etc.; by Guy Baeten (2002) who associate it with deprivation, dirt and misery. Cable Raju also calls it '*murikiváda*' whose literal translation is 'place of dirt' but translates to 'slum' when he was comparing his basti in Jubilee Hills to the Jubilee Hills on the other side. "*Urban dystopianism has pervaded and perverted common sense thinking to such an extent that the mere phrase 'inner city' would instantly be associated with danger, dirt and disease*" (Baeten, 2002, p. 104).

When Cable Raju is struggling to find money to buy the overpriced passes for the party, his friend Dappu Subhani suggests snatching chains of women as a solution. Desperate to get the money and move up the social ladder, Cable Raju succeeds in snatching a chain but immediately gets caught by the police. His urban experience propels him towards realising his world, turning dystopic and dark when he was asked by a sex-worker Saroja in the police station if what he felt was really 'love'. Further, when his grandmother provides bail money and gives her savings of Rs. 3000 to him, his morality already torn, he is ready to confess to his lover, but keeps fluctuating as he rides his bike onto the Hyderabad streets. The urban experience turns uncanny for him with the guilt of snatching chains of women and the class divide between him and his girl. The upper-class New Year eve party passes for one night of revelry for rupees 40,000 turns into a dystopian urban experience Cable Raju. He finally realises the reality of urban inequalities manifesting in different forms of exclusions, exploitation and state aggression.

The urban subject Cable Raju appears still, in this dilemma, while riding his bike but the city is moving fast and away from his reach. The helpless marginalised urban subject is always on the move to survive, but the city moves faster than him/her, leaving him/her to catch up to narrow the income disparity that arises from being left out by development. Finally, Cable Raju robs money from the old handloom weaver Ramulu, who received the money by selling his daughter-in-law's kidney to release his grandson from bonded labour from the money lender in the village. Cable Raju's choices and the moral dilemmas contribute to the formation of 'dystopian visions of the city' (Fu & Murray, 2007, p. 288). The city provides us a frame to show his corrupted nature and dystopic world. Cable Raju returns the money, and as he is relieved of his guilt, he plays with a kid in the hospital with a clean conscience. But this new found happiness found is short-lived when the child is killed by a bullet wound, and the city unleashes a new form of dystopia in the form of a terror attack. In efforts to save people from the terrorists' shooting in the hospital, Cable Raju gets killed and finds his peace only while dying in the city. The city can offer comfort, only in death, and there is a catharsis offered to the individual in a violent death; that comfort cannot be found in riches, love and family as they possess a potential to turn into dystopian urban spaces.

Paisa: The Hindu in Old City

Prakash, from the film *Paisa*, is a Hindu in the Old City who wants better things in his life and wants an upper-class lifestyle. He tries to woo a minister's daughter to get married into wealth and live a luxurious lifestyle, but falls for a poor Muslim girl Noor. He abandons the plan to woo the rich girl. There is an ever-present news in the background of the film, talking about the remuneration of film stars, the money robbed in scams. The disparity of wealth between the richest and the poorest is not only stark but too close to each other in urban spaces. While rescuing Noor from her marriage to a rich visiting Emirate sheikh, Prakash uses a cop's car which has 'hawala'[83] money

[83] The word "Hawala" means trust. It is an alternative or parallel remittance system, which works outside the circle of banks and formal financial systems. Hawala is an ancient system of money transfer which originated in South Asia and is now being used across the globe. This system mainly developed in India, before the introduction of western banking practices. It works on the basis of many middle men called the hawaladars or the hawala dealers. The reason, why Hawala is extensively used despite the fact that it is illegal, is the inseparable element of trust and extensive use of family or regional affiliations. Source: http://www.n2moneymatters.com/2011/03/what-is-hawala-all-you-want-to-know.html

for a politician, for election campaigning and buying a seat in the party. He tricks the politician, police and the local gangster and takes the money and settles in Dubai with Noor and opens an Indian traditional wear store.

As a Hindu in the Old City, his vision and experience of the space are different from Amjad from *Khadgam* and Rahim in *Vedam.* He is pitted against the Muslim community many times in the film. He is constantly framed with Charminar in the background, locating him in Old City, making him an Old City *Potta.* The city's malls and monument are also framed behind him (figure 4.10), making him not just the *potta* of Old City, Charminar area but also a Hyderabadi by virtue of his non-Muslim religion, devoid or the urban performativity of '*potta'* and ease of access to many city spaces. The constant framing of Charminar behind him informs us of his location and the city's history. The city in the background as muted monuments and indifferent consumerist symbols are witnesses to, and they also influence the individual's trials and tribulations in the city. The story is not just about Prakash, but also the city's troubled engagement with poverty, development, globalization and communalism.

Figure 4.10: Story of the city: Charminar in the background; Source: YouTube

The opening scene of the film *Paisa* depicts a kite competition where the Muslims have Salman Khan on their kite and Prakash has Rajnikanth on his kite. He wins the prize money, indicating to the superiority of Hindu masculinity over the Muslims. When Noor wears jeans and a tank top, the local Muslim youth play the role of moral police and attack her. Prakash comes and rescues her from them, tells her that she

should wear anything she wants. It demonstrates the necessary secularism and liberalism of a Hindu man against the regressive Islam and its followers. Blom Hansen opines that there is a desire, of the dominant ideology of the country, to a restoration to the pure, Hindu nation. The removal of Muslim, the other will lead to this restoration, which he calls "*restoration to the full 'manly' strength"* (Srivastava S. , 2010, p. 836).

In this film *Paisa,* to inflict violence and ruthless killings, people are called from Andhra side who are influenced by Mahesh Babu and another set of the gang from Rayalseema who are fans of Junior NTR by another politician to look for the same money. This subverts the dominant ideology of violent gangs' association only with urban spaces, as the statistics mentioned in the beginning point to the high incidence of violence in small towns and small cities. The gangs from both regions come from the lower classes. Here they come to the city in greed for the money and an opportunity to build their illegal businesses. The city, which is growing with its informal and illegal sectors produces conditions conducive to form gangs by recruiting youth from mostly economically marginal sections (Parthasarathy, 1997). The big city breeds greed and evil, along with the promise of opportunity and money (Dyckman, 2002). These local, provincial gangs are associated with politicians by caste loyalties, and in the film, the politicians use these gangs for their gain. These gangs aspire to be in the city, and their only means and mode of entertainment are films which they take very seriously. Films are the only window to the city of Hyderabad, which on the ground might not be as exotic as it is imagined to be.

When the local youth are picked up by the police on suspicion of stealing the car with *hawala* money, Prakash is also picked up. Amidst the loyal followers of the Muslim legislator who closely resembles the Hyderabad politician Akbaruddin Owaisi[84], he is the only Hindu who is not associated with the Muslim legislators in the police lockup. The Muslim legislator gets them released, and his followers are the 'aggressive' and 'regressive' Muslims. If the Muslim communities' obsession is keeping their identity and themselves safe, Prakash's obsession is money and getting rich. It is observed in the film, the notion that Muslims do not aim for social mobility or bettering themselves

[84] Akbaruddin Owaisi is a politician from Hyderabad, and belongs to the Majilis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen party. He is an MLA of Telangana legislative assembly from Chandrayangutta constituency which falls in the Old City zone. He is infamous for his communally charged speeches.

with education or being enterprising by shedding their Islamic ideology and embracing modernism. The films' narrative fails to see the circumstances of alienation of Muslims and their subjection to constant suspicion and as the outsider that results in a need to assert their identity and feel safe amongst their own group. There is little support from the government and politics who take advantage of their insecurities and position to keep them alienated and uneducated.

Khadgam: Starry Dreams

Koti in *Khadgam* wants to be a film star and has only one-track mind. His acting spills into daily life where he acts in different roles. Like people who come to Bombay to become a Bollywood star, Hyderabad is Mumbai for Tollywood. The presence of studios in Hyderabad, Ramanaidu studios and Annapurna Studios attracts many people aspiring to be part of the Telugu film industry. Krishna Vamsi, the director of *Khadgam*, lived in Film Nagar during his struggling days and used to hang around Annapurna studios. Now Film Nagar has become one more prominent place and still has lower and middle-class dwelling in and around it.

The film looks at the city and the cinematic city that produces the city and the exclusion of people into the exclusive elite caste biased film industry, which is Tollywood. Sitamahalakshmi, a small-town girl from Nizamabad, comes to the city to become a heroine; she is rescued by Koti from a sexual assault. The risks and exclusion for a woman are double than a man who has to prove his mettle as an actor over and over again if he does not belong to a film industry family. Women have to face constant sexual exploitation even after gaining entry into the industry. The recent wave of 'Me Too' movement revealed the sexual harassment and exploitation of women in Telugu Industry when Sri Reddy[85], a character artist in Telugu film industry came forward with allegations and stories of rampant sexual harassment at the hands of actors, producers and directors. After denials and a ban by Movie Artists Association of Telugu film industry, the film industry relented by revoking the ban on Sri Reddy and agreed to put in place a panel[86] to handle the sexual harassment cases

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[85] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/telugu/movies/news/aspiring-actress-strips-in-public-at-film-chamber-alleging-sexual-exploitation-in-telugu-film-industry/articleshow/63654666.cms

[86] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/telugu/movies/news/film-body-forms-panel-on-sexual-harassment/articleshow/63740938.cms

and help women in the industry. Sri Reddy's accusations were echoed by other women and saw criticism pouring in against sexist and misogynist attitudes of Telugu film Industry. The struggle of a common person to gain access to the world of the films is hard if the person is not upper caste or does not have a film background (Srinivas, 2009).

Sitamahalakshmi succumbs to the sexual demands of a director in return for a role in his film. Koti is morally outraged at Sitamahalakshmi, and he is determined to get into a film only through hard work. He and his friend who wants to be a director, kidnap a producer to narrate a story and show Koti's acting skills. The producer is impressed with them and gives them an opportunity. Though Koti also commits a punishable offence of kidnapping, he is not judged the same way as Sita was. The film industry also replicates the city's exclusionary practices and keeps out undesirable people.

The dominance of Tamil industry filmmakers and personalities and lack of original scripts are commented and lamented upon in *Khadgam*. When Koti is thrown out of all studios by security guards, the guards talk to him and scold him in Hindi. Koti retaliates by telling them that Hindi speaking people in Telugu film industry remain as security guards only. This could be seen as a comment on how the southern superstars are typecast in the Bollywood films as second leads and supporting cast. Koti and his friend feel sad about the fascination in Hyderabad with other language films (mainly Hindi films) and talk about pure Telugu films. This was the problem for the filmmakers who first moved to Hyderabad from Chennai that Hyderabad city lacked the 'Teluguness' (Srinivas, 2013).

Vedam: The Migrants and Visitors

It is the observer or the stranger to the city who defines the city as discussed in earlier sections. Beville (2013) says that there are two major themes of Modernism - the city and the artist: the "*observer who brings a distinct consciousness to the city"* (Beville, 2013, p. 607). It is reported that the new slums that have cropped up in Hyderabad city are to accommodate the migrants since the 1990s and the recent times. Slum growth is proportional to the economic growth in the city[87]. There are many people who come to the city to make quick money and do not have the intention to stay. They

[87] Deccan Chronicle, *Hyderabad has second largest poor populace in India*. 13 July 2017

comprise the floating population of the city that Hyderabad receives in large numbers. Handloom weaver Ramulu from Sircilla who comes with his daughter-in-law in the film *Vedam*, to sell her kidney to pay off the debt to the local money lender and zamindar Patel to free his grandson from bonded labour at Patel's brick kiln. There are studies on visitors to the city as a tourist, but unlike the tourists, these desperate visitors do not take in the city as a spectacle or for pleasure. The sex worker Saroja and her close friend and associate Karpooram (which means camphor) leave the brothel of Rathamma in Amalapuram (in Coastal Andhra) to set up their own business in Hyderabad to make big money. For the entrepreneurial Saroja, the city is not a spectacle, but she is the spectacle and pleasure to the city.

For Ramulu and his daughter-in-law, Hyderabad is a place to make quick money for survival through illegal organ trade, and Hyderabad city is a scary and unnavigable labyrinth for a small business owner from a small village with no training to navigate the big city. The moment they step out of the train, Ramulu seeks the help of a telephone booth operator to call on a number of the agent in this racket. From there, they are whisked to different places by the agent. Their clothes, old and shabby, are looked down on by the agent. The big greedy city offers them only half the money that the kidney is actually sold for. The other half money is pocketed by the agent, who takes advantage of their desperation and he offers reduced money referring to their caste, saying that their blood is not good. Ramulu had already sold his kidney earlier to pay off the principal debt. The moneylender Patel now demanded the interest money and takes advantage of their illiteracy and helplessness. The greed of rural and urban is no different, the rural is as cruel as the city, and the village took away a child into bonded labour, cheating them because of their illiteracy and the city is selling organs illegally and in exploitative ways. But the city also helps them, when Cable Raju who robs their money, gives back the money adding the Rs. 3000 from his pocket and he later saves them from terrorists' attack in the hospital. It is the city that gives them the opportunity, even though illegal, to alleviate their problems.

Saroja, a sex worker, flees from a brothel in Amalapuram (town in Coastal Andhra) and takes the train to Hyderabad. For many like Saroja the big city offers a better life with more money. Like in Ramulu's case, the dichotomy of rural vs urban, good village vs evil city is turned on its head. Amalapuram village is as exploitative as Hyderabad city. Saroja, as a sex worker is proud of her occupation. She sees it as

business only, and she is unapologetic about it. She rejects and chides a man on the train who offers to make her life better by marrying her, as charity. She is the object of desire and disgust in the city. The morality and evil of the city space are located in the body of the sex worker in real and imagined cities.

Sex workers are able to navigate and manipulate the city space by fighting the marginalisation, in some ways trying to minimise risks and maximise profits (Sanders, 2004). Saroja, when caught by the police on wrong pretexts, tries to argue with the police. The policeman desires her and at the same time is repulsed by her. Later, when she realises that he would not budge with insults or even pleading and that he will send her back, she makes a deal that she will give a percentage of her earnings and he demands that she should provide her sexual services for free for him.

Cable Raju, when humiliated by the police excesses, has a temporary change of heart and Rahim is permanently scarred and traumatised by police excesses. Saroja though humiliated and berated after she walks out of the police station, is in high spirits and looks only to the future. Saroja is unfettered by the state impositions and state-imposed violence because she, as a sex worker has never looked at the police as a protector. Among all the people who face hardships in Vedam, a sex-worker suffers under the moralising eyes of the city, the moment she arrives in Hyderabad. Her marginalisation is doubled due to her gender and her occupation. The city tries to marginalise and push sex-workers to the shadows and fringes of the urban space to render them invisible.

Karpooram, a transvestite/*hijra*, faces marginalisation in different ways from others in the film. She is constantly talked down to by everyone, the men who come desiring Saroja, are repulsed by the sight of her. The emotions that Saroja evokes in them is confusing; it is coupled with the masculine desire to control her sexually and morally. The male anxiety that arises in them when they see or talk to Karpooram is a heightened castration anxiety, repulsion to her who is not categorised or defined by nature. "*Hijras have long been social pariahs, stigmatized and set apart on the basis of their transgressive gender identification and their location beyond the domain of procreative sexuality"* (Reddy, 2005, p. 256). The difference is not something recognisable; any difference from the idealised male masculinity is rejected. Like the Muslims, Women, Dalits, etc., the *hijra* is at the lowest rung in the social ladder of respect and care (Reddy, 2005). But the figure of *hijra* has to be out of sight, to not even exist in the fringes, as they have no space anywhere which is depicted when she

goes to use a bathroom in the railway station, she asks, "*do only men and women could go to the toilet? Do not other humans need to go to the toilet?*" The only person who treats her with respect, love and affection is Saroja, who is ready to do anything to save Karpooram. In return, Karpooram gives Saroja what she could not get from the society, while women envy her, and the men desire her, both disrespect her.

4.3.3. Muslim representation in mainstream Tollywood

Amjad from *Khadgam* and Rahim from *Vedam* figure in this discussion. Both of them are oppressed by the police, humiliated, beaten and mistrusted. The Muslim population in Hyderabad from 42% in 2001 is now 43% according to 2011 census data[88]. Given the considerably large population in Hyderabad, from where Telugu films are produced representing the city and ethos of the Hyderabad city, the representation of Muslims in Tollywood film is appalling. There is not one film where a Muslim is a protagonist except for the remake of *Mughal-e-Azam* in Telugu and films adaptation of *Alibaba and 40 thieves*. The Muslim representations started in Hyderabad not in Tollywood, but from the local Deccani language films as discussed in chapter 2. Those representations are different from the representations of Muslim in Tollywood films. The Muslims in those films are people doing regular things and just like Hindu heroes and other Hindu characters in Tollywood films their faith is secondary, which does not figure into the narrative and is not emphasised. Tollywood has token representations of Muslims, and they are forgettable characters. The invisible Muslim suddenly has come to the fore in cinematic and media imagination as a terrorist (Srinivas, 1994). The Muslim socials that were prominent in Bollywood are not replicated in Tollywood

There have been many studies on the representation of Islam and Muslims in Bollywood. The studies conclude that Muslim representation is always problematic; the Muslim figure is always the 'other' and the invasive alien in the nation (Chakrabarthy, 2005; Kumar, 2013; Srivastava, 2010). Rahimudhin Qureshi from the film *Vedam* has just found out that his wife is pregnant with twins, wearing a striped shirt and formal pants, talks about naming his twins – if a girl: Zara and if a son: Shahrukh Khan or Pawan Kalyan (brother of Chiranjeevi and one of the major stars

[88] http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/C-01.html, religious census data

in Tollywood) to his wife riding pillion on the bike. They are in the middle of Ganesh Chaturthi procession, Ganesh Chaturthi in Hyderabad has risen out of communal tension, to show Hindu force in numbers through the Hindu festival of Ganesh Chaturthi. Their fear amidst the revellers and devotees is tangible, and then someone applies colour on Rahim's wife - Sara's face. He objects to it, and the devotees surround him, drag him off of his bike and start beating him.

A police jeep passes by, and a police officer stops to apply tilak and prays to God. The police arrive at the scene and break up the fight. This act of devotion by a police officer is different from that of a practising Muslim because Islam is represented as an ideology whereas in Hinduism, religion and nation coalesce (Murty, 2009). In the pushing and shoving, Sara is pushed aside on to the pavement by the devotees. The devotees lie to the police that Rahim was abusing the Hindu God. Before Rahim could answer, he was asked his name, when his name affirms his Muslim identity, the police insult Muslim community for disturbing the peace and slaps him. His wife has a miscarriage in the scuffle.

Amjad Khan in the films *Khadgam* is an auto driver. He is arrested when he defends his friend Pooja. The police officer Radhakrishna holds Pooja's blouse is, placing his hand on her bosom. But later Amjad apologises to police, but Radhakrishna is not sorry for outraging the woman's modesty. Amjad Khan stops the police officer from entering the mosque with his footwear as the terrorist enters the masjid. The police officer arrests him for that too, and he insults the Muslim community in the police station. Both Rahim and Amjad are arrested as they are blood relatives of terrorists though there is no evidence of their links to any terrorist groups. Rahim's nephews have links with terrorists, and Amjad's brother is a terrorist.

Amjad does not question his previous arrest for beating up the policeman for assaulting his friend Pooja. Rahim carries the trauma and humiliation; he is scarred and wants to escape the prejudice. Rahim carries the cultural traumas which Derrida calls as Hauntologie; he says, "*…hauntologie also covers the spectral presence of cultural traumas (such as the Holocaust or 9/11)*" (Eckhard, 2011, p. 12). When Amjad is questioned about his loyalties, he strongly objects and asserts that India is his country. Rahim is already detached and does not feel safe. Rahim after the loss of his unborn child and his trust in the state to protect him; holds on to his faith for his

stability. He grows his beard, wears Surma[89] in his eyes and wears only Kurtas shedding the western clothing, and clean-shaven look.

Amjad is always seen from the beginning carrying Muslim markers of the skull cap, Surma and kurtas. In *Khadgam*, Police officer Radha Krishna's prejudice is justified in a flashback when his fiancé is killed by ISI terrorist. He projects his hatred towards Pakistan and on all Muslims. The police officer Radhakrishna goes on an anti-Muslim tirade that they are disloyal, secretly harbour a love for Pakistan, Amjad counters these points and talks about the growing insecurity in Muslim communities in India. To which the police officer offers the oft-heard rhetoric against Muslims who complain about the persecution that they are living here on Hindu's compassion for which they need to be grateful and that they are free to leave Pakistan. This is the only time that Amjad gets to vent out his frustrations. The words of the Police inspector acquire a certain kind of legitimacy where he talks holding a gun, and he is framed with a huge national flag in the background (figure 4.11). While Amjad is handcuffed, squatting on the floor and addressing police officer as 'sahib'.

Figure 4.11: Muslim Vs nation confrontation in Khadgam; Source: YouTube

The discussions of Rahim and the police officer are not as melodramatically invested as the above scene in *Khadgam*. The overused lines of 'go to Pakistan' and 'you are at Hindus mercy' are not used. The police officer looks at them as an unnecessary nuisance and with suspicion. In *Vedam* the Muslims is seen as an ambivalent stranger (after 1947 partition) who may live in India but harbours a desire for Pakistan (Chakrabarthy, 2005). Rahim does not go into exasperated monologues of proving his love for the nation. He calls out the prejudice of the police officer and tells him that

[89] It is like a kohl that is applied to eyes in powder form

with his blind hatred towards Muslims is no different from the Muslim terrorists. Amjad's love for his country and his secular nature in the films is emphasised too many times, but this is not enough. For a Hindu, there are no such moral dilemmas of nation vs Hinduism or no demonstrations to prove his loyalties (Chakrabarthy, 2005) (Murty, 2009). Amjad is asked for the sacrifice of his terrorist brother to prove his loyalty. Amjad keeps shouting "Vandemataram" when the police officer Radha shoots his brother, when his brother Azhar is not armed and begs for his life. *Khadgam* is one of those films which tries to deal with Islam sensitively, but ends up reinforcing the hegemonic discourse.

In *Pokiri*, Syed Mohammed Pasha Qadri is the new police commissioner, and when he is introduced, he is shown doing namaz with Azaan playing in the background. The narrative is interrupted to show him practising his faith. In the same film, when Mahesh Babu is revealed as a police officer, he was shown performing his duty, and there was no visual representation of his faith. In Khadgam, the police are introduced in similar introduction, where his achievements as a police officer are noted but not his religion while Amjad does Namaz after two to three minutes of entering into the frame. A Muslim is always recognised by his religion. It is in only in *Vedam,* both the police officer and Rahim who deal with each other and the religious prejudices, are shown practising their faiths when introduced.

In *Khadgam*, the nation is placed in the city of Hyderabad. The nation is played out in the local, as *'the nationalism'* is *'… expressed through the regionalism and localisms.'* (Chakrabarthy, 2005, p. 213). The characters in the films describe their cultural singularity of the nation through the song *"memey Indians"* (we are Indians). The song has no context in the narrative point whatsoever; they just trick their Muslim landlord (who is caricatured with stereotypical Muslim-Telugu accent) into thinking that they have paid three months' rent of the six months' rent they owed. They immediately break into a song about being Indian and chanting Vandemataram in celebration. This song evokes a sense of collective identity and shared history and culture. The police officer Radha catches the head of the ISI Mansoor Khan in front of a temple, near the statue of "Bharat Mata"[90]. Even if *Vedam* showed a different

[90] The Indian nation is anthropomorphised as a woman who is the mother of its citizens and called 'Bharatmata'

engagement with Muslim alienation and victimisation avoiding the pitfalls of using the same stereotypical images of Muslims in circulation for the markets, there is a need for alternative representation of Islam in Tollywood. Muslims are represented in relation to violence and crime, and this image continues to be stereotyped (Hirji, 2008).

4.4. Summary

The city has been represented as unliveable and oppressive (Krutnik, 1997) (McArthur, 1997). And the "*urban aesthetics that is built upon the dialectics of dream and nightmare*" (Huat, 2008, p. 22). The chase of Siva and, some of the scenes in *Pokiri, Vedam* and *Paisa* traverse the city representing the closed in, bounded spaces but at the same time providing opportunities to escape to safety. The liminal spaces of train stations, tea stalls, hotels, college canteen, streets, historical monument, public transport and shopping complexes where nostalgia and romance are evoked are interrupted by violence where either one of the parties (villain and hero) establishes or maintains or destabilises the existing power relations. These liminal and transient urban spaces are repeated features of the city, which can be re-inscribed and reinvented by the inhabitants. There is no private in a dystopian city and a gangster film. The homelessness of the youth in the city and the disenfranchisement produces violence as demonstrated in *Siva* and *Pokiri.* The private has been disrupted, and the home is invaded by the violence of outside with death and personal trauma. The calm and composed gangster of *Siva* with local networks is replaced by a character with excesses and hedonistic global gangster in the 21st century.

The women are unsafe in the city and become the desired objects of masculinity, which is in control of all spaces. Masculinity finally subdues Asha and Shruthi whose transgressions are managed, from masculine spaces into domesticity. The city is unforgiving to women who are sex workers and transgender. The insecure masculinities which hang to the past cultural and social ideologies of traditional masculinity and chauvinism becomes symbolic of the bygone era literally and figuratively but try to keep up and adjust with the confused, retaliatory actions towards changing urban landscape, economic structures, and women's freedom. The economic disparity that existed continues to exist in new forms in neo-liberal city policies that privilege the already rich and well off and marginalise the poor and lower class more.

This leaves us with the bold imprint that "*class does not disappear just because traditional ways of life fade away (Beck, 1998[1992]: 99) but forms part of a continuum in their lives"* (Nayak, 2006, p. 825). The dystopian city does not offer any other alternative to solve problems of crime and violence other than violence.

The panoramic and continuous city is fragmented and is connected by disparate networks and the hyperlink film *Vedam* is the marker of globalisation and global flows and the beginning of the transition from modernity to postmodern cities. "*These moments of apprehended fragments are experienced directly, remembered after the fact and/or recorded by different modes and media – memorialized in writing, painting, photography and cinema"* (Huat, 2008, p. 3). The neo-liberal policies of the city, which drive to cleanse the city benefit certain economic classes and reproduce more fissures in the spatial structures. The representation of cinematic city from the cinematic spaces from the cinematic publics, to exclusive elite zones like shopping malls, capture globalisation.

The representation of a singular city in *Khadgam* and *Siva* have given way to the conglomeration of the city with different temporal settings and different classes and ethnic groups in *Vedam, Paisa* and *Pokiri* (Huat, 2008). The panoramic shots to establish identity of a city to provide an understanding of spatial structures of Hyderabad city, is replaced by the depiction of chaotic montages of schizoid spaces with no proper link to each other, each space is nuzzled into another like a labyrinth but with more informal and intangible networks and communication across the city. Unlike the vigilante in *Pokiri* and *Siva* who has to transcend the street and homelessness, the youth's turf (*Vedam* and *Paisa*) is the street, and that is where he engages with the authority of law through trickery or logic. What one notes is that, there is a thin line between bravado and violence (Liang, Cinematic citizenship and the illegal city, 2005, p. 379).

The dystopic and uncanny visions of the city in the cinema gives us a way to explore the inequalities, violence, crime and slum communities, and the city's persistent deprivation and poverty. The spatialisation of poverty is a process of reducing and making it a problem of a particular urban space and not link it to the social systems in place. This process is called 'spatial fetishization' of urban spaces (Baeten, 2002). With poverty and deprivation becoming spatial metaphors, the state claims no

responsibility and blames the poor, instead of the forces of capitalism and neoliberalism that state helped to establish and facilitate.

The struggles of the city have taken a casteless characterisation, as in *Vedam* the hero declared that there are only two castes in the world: haves and have-nots. This is a tendency that films lean into, where only the class struggles between poor and rich exist. It is the privilege of the upper castes to embody 'castelessness'. The films' narrative is placed in the upper-caste stars who even when playing a lower-caste role (denoted in the dressing, food, dwelling and performance) do not portray the caste articulations of their struggles, poverty, contestations and conflicts. The anxiety to acknowledge caste in Telugu film industry informs the strict boundaries of Telugu film industry which allows or disallows people to enter the industry based on caste lines. The othering of the undesirable, Muslim, sex worker and *hijra* is spatial. If sex workers and *hijras* are threat to the patriarchal spatial order, the Muslim is a threat to the nation, a larger imagination of space that "*Nationalism—the integrity of the nation-state and the imagined belongingness of its citizens—is predicated on its dreaded other, namely, the enemy within, the dissident, the terrorist"* (Chakrabarthy, 2005, p. 220). The urban anxiety with increasing wealth gap, isolation and surveillance is symbolised in the gangster violence, and terrorist attacks both violence are perpetrated by Muslims. This reflects the increasing anxiety and renewed revitalisation of Hindutva politics around the figure of a Muslim male figure who needs to be subdued before becoming a threat to the city and nation.

The marginalised find ways to cope with the alienation and economic status with 'tactics' or violence. The marginalisation manifests in different ways for different people at intersections of identities. The alienation of an individual in a metropolis brings the uncanny of the city to fore and can be 'cut out' and 'turn over' frames. Death is closely related to the city, and its residents are indifferent to it but affected by it. Each violent and untimely death uncovers the uncanny city. The reliance on technology and growing surveillance, with the welfare state stepping back, growing neo-liberal policies in the city that encourage association of crime and violence with the spaces of lumpen poor and undesirables produces the dystopian vision.

The cinematic city is divided into zones that are mainly for the wealthy, middle class and poor. The wealthy reside in high rise luxury apartments and sprawling mansions. These are in close proximity to the slums reminding the slum dwellers of the wealth

gap which becomes the backdrop of a dystopian city. The close proximity of slums to the wealthy deters them to enter the space that is associated with filth and lumpen elements. When these spaces collide with the encounters of the two groups and incursions into each other spaces, the uncanny of the spaces emerge. The desire of the poor to belong to a higher class and the fear and disdain of wealthy and middle class to be poor, drives them to witness the uncanny in city. The violence erupting in the transient spaces of hospitals, public transport, monuments and streets reaches the private spheres of homes, making the home and the city unfamiliar and haunting, which are features of the uncanny.

The private space of gated communities is disconnected from the rest of the city and blind to the violence and decay in the city, whereas the slum is vulnerable to violence, stigmatization and alienation, due to its stereotyped associations with crime, dilapidation and disease. Urban planning has zoned the city and communities into separate areas, and placed tight boundaries between the wealthy spaces and slums. The city is more fragmented, and gated commercial/office/residential spaces with controlled access, avoid meeting undesirables. The opportunity for shared spaces and concerns, for common pressure groups, for conflict resolution and negotiations to rewrite and redefine spaces is being lost. Mixed neighbourhoods are beneficial to all communities, in helping equitable distribution of infrastructure and amenities, in encouraging diversity that fosters tolerance, in dispelling the stereotypes and in keeping rents and housing prices low. It is this vision of an inclusive city that both urban planning and cinema should engage with and articulate.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion: An Inclusive City?

5.1. Introduction

The thesis outlined exclusions that are mapped onto cinematic representation, with particular reference to the city of Hyderabad. It has been observed that exclusion in Hyderabad plays out on a complex and interconnected map of class, gender, caste and religious identities. Cinema offers a way to map out the exclusions of the city through its visual narratives. For example, the exclusions for a woman are more compared to a man, and the exclusions become more complex when she is from a lower class and from certain occupations, like, a sex worker or a trans person.

Cinema is an expressive form that draws from the range of current political, cultural, and economic ideologies. It also tries to transgress these political and cultural norms but, in the end, almost reinforces the norm. While presenting narratives that reinforce norms or challenge them, cinema provides alternatives to existing social and cultural practices, and political ideologies (Robinson, 2000). The thesis argued with examples from a cross section of films, that cinema is able to capture the nuances of urban exclusions that reside in the myriad encounters and everyday practices of urban space and are often lost to the visible eye.

Urban (Hyderabad) Cinema becomes the site of articulation of conflicts and contestations – "*a veritable arena of cultural politics"* (Lukinbeal, 2005, p. 14) - for urban citizens from varied backgrounds and identities, presented in exaggerated or underwritten ways in the layers of narrative. Based on a close reading of selected films, the analysis presented here suggests that the built environment and the urban infrastructure (material and immaterial) shapes mobility and access, and at the same time gets shaped by and acquires meaning from the lived experiences of those who live in the city. 'Tactics and strategy' by De Certeau (1984) are used to understand the films' urban subjects; as the citizens use tactics to circumvent the constraints imposed by the institutions and politics. The anthropologist Singer opined that the Indian city is different from the western metropolis, as it contains tradition embedded in social systems that have come from elsewhere (Rao, 2009). The peculiarity of Hyderabad city can be observed in the creative ways that Hyderabad citizens claim and occupy

and create a productive space in the city, evading the panoptic gaze of the higher systems of ordering.

It was observed and reiterated through the chapters that the cinematic city and the real city privileges the upper-middle-class (and upper caste) heterosexual male. The dominant meaning of a discursively constructed place is understood by the dominant groups (in Hollywood's case middle-class heterosexual white male); in Indian cinema across the regions, it is the upper caste Hindu heterosexual male (Lukinbeal, 2005). The differences are emphasised in a range of exclusionary practices of the city. Anyone other than the idealised male has to contend with limited access and find creative or revolutionary ways to claim their right to Hyderabad city. The mediations employed by the 'others', Muslims, women, sex workers, migrants and poor are observed. That violence creates exclusions is known but we also find that the exclusions and marginality produce violence. Despite the structural exclusions, those who inhabit the city find ways to preserve community and for some, even the organic life of the village. The gap between the wealthy and poor is wide, but the conflicts between them do not reduce their 'attachment to the city'; for them the city is both a battleground and home.

The stereotypes of the 'others' are projected onto the spaces they inhabit, and gender codes of the spaces create geographies of exclusion. The films located in a certain site or region employ recognizable stereotypes of the place and in the process, legitimise the cultural politics of that place and people (Lukinbeal, 2005). Here, the people and built environment are considered to be "constituted of the place". Thus, stereotypes are geographical too and not just identities removed from the physical and material spaces. According to Anthony Vidler (1991), and Georg Simmel (1903 & 1908), every metropolitan subject feels estrangement in the city. The thesis explored the alienation that is felt by the average Hyderabad citizen in relation to violence and personal trauma by drawing on concepts of 'uncanny' and 'dystopic' visions of the urban city of Hyderabad.

Hyderabad's origin and history before 1956 State reorganisation (when it became part of Andhra Pradesh) informs its present, and the turmoil and violence that it witnessed make the city unique. There are many groups that lay claim to Hyderabad and try to legitimise their presence through history, culture, politics and economics. Unlike other cities, the claims on Hyderabad by different groups are not just regional but cultural,

political and emotional connections of people to the city. Given that the city has a rich history of Islam from its Muslim rulers, the Muslims of Hyderabad demand their right to the city, resist "othering" and disfranchisement, and assert their right to be part of the progress of the city with better facilities and welfare programmes, most of which remain unfulfilled. Telangana people feel they have a birth right and emotional connect to Hyderabad, as historically it was their capital. Andhra people are credited with economic, political and cultural investment in the city to make it what it is today, but unfortunately, they marginalised the city's Islamic culture and confined it to the Old City and few other pockets.

The dominant group in Hyderabad are people from Andhra Pradesh who belong to the upper caste Kamma group. The caste groups of Reddy, Kapu and Gouds from Telangana, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema too have political and economic power, but it is the Kamma caste group with cultural and economic capital who from 1956 changed the demography and direction of Hyderabad and shaped the Telugu film industry. As the city's architecture changed and the social fabric of the city transformed, the exclusions became more sharply defined. Women, the poor, those with disabilities, people from lower castes, Muslims, sex workers, third gender, and so on who are essentially non-upper caste males experience exclusions in many facets of everyday life which manifest spatially in the city. Caste articulation and discrimination continue to exist in the city of Hyderabad. The restrictive spaces of gender are morally coded and hidden, under the guise of progressiveness, particularly in relation to gender and religion. The communal separation that takes over the spatiality of Hyderabad city is deeply etched on the city's memory and spaces.

Hyderabad's social demography, and political history is different from other cities in coastal Andhra. The memories of Hyderabad before 1990s were of Old City and Banjara Hills. Bollywood picked up the Old City in the 1980s, and represented Muslim issues in its films on the city. Telugu cinema which is dominated by coastal Andhra people, had an uneasy relationship with Hyderabad, which is seen as a Muslim region of Telangana. Telangana does not have the 'Teluguness', that coastal Andhra seeks to promote. Telangana language is referred to by some Coastal Andhra people as '*sankara basha',* which means a hybrid language. The word '*sankara'* carries derogatory cultural and casteist connotations. For the Telugu film fraternity, Hyderabad as a state capital has no shared history, their memories are of the coastal

towns. Hence, in *Patnam Vachina Pativratalu* and *Siva*, both of which were released in the 80s, Hyderabad city is depicted as an intimidating space for migrants to the city. After the 1990s, Hyderabad city became home for new residents and the second generation of the migrants from 1950s. The city is depicted in the 1990s films as a space of employment opportunities for men and women, in banking, manufacturing, and newspaper industries, and also in administrative sections of Government. With globalisation, the city breaks free of its Telangana region and takes on an autonomous character. It transforms from the sleepy, traditional, Muslim city to a dynamic IT and aspiring global capital. This changing landscape of the city of Hyderabad and the complex relationship of different communities within it, is depicted in the Telugu, Deccani and Bollywood films.

5.2. The Region of Old City

Old City has been the focus of this thesis and finds mention in every chapter. Old City is important in the conceptualisations of 'Inner city' to understand marginalisation, and exclusions tied to a location, with its inhabitants depicted in exaggerated and identifiable ways. The marginalisation of Old City and its inhabitants is multifaceted, where religious and class differences are key registers of exclusions. The Hyderabadi language (Deccani Urdu) films that are produced in the local industry and situated in the locale of Hyderabad, especially Old City, represent the bodily performance of the '*pottey*' and while language gains significance in the articulation of their claims to space. Language here is used as a metaphor for the 'urban landscapes and processes', than in the literal sense, and becomes part of a methodological approach in urban research where 'urban language practices and language-based representations of cities' are studied (Vuolteenaho, Ameel, Newby, & Scott, 2012).

The '*pottey'* of the Old City, perform for the street and in the street to mark their presence, they use the body and language, which spills into the unique gestures to inscribe the spaces they occupy with the meaning they choose. The body is the medium which occupies the space and performs in the space, hence ascribing meaning to space (Lefebvre, 1991). "*Organized gestures, which is to say ritualized and codified gestures, are not simply performed in 'physical' space, in the space of bodies. Bodies themselves generate spaces, which are produced by and for their gestures"* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 216).

The set of spatial practices through language and gestures are placed "naturally" in the region of Old City. Lefebvre's argument about the common language of the city is that it is the code which evolves in the daily practices (Lefebvre, 1991). Like De Certeau's (1984) explanation of tactics, the Old City boys in the films employ tactics to subvert the imposed order. David Sibley describes how in UK prisons, the circumvention of rigid controls by the inmates, resulted in a relaxation of the rules and control (Sibley, 1997). Though the subversions happen and those from them margins perform to overcome their marginality, the small spaces of control are not big enough to make a change in the larger socio-spatial relations. But Hyderabad cinema contributes to bringing awareness to the inconsistent and changing power dynamics that give meaning to spaces and also to better understand spatial relations (Sibley, 1997).

As it was noted in the earlier chapters, *"...one of the most notable forms of contemporary exclusion stems from the ongoing criminalization of city spaces."* (Herbert, 2008, p. 660) No other space in Hyderabad has been identified and entrenched with signifiers and representation of backwardness as the Old city. This marginalisation not only stems from poverty but also with its association with Islam. The representation of Old City in Hyderabadi films does not fetishize poverty and backwardness, but the perceptions of the mainstream popular culture reflect and reinforce the dominant ideology of Islam as a symbol of backwardness, poverty, unemployment and repression of women. This is evident in the films of Bollywood: *Bazaar, Nikhaah, Daawat-e-Ishq*, and *Bobby Jasoos*, and Telugu films like *Khadgam* and *Paisa*. There are films that sensitively bring up issues when representing Old City like *Mandi, Vedam* and *Well Done Abba*, which go against the dominant ideology. They offer alternative ways of representation that can make visible the vulnerabilities, struggles, contestations and negotiations that arise from such inscription of spaces with marginality and poverty.

In the mainstream depiction of Old City, the locus of much of the narrative is Charminar, a symbolic remnant of Muslim rule. The Old City is famous for the local industries rooted in the Deccani culture, people from all over Hyderabad and tourists visit Old City. Apart from visiting the monuments they shop for traditional Sherwanis, Wedding Lehenga and Sharara/cholis, jewellery, bangles, pearls, handicrafts, variety of embroidery work on clothes and also to eat Hyderabadi delicacies. The Old City is

also a space of anxiety for outsiders (including people from newer parts of Hyderabad) due to the large presence of Muslims and their different cultural practices. These anxieties are often misplaced, originating from the stereotypes of the place and from the processes of spatialization. The films that avoided a focus on Charminar are the films that tried to engage with the spatial politics of Old City and its residents, with alternate representations. Charminar was a clichéd iconic symbol of Hyderabad till the 1990s but after 2000 with rising global Islamophobia, it got reduced to a symbol of the Old City and its backwardness equated to Muslim space.

The low development of a Muslim space is different from that depicted in a slum in Jubilee hills, where the residents are poor but mostly Hindus. In films, the slums dominated by Hindus have a temple on the street, women occupy the space outside the homes and the arts and handicrafts business dominant in Old City spaces are absent in these localities. Old City space has been constructed as a space of poor and of Muslims, whereas the new Hyderabad city is a mix of all groups from wealthy business owners, small and medium businesses and manufacturers, and poor. If a slum dominated by non-Muslims is still feared for petty crime, and polluting the city and its aesthetics but a Muslim ghetto's backwardness is associated with a heightened anxiety of Islamic terrorism and threat to the nation.

The Indo-Persian, art deco and European influences in architecture in history survive throughout the city[91] , but the monuments and architecture of erstwhile dwellings especially in Old City take the form of "architectural eugenics" (Rao, 2009, p. 377):

> "*This term used by Mumbai-based architect Mustansir Dalvi in a personal conversation (with Vyjayanthi Rao) about how the historic preservation movement in Mumbai connects particular built forms to particular religious and ethnic communities, even when sociological observation suggests that these neighbourhoods were spaces of coexistence and conviviality. The imposition of a narrative of singularity on the built environment, therefore, promotes a certain understanding of the politics of community in the city"* (Rao, 2009, p. 383)

[91] See dspace.mit.edu/bitstream/handle/1721.1/69102/HyderabadGuide_2009.pdf

The neglected neighbourhood of Old City is a place of ruins and a heritage preservation site where time is frozen along with its monuments and architecture. The new city turns its gaze towards Old City to objectify it for its heritage and commodities: cheap artisan and traditional goods, markets for knock-off commodities, and Indo-Persian cuisine with local amalgamations especially, biryani and paya. Inscribing meanings of backwardness and Islam are symbolic of such backwardness as shown in *Angrez, Bazaar* and Krishna Vamsi's *Khadgam* and *Paisa*. The "*pottey*" resist and negotiate marginalisation and its associated vulnerability by performance and using the lingua franca of Hyderabad (Deccani) which was also marginalised by Telugu. These performances are rooted in masculine codes, and so are the spaces coded as masculine where femininity and women have no place. Body-reflexive practices among men, which are symbolic and ritualistic, forms their social group and bonds (Nayak, 2006). These practices include betting, swearing, and teasing, etc.

The Old City youth were left out of the benefits reaped in the newly independent nation. The history of life of the Nawabs, whiling away time chatting, and reciting poetry in *mushaira* (a forum for poets to showcase their work) and legacy of *mazakiya shayari* (comedy poems) of Deccani language is continued now with the free time accorded by marginalisation, lack of proper access to education and meagre employment opportunities. In the globalised economy a certain type of employee is preferred: English speaking, dressed in a certain way, holding a graduate degree and willing to work long hours in an office far away from the Old City. The current labour market demands compliance and conformity to a certain work culture. The Old City youth do not fit these criteria.

5.3. Gendered City of Hyderabad

The literature review cited several authors who have examined the politics of the city and cinema, and established that in Hyderabad cinema women experience a dichotomy of space, coded for and by gender. These dichotomies of outside/inside, public/private, home/street exclusions are prominently visible in urban spaces. A woman out in the city is a danger to herself and for the city. This is where the role of femme fatale emerges. Women on the street are associated with streetwalkers. Female mobility in the city gained legitimacy through consumerism and window shopping (Tiller, 2015). Prior to this phenomenon, working-class women had more freedom of

mobility than upper-class women. Women in the street are an object of consumption for the male gaze.

Till the 1980s, the women are absent from Hyderabad's cinematic public space. The *flaneuse* who desires the city and owns the gaze is tamed and taken back to the village in *Patnam vachina Pativrathalu*. Dangerous women and ignorant women return the gaze of a flaneur. They refuse to be looked at or remain passive. From the 1990s the village/city dichotomy shifted to the home/work dichotomy. Hyderabad city has become the arena to fight for feminism and right to work and equality as we see in the films. The liberalisation in the 1990s changed the economic relations and also the social and cultural milieu:

> *"When a city's identity or cultural/economic markers shifts and changes, it has an effect on the material landscape, and the formation of local identities and hence, the gender processes also change. The changing economic patterns in a city changes the gender environment in the labour market"* (Nayak, 2006, p. 817)

In the early nineties, the films depicted the struggle for right to work and with patriarchal control at home and society *in Mr.Pellam, Aame, Pellichesukundam* and continued till 2000 in *Kshemamga Velli Labamga Randi*. The image of a working woman in Hyderabad is normalized, and also subverts the notion that the outside is unsafe and dangerous for women by showing that the home is equally traumatising and violent for women. With the new found economic independence and right to mobility, women fight the masculinised ordering of home and society. The working women still face the daunting task of fighting battles outside and within the home, as represented in the films as both the city and its architecture privileges the male.

Home as the natural space for the feminine is inscribed by the city. With their act of transgression into masculine spaces, women renegotiate and re-inscribe spaces with new meanings, but these spaces are still coded with masculinity. As "*female body moves across the city and unobtrusively occupies specific sites that "bring into being" transformations of both"* (Kishore, 2015, p. 15)*;* which means that the mental maps and caution about safety regarding certain places is written onto the female body. With repetitive traversing of the city space by women and in the same way the repetitive

presence of female body in the city spaces, acclimatises the patriarchal gaze which may start ignoring the female body and letting go of the control.

On the changing spatial boundaries for gender and what it can entail, Peter G. Goehen (1998) comments that the "*capacity of women to redefine the meaning of public and private" is* significant as it can "*...expose the permeability of the boundary between public and private, and the capacity of women to negotiate and influence its demarcation"* (Goehen, 1998, p. 492). It was evident in the cinematic city and the real city that the boundaries between the home and outside are porous, and it overlaps, and the home is the playground of the politics of the city, as observed by Massey (2015). The societal orders flow inside to outside and outside to inside. Home as a refuge, safe haven, and resting place is often a myth, especially for women. With constant struggles and fights to find space in the city, restricted mobility has been granted to women but with no compromise on abnegation of sexuality, self-actualisation, and becoming active agents in the neoliberal city. The urban that privileges the male denies self-realisation of full potential in personal achievements and sexuality to women, and fulfilment of women at the end of the films is achieved only through motherhood and having a family.

The access for women to the neoliberal city after the 2000s has opened up to some extent, but remains within the same patriarchal control. The women in the city are offered unfettered access to consumerism for which female employment and education is encouraged. Angela McRobie (2008) in her book the '*Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, culture and social change'* says that the neoliberal city offers token equality to women in the form of education and employment and active participation in consumer culture. The capitalist urban space provides new manicured and stylised spaces of malls, cafes, restaurants, boulevards within the shopping malls and certain upscale localities but denies access to certain spaces. The women of Hyderabad cinematic city's progress in setting in motion the discourse on sexual violence, and right to equality in the 1990s is undone and abandoned by the post 2000s cinematic city of Hyderabad which focussed on women as being accessories to project a globalised city and an aspiring middle class yet still rooted in tradition and patriarchal social codes.

Female sexuality and her desires are still controlled obsessively by the city spaces. The new woman performs excessive femininity to repress her desires – Masquerading

Femininity (by Mary Anne Doane). She conforms to the patriarchal order by consuming fashion; and infantilising tactics to be looked at but not to evoke aggressive masculine reactions. In *Bommarillu* a masquerading naiveté is seen, which combines the tropes of manic pixie dream girl and Born Yesterday[92] but nativised for Indian spaces.

Never in any of these films, had the flaneuse of Hyderabad truly existed. Many feminist geographers agree that flaneuse is a 'practical impossibility' (Hanson & Pratt, 1995, p. 22). Maybe a disoriented flaneuse is possible where she cannot form a subjectivity in relation to the city, but the aimless wanderings of her vulnerable self and gaze evoke feelings of alienation as she walks in unfamiliar spaces (read masculine) (Edwards, 2008, p. 122). The only flaneuse depicted in the Hyderabad city is the streetwalker or sex worker who defies every codified structure of masculine spaces. Hyderabad city has long been synonymous with "morally loose" women; this urban sin is placed against rural innocence (Mouton, 2001). The presence of sex workers on the streets disrupts the street life by inducing anxiety and repulsiveness, while at the same time it evokes desire and heightened eroticism. Sex workers are persecuted, and in efforts to cleanse the city, they are pushed further to the peripheries of urban space. The geographies of exclusion are ubiquitous and evident in the study of sex workers and their spatial practises.

The restriction of access to public space becomes intense for Muslim women. The alienation due to religion and gender is more complex and nuanced. The stereotype of regressive Islam and the rhetoric of rescuing Muslim women from themselves and a hostile religion was avoided in the films discussed in Chapter 3. In terms of mobility and access to the city, Muslim women face the most disadvantage, and they are denied

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[92] **Manic Pixie Dream girl** coined in 2007 by film critic Nathan Rabin who has no aims of her own but to fulfil men's lackluster life with happiness and colour. There is no character arc for this trope but for the purposes of the man to find himself and happiness.

Born sexy yesterday female trope is found in Sci-fi films of Hollywood where a woman is literally born yesterday as a fully grown adult but no idea of the ways of world and society but she has incredible powers. A lonely, broken man finds her and shows her the ways of world teaches her how to behave meanwhile protecting her from people taking advantage of her innocence and also inadvertently teaches her to fall in love with him. This trope fulfils a desire of patriarchy which wants control over an innocent girl.

https://youtu.be/0thpEyEwi80

the agency of sex workers and transwomen. Hence, the experiences of race, caste, ethnicity, class, etc., are different and the intersections of these dichotomies are embedded in power relations.

Though the city is depicted as a danger to the women and women's presence is shown as disruptive and product of disorder, the presence of women in the city spaces of Hyderabad both in cinema and in actuality has transformative capabilities. With the feminine metaphors of "merging and tolerance for difference" (Sibley, 1997, p. 7), it is crucial to decode the spaces and recode them as spaces of tolerance that enable a merging of different identities and backgrounds for a more accessible Hyderabad city. There are risks involved for women in urban space coupled with gendered restrictions, but the urban space also provides relative freedom in the city and potentiality to explore with its feature of anonymity and social diversity. The city of Hyderabad is seen to be both empowering and restrictive for women.

In the analysis of films, the transformation of urban space of Hyderabad in relation with the presence of women, is observed from the late 1980s. In the 1980s, urban public spaces represented erotic zones (Hanson & Pratt, 1995), that were occupied only by lower-class women. As, the middle-class women are denied access to public space represented in the film *Patnam Vachina Pativratalu.* In the 1990s, middle class working women entered the public space of Hyderabad. It can be inferred that middle-class women are privileged over every other woman in the city. The restrictions of mobility and gender through spatial ordering are to protect middle-class women from mixing with undesirables that include men and also women from the lower class, castes and in 'immoral occupations/tendencies' and to restrain the sexual encounters with strange men. At the same time, middle-class women are the symbol of progress and modernity of the city. They are educated and seen at the right places acting appropriately. The responsibility of following the gender codes is voluntary and self-regulated. The global social codes rooted in tradition are negotiated and constantly tweaked by modern women to gain certain freedoms and access into the public domain, while still maintaining the status quo. The cinematic city represents a gendered city, which is highly patriarchal, and this is true to a certain extent about Hyderabad city. These social codes are ascribed to the urban space of Hyderabad, but the cinematic narrative fails to capture the rebellions of women to challenge and often bypass these gendered spatial codes. In the cinematic landscape, Hyderabad is an

empty space for women and one is left with unease at the depiction of women in Telugu cinema[93]. The film representations reflect the patriarchal mindset of Telugu film industry and the Hyderabad city. Men write down women in their fictional narratives of cinema as one-dimensional characters with little to no agency, to fulfil and fuel masculine fantasies. The women in the city are relegated to be a spectacle and an object that fits and fills the void in men's lives in the narratives. The narratives of films counter the women's presence in the city by projecting masculine desires onto them and the women submitting to those desires, which most often end up in domesticity through marriage.

5.3. Uncanny City: Violence and Trauma

The fourth chapter of the thesis focused on the processes in the city that make it uncanny and acquire dystopian visions. To trace the uncanny and how the exclusions play out in a city where violence and conflict hide under the surface, different tropes of Hyderabad city were analysed -the migrant who turned into a gangster, the aspiring poor, women, Muslims escaping persecution in the wake of terrorism and heightened suspicion, and sex workers.

In the context of terrorism and national and global precarity, the Old City of Hyderabad becomes a place where terrorism resides, a site where the anxiety about Muslims as 'others' is on display. Old City is the place always expected to prove its nationalistic fervour to weed out the bad citizens/terrorists (who are always Muslims). Also, for the good Muslims who have to repeatedly prove their loyalty through enduring series of violent persecution by the state and society, these demands result in a greater sacrifice with violence on self.

The review of literature established that marginality is a spatial practice that is tied to the identities of people and place. The common thing that binds all the above-mentioned metropolitan subjects to the uncanny metropolis, is the lack of defined home and the experience of different forms of alienation and marginalisation which is

[93] A video made by a woman who watches Telugu cinema on the problematic depiction of women in Telugu cinema has gone viral. This video fuelled debate on this topic with many film and media personalities offering their opinion. However, the main players in Telugu Film Industry were silent and refused to respond to these accusations.

https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/i-stand-my-video-woman-behind-viral-video-sexism-telugu-films-should-change-32689

called ‘modern unhomely’ by Anthony Vidler (1992) in his book ‘*The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*’. Home is closely associated with nostalgia and memory. A return to something familiar and a feeling that evokes belonging and inclusiveness; the home is also elusive, divisive and disruptive. The sense and feeling of home are constructed, which can extend to a city, nation etc. (Massey, 1995). Like a stranger, all these disparate characters flow through the urban spaces in search of stability, opportunity, wealth – a home. They go through physical and mental trauma that evokes the uncanny.

In research on gang violence across the world, it is observed that the indoctrination into gangs happens from the ages 14 to 18 years (Saunders-Hastings, 2015). Marginality, in young men, in urban spaces, often leads to formation of gangs and gang violence (Vigil, 2003) and leads to more alienation from opportunities, and a stable home life. Not everyone wants to be part of the gang life, some look for opportunities to get out of their disadvantaged situation like Cable Raju in *Vedam* and Prakash in *Paisa* or aspiring actors and directors in *Khadgam*. Here, they are “*included in the contemporary capitalist city by virtue of their residence, their cultural and stylistic orientations, and their material aspirations”* but are excluded from its system of advancement and rewards (Saunders-Hastings, 2015, p. 394). In desperation, they resort to immoral or illegal ways after futile attempts to gain a foothold in the city for opportunities in legal ways.

The oppression in the city is manifested in the representation of gangsters and police. The police excesses and gangsters’ exploitation turn the city dystopic. The violence of the city with its history of communal violence, peasant rebellion, Razzakars’ draconic oppression and the Maoist presence, haunts the contemporary spaces of Hyderabad. This history has created spatial phobias associated with city spaces and its residents, which appear to converge in the perceptions of Old City. With globalisation, these fears moved beyond the boundaries of region and nation with the rise of global terrorism, after the bomb blasts in Hyderabad These dystopian characteristics of spaces as haunting, spatial phobias and spatial anxieties create fissures in the social fabric of the city resulting in spatial exclusion of ‘others’. These exclusions and the processes of spatial ordering that privileges one urban subject over the other, causes further urban decay and marginalisation. Over a period of time, this

manifests into urban violence and creation of uncanny spaces – producing an endless cycle of victimisation and violence where the 'other' is further discriminated.

There are absences in the films that are stark: with the large population of Muslims in Hyderabad (around 30%), their representation is low in Telugu cinema with only few films showing a Muslim protagonist; elderly are ignored and pushed to the fringes of the cinematic city; a focus on caste enunciations is missing though caste solidarity is dominant in the Telugu film industry. Studies on the social profile of major players in the Telugu film industry reveal, the dominance by the Kamma caste, followed by other well-to-do peasant castes. Caste politics and nepotism define the Telugu film industry, where they reflect the upper caste sensibilities and solidarity, while ignoring the cultural articulations and aspirations of other castes. The film *Khadgam* shows the difficulty of an average citizen gaining entry into the film industry, that is dominated by caste and caste affiliated dynasty dominations. The reason for this is "*commercial cinema is unable to present a truly emancipatory or radical political message"* and it "*...traditionally served the interests of the rising middle-class, while drawing on a mass audience from all social classes"* (Srivastava, 2009, p. 716)*:*

> *"Despite major economic transformation and media rebranding, the cultures of the old industrial city and the identities therein refuse to be written out of existence. Rather, the post-industrial city is configured as a palimpsest – a cultural text upon which the previous inscriptions of past cultures continue to be etched into the present, to be embodied by a new generation. As creative actors, young men respond to change by intertwining new and old cultures"* (Nayak, 2006, p. 828).

The privilege of being casteless is only available to the upper castes, the lower castes do not share this experience. Srinivas, writing on Telugu films says, that citizen's access and privilege is based on caste and class, Dalits and Brahmins cannot disincorporate caste from their bodies as they are '*tied*' to "*their shameful positivity to their bodies"* (Srinivas, 2009, p. 139). When Srinivas (2009) talks about the inability of Brahmin and Dalits to disincorporate, he talks about how the body becomes important in carrying these castes. The Brahmin body cannot be separated from its Brahminism; the body is involved in the ritualistic and traditional performance. The Dalit body is a disempowered body that has been marked as inferior and impure; the Dalit body performs its duties for its upper caste masters; a Dalit body

that has been dehumanised for centuries, remains only a Dalit body. The upper caste is not tied to its caste solely, and they have the ability to be casteless. The urban bodies that films depict that are unmarked by caste are upper caste, and the neoliberal city too follows this casteless discourse, in effect, both films and the city exclude the lower castes and their bodies from their narratives.

5.4. Summing up and Further Research

The national gaze on Hyderabad city in Bollywood cinema focuses on the Old City. In Bollywood's imagination Hyderabad is Muslim. The films depict the status of Muslims, especially Muslim women who are portrayed as backward, neglected and in poverty. Yet, Bollywood representation of Muslim women is empowering as presented in the films reviewed - they are seen to exercise some agency, confront difficult issues like bride selling practice and Triple Talaq in the 1980s and in 1990s, in spite of the social constraints imposed on them. The exception to these Bollywood films is *Hyderabad Blues*, which is located outside the Old City in an aspiring cosmopolitan Hyderabad, where modernity and tradition are shown to be in conflict.

The regional gaze of Telugu films industry traverses locales in Hyderabad city, but largely ignores the Old City. In Telugu films the dominant image is of a Hindu male vested with power to move around freely and even control the access to the urban spaces. Muslims are placed in the Old City and as potential terrorists. In Telugu films women are constantly negotiating and compromising in the Hyderabad public spaces and at homes, sex workers are pushed to fringes (both social and spatial), wishing the third sex to invisibility. The newer spaces of Secunderabad, and modern Hyderabad are dominant in these films. The IT zone of Cyberabad is depicted as a montage to symbolise the arrival of Hyderabad on the global stage. The narratives of Hyderabad cinematic city in Telugu films do not take place in Cyberabad. Cyberabad is a place of cosmopolitanism where the new skilled migrants from all over India work and live, and hence does not conform to the 'Teluguness' that defines these films. For the Telugu film industry which is still unable to shed the regional, linguistic and caste hegemony, depicting those who are non-Telugu is not possible or desired. The Muslims, Telangana people, Biharis, Tamilians, Punjabis and others find only caricatural and stereotypical representations in Telugu films.

The local insider gaze of the Old City is different. It is a space of close-knit community at home with *'Deccani tehzeeb'*, familiar and safe. In fact, these Deccani films, present a picture of the realities of Old City through comedy that contradicts the popular image of it as a site of conflict and tension. The mainstream gaze at the Old City as a Muslim ghetto, where time is frozen. It only invades the public imagination in narratives of terrorism, poverty and crime. The discourse of nation versus divisive forces disrupting the national integrity and peace, acquired a spatial address by placing crime and terrorism in Muslim spaces of Old City. The politics of hegemony of language is evident in the case of Deccani films. These films were able to get official recognition under the language 'Dakhni' only in 2016 from the Central Board of Films. This recognition was crucial as it was only with the Deccani films that the Old city and its culture found an opportunity to reclaim and assert their identity.

The discourse of the films to potentially transform the existing social and cultural images, is limited. As the Deccani films are a pastiche of Bollywood and Tollywood films. If these films are to have an impact on how the region and its communities are understood, they need to go beyond borrowing frames from Hindi cinema and Telugu cinema. It is observed that to some extent the Deccani cinema is self-aware and reflexive of this borrowing from regional and nation cinema. However, acknowledging the old tropes present in films but continuing with them leaves much to be desired.

The city for women has gone through a transformation from clear moral distinctions between private and public spaces to city spaces that are constantly rewritten and repurposed, sometimes as spaces of empowerment and other times as spaces of subjugation. It is observed in the films that both the domestic spaces of home and public urban spaces are oppressive and violent to women. In the post-globalised Hyderabad city, the progress of the city is placed in the image of a middle-class woman who is acculturated to consumerist and market-driven spaces. Muslim women, sex-workers, third genders and women from lower classes and castes are undesirables and invisible in the city spaces. The movement of women in cinematic city of Hyderabad is self-censured and self-restrained. Representation of women in the cinematic city post 2000s, paints a grim picture where the freedom and mobility of women ends with domestication (marriage and raising a family). The progress made

by Telugu films in depicting the struggles and fights on behalf of women for equality and right to work is a disinterested and unfinished project.

Though the cinematic city transgresses the normative order, the spatial narratives pack the older traditional structures in a new-fangled form, informed by the capitalist consumer society. Datta, cited by Kishore (2015) based on the examination of emerging forms of urbanization in India, opines that the new economic order now dominant in the cities. The neo-liberal policies of government benefits the political elites, middle-class, and the traditional social exclusions are played in an exaggerated manner where the groups that could not fit into these advancements are pushed to the fringes with no support or opportunities (Kishore, 2015, p. 4). With the rearrangement of the urban space in neoliberal city, patriarchy and gender-controlled spaces are reimagined, and they re-emerge in new forms making the articulations of differences more pronounced. On the one hand, the neoliberal city offers access and opportunities but also new forms of sanctions for women and vulnerable people.

The individual in the city is alienated and adopts a blasé attitude. Those who are marginalised from the progress and developmental plans of neo-liberal policy form gangs and recourse to violence uncovering the uncanny and dystopic visions of the city. Marginality is a spatial practice where crime and the decline of the city are associated with the slums and its people. The nameless and placeless but familiar spaces of gangster cinema offer the mysterious element of the gangster and underground world a locale for clandestine dealings from where that uncanny emerges. With guns, bombs and other weapons, the familiar spaces of the average citizen can turn dystopic with violence.

The filming of a location for a cinema has the potential to offer an alternate understanding of the space. Cinema holds a mirror to the society--not a true image but an image for reflection--where the process of formation of urban subjectivities are explored, a Lacanian mirror. Cinematic city aspires to be the real city but it is in fact the real city that aspires to be the cinematic city, and as Baudrillard says, the city does not begin on the streets, but it begins on the cinema screens and then spills out to the streets outside the movie theatres.

The concepts of Lefebvre, De Certeau, Georg Simmel and western human geographers were used to inform the analysis of Cinematic spatiality of Hyderabad in

part due to the lack of such theorisations on Indian cities from localised perspectives and partly because of their universal applicability. But there is a problem with Western centric concepts and notions used in Global South contexts. Vyjayanthi Rao (2009) elaborates on this problem: an individual of the metropolis from Georg Simmel's conceptualisation cannot arise in an Indian city as the city is rooted in rural traditions. With changing economic relations and social and cultural milieu, Indian cities are shifting from being 'city of risk' to 'city at risk'. She argues that western urban studies focus only on infrastructure as a producer of the techno-social basis of forms of urban life and fail to take note of the urban peculiarities of a certain place and that the urban citizens find a space to claim, not just of economic consequences but cultural, social and political, in creative ways. The findings concurred with her argument that the cities of the global south could be studied as prototypes for 'understanding of contemporary global cities' (Rao, 2009, p. 377). Keeping this in mind, the thesis analysed the concepts to understand how useful western concepts are in accommodating the complexities of an Indian city.

Table 5.1 is an attempt to pull together the various strands that the thesis has articulated, signifying the key arguments/findings and capturing the similarities and differences between the three genres of films selected for study.

Table 5.1: Comparison of Key Findings in the Three Genres of Films on Hyderabad

Film Genres	**Deccani Films**	**Tollywood Films**	**Bollywood Films**
Language	Deccani/ Dakhni	Telugu	Hindi
Scale	Local	Regional	National
Privileged Focus	Muslim men	Hindu upper caste men	Muslim women
Spatial Gaze	Old city	New Hyderabad-	Old city

			Secunderabad	
Marginal/Excluded Focus		Women	Non-Hindu, Poor, Lower castes and other genders	Muslims
Women	Spatiality	Invisible Disposable	-- Domestic space as natural -- Furtively inhabit urban spaces -- Welcome in consumer oriented public spaces post globalization	-- Invisible behind hijabs, purdahs, zenanas and religious sanctions in 80s --Visible but limited access in 2000s
	Mediations/ Assertions	None	--Self-regulation -- Circumventing certain restrictions by small rebellions	--Escape from the city or family (in 80s) -- Circumventing certain restrictions by small rebellions (2000s)

Muslims	Spatiality	Associated with spaces of ghetto, language and *Deccani Tehzeeb*	Associated with spaces of ghetto, crime, terrorism and cultural backwardness	Associated with poverty, backwardness and trappings of Muslim culture
	Mediations/ Assertions	Urban performance with emphasis on language to reclaim public space	Negotiation for access by constantly proving one's loyalty to nation	--Contend with allowed access --Imbibe upper-class and 'non-Muslim' (clothes and language) --Performance
Hindu Men	Spatiality	None	Uninhibited Access	None
	Mediations/ Assertions	None	--Form homosocial bonds --Secure status quo through political and economic networks	None
Poor	Spatiality	Men: Associated with spaces of ghetto- crime, filth and decay		

		Women: Associated with eroticized spaces		
	Media tions/ Assert ions	Muslim poor through performa nce and comedy	Women: Mental maps of spaces they are dis/allowed; Aggressive presence in public space to transform them Men: Reclaiming space by either falsehood or petty crime. Invested in masculinity.	
Old city	Spatia lity	- Associate d with the past history of Muslim political power - Distinct culture of Deccani Tehzeeb --Space of familiar communi ty and neighbou rhood	-- Symbol of backwar dness and regressio n --Space perceive d as evoking anxiety and a threat to the city, region and nation	--Space of backwar dness --Old City space represen ts 'Muslim ness' in Hyderab ad city
	Media tions/ Assert ions	--Taking advantag e of new opportuni ties in new city post globalizat ion -- Assertion through Deccani language	-- Separate d from the city -- Fetishize d for its perceive d crime, backwar dness and Muslim culture	-- Sheddin g the religious identific ations -- Embraci ng diversity -- Welcom ing interacti

		of the region		ons with new city
New Hyderabad-Cyberabad	Spatiality	-- Globalization creation -- Space of prosperity, middle to upper class societies, young IT migrants from outside region		
	Mediations/ Assertions	Assertion of this space is legitimised by the State, through development, infrastructure and social composition		

5.4.1. Concluding Comments: Further Research

The study analysed and mapped the various exclusions on to Hyderabad city. The analysis suggests the Hyderabad city is a symbol of urban malaise, which corroborates with the traditional view of the city as a place of indifference, alienation, violence and deep-rooted exclusionary spatial practices. In Hyderabad city, there is a history of exposure to cultural otherness, and it therefore provides a suitable site for examining and understanding the exclusionary practices of social interactions. Jane Jacobs' (1961) argument that heterogeneity in cities indeed promotes innovations and progress is relevant in the context of Hyderabad:

> *"... big cities are natural generators of diversity and prolific incubators of new enterprises and ideas of all kinds. Moreover, big cities are natural economic homes of immense numbers and ranges of small enterprises"* (Jacobs, 1961, p. 145).

Urban space is recognised as a dominantly masculine space, and the cinematic gaze is also patriarchal, which privileges the male gaze, which also engenders the spaces. For this reason, both in Hollywood and Indian regional cinemas, the city is seen as a dangerous space and noir city cinemas are the result of that perspective. In current times, exclusions have increased, and the forms of exclusion multiplied. These exclusions are subverted by the marginalised by the creative use of the spaces, infrastructure and resources. Despite the differences, the thesis also charts out the inclusions and the subversive and hidden spatial practices that enable these practices. If exclusions bring light on the disruptive spatial practices, it is also important to acknowledge how inclusions play out in the urban milieu to understand how these exclusions and estrangements can be reduced, as a city which promotes

multiculturalism and heralds(ed) cosmopolitanism (Herbert, 2008). Steve Herbert (2008) cites Erving Goffman's research that "*the city spaces can remain incubators of genuine, heartfelt human connectedness"* (Herbert, 2008, p. 663). Jane Jacobs (1961) lists out four conditions for a city to be diverse:

1. A district should serve more than one primary function
2. Shorter blocks for people to find turns and walk into streets easily
3. The built environment should include new and old in buildings and enterprises
4. Dense blocks – in floating population and residence

Diversity enables more diversity in the city (Jacobs, 1961). The cultural and industrial production of architecture, cinema, arts, crafts and scientific innovations are the result of this heterogeneity. Due to this diversity, the differences play out; invisible exclusions become tangible. Unlike in villages where communities tend to be closed, with highly hierarchical interactions informed by traditional social structures and systems, interactions and encounters in the urban milieu are part of an everyday practice where hierarchies and traditions are often ignored. The city becomes the site of practising political ideologies, social and cultural ideologies of a region, state and nation. Hence, urban sites as complex social and cultural systems, informed by the innovations in economic systems, become the locus of social science research and study.

Steve Herbert (2008) calls for research beyond stereotypes and fitting certain social types to certain spaces. Such research will help understand the people who are ostracised and may reduce the alienation and assuage the misconceptions, given the importance of discourse and dialogue about the different types of exclusions and the unjustness of it (Herbert, 2008). Hyderabad city is still in its nascent stage of becoming a gentrified city like New York, London or Birmingham, due to the neo-liberal policies where the exclusions and alienations of undesirables are marked aggressively in select spaces. With the knowledge of these spatial practices emerging through research on Hyderabad city, policy makers and planners can strive to build a more inclusive city. The culture industry plays a significant role in representing the built city of Hyderabad through its representations of the marginalised and vulnerable. As emphasised, the cultural tool of cinema can be the place where the urban subjectivities and specialities can be debated, contested and negotiated.

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Appendix 1 – Filmography

Deccani Language Films (Dollywood)

1. Angrez (2005, Nikhil Kunta)
2. Hyderabadi Nawabs (2006, Lakshmikanth Chinna)
3. Fun aur Masti (2007, Shekar Sagar)
4. Angrez 2 (2015, Nikhil Kunta)
5. Salaam Hyderabad (2008, K Anand)
6. Half-fry (2009, Sanjay Punjabi)
7. Berozgaar (2010, Aziz Nazer)
8. Sabkee Boltee Bandh (2011, Aleka Choudhary Vemula)
9. Gullu Dada Thiree (2012, Abrar Khan)
10. Ek tha sardar (2013, Secandder)

Telugu Films (Tollywood)

11. Patnam Vachina Pativratalu (1982, Vijay Bapineedu
12. Aame (1994, EVV Satyanarayana)
13. Pellichesukundam (1997, Mutyal Subbaiah)
14. Mr Pellam (1993, Bapu)
15. Khushi (2001, Suryah)
16. Anand (2004, Shekhar Kammula)
17. Allari (2002, Ravi Babu)
18. Happy days (2007, Shekhar Kammula)
19. Anukokunda Oka Roju (2005, Chandra Shekhar Yeleti)
20. Bommarillu (2006, Bhaskar)
21. Siva (1989, Ram Gopal Varma)
22. Pokiri (2006, Puri Jaggandh)
23. Khadgam (2002, Krishna Vamsi)
24. Paisa (2013, Krishna Vamsi)
25. Vedam (2010, Krish)

Hindi films (Bollywood)

26. Bazaar (1982, Sagar Sarhadi)
27. Mandi (1983, Shyam Benegal)
28. Nikaah (1982, B R Chopra)
29. Well Done Abba (2009, Shyam Benegal)
30. Dawaat-e-ishq (2014, Habib Faisal)
31. Bobby Jasoos (2014, Samar Sheikh)
32. Hyderabad Blues (1998, Nagesh Kukunoor)

Appendix 2 – Demographic Profile of Hyderabad

Table Appendix.1: Demographic Profile of Hyderabad urban agglomeration

Categories		**Number**	**Percentage**
Population	Total	7,674,689	
	Female	3,747,660	48.8
	Male	3,927,029	51.2
Sex Ratio		954	--
Religions	Hindu	4,540,841	64.93
	Muslims	2,107,047	30.13
	Christians	192,660	2.75
	Sikhs	17,303	0.25
	Jains	20,480	0.29
	Buddhists	2,451	0.04
	Unclassified	3,137	004
	Didn't mention	108,343	1.56
Slums	Population	2,287,014	39.9
	Number of Slums	507, 396	--
SC Population	Total	574,452	7.48

ST population	Total	133,804	1.7
Work Participation	Total	2,598,757	33.86
	Female	634066	8.2
	Male	1,964,691	25.6

Source: Hyderabad and Rangareddy District Census Handbook, India Census 2011

Note: Migrant population data is not provided for Hyderabad but the decadal growth of 9.9% in Hyderabad from 2001 -2011 is contributed in part by migration.

Appendix 3 – Published Article

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Uncanny and Dystopian City: An Analysis of *Siva*[1]

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With rapid urbanisation and people's migration from rural to urban areas in search of work, education and other opportunities, urban conglomerations in India are rapidly growing. A city is marked by diversity, modernity, high- rise buildings, modern infrastructure and consumerism. Popular culture is one of the many resources for understanding the cityscape. The city is not just about physical and material spaces but also includes the lived experiences, interactions, contestations, exclusions and power relationships. Many urban geographers opine that cinema reflects and represents these issues as well as the discourses about the city. There is little or no research on the Cinematic City of Hyderabad. This article analyses the movie *Siva*, which captured the essence of the city of Hyderabad. The discussion maps out its urban spaces by using semiotic and discourse analysis, and addresses the different themes that the discourse reveals. In sum, *Siva* captures the anxiety, violence and evolution of a dystopian city and provides insights to the potential fate of similar urban conglomerations.

Keywords: Hyderabad, cinema, Cinematic City, cinema and geography, film studies, urban studies, city.

Introduction

Films are set in space, imaginative or real, and then re-presented to the audience in what Stephen Heath terms in his seminal essay, 'narrative space' (Heath 1993). Cinema can also be an archive of the city (Mazumdar 2007), 'a tool to read the cityscape' (Unni 2011), and for cinematic discourse (AlSayyad 2006). To understand the city of Hyderabad, the movie *Siva*, which was released in 1989 and directed by Ram Gopal Varma, is analysed. *Siva* is one of the first Telugu movies that used the city (of Hyderabad) as a character of the story and represented the *uncanny* city (Mazumdar 2007); one of the characteristics of a city and its modernity which is discussed in later sections.

[1] I would like to thank the anonymous readers for *Urbanities* for their suggestions and criticism, and especially Prof. Jerome Krase for his editorial assistance.

[2] Anthony Giddens (1984) used the word spatiality and later many scholars defined and redefined the term. Spatiality is defined as how the spaces are structured by architecture in public spaces and private spaces, informal and formal use and segregation of spaces, and so on. It informs the power relations of different people and discourses set in that space.

The focus of the Telugu movie industry (which is called 'Tollywood') from its beginning was on rural people and their culture. Movies about urban spaces and residents were very rare and the city location was always Chennai. The city of Hyderabad was virtually non-existent in the cinematic imaginations of the Tollywood industry. It was only after the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956 and with government encouragement and subsidies that the Telugu movie industry moved from Chennai to Hyderabad, as did its narratives (Srinivas 2013). It was the movie *Siva* which first captured the city of Hyderabad like no other film had ever done, with on location shoots, without the use of sets (except in songs), and with the use of the spatiality[2] of urbanscapes.

Siva became a hit beyond the imaginations of its director and producer[3]. The movie set a precedent for future Telugu movies with the use of a steady cam, and sound design which had never been used before as effectively. Since then, the importance of using a place as a backdrop to a narrative structure has changed; that is, the narrative has spatial aspects linking the stories to the locale. Many directors after Ram Gopal Varma say their movies were influenced by his movies and especially *Siva*. Directors Puri Jagganath, TriVrikram and Krishna Vamsi are some of the directors who made movies that follow the trends set by Varma. This movie brought Hyderabad's contestations[4] into focus in order to understand and analyse the negotiations and lived experiences of the city. The markers of the city do not just rest on its physical reality, but also in its stories, everyday discourse, art, symbols and imagery (Unni 2011) as well as being constructed by images and representations (Lapsley 1997: 187; Fitzmaurice 2001). To understand the city to its fullest, the representations of the city offer to unravel the *hidden secrets, and notion of the uncanny of the city* (Mazumdar 2007: 40). S.V. Srinivas, on the depiction of Hyderabad in movies and especially *Siva*, says:

> The city's geography and Telangana region's dialect became a noticeable presence in Telugu cinema as recently as the late 1980s with Siva (Ramgopal Varma 1989). In this film, for the first time in popular Telugu cinema, the local specificity of the city was foregrounded, the action being set in narrow by lanes of city's bastis and Irani tea shops, against the backdrop of the odd historical monument (2013).

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[3] Surendra Yarlagadda and Annapurna Studios are the producers of the movie.

[4] Contestations are the negotiations, struggles and compromises for power, access to space, production of meanings of space, everyday living, and so on. Hyderabad's contestations were cultural, political and economic assertions and claims to the city — between the local and immigrants, the Telangana and Andhra people, and the Hindu, Muslim and other minorities.

Ram Gopal Varma introduced new filmmaking and narrating techniques in his debut movie, *Siva.* Ram Gopal Varma said in an interview that he will never make a family movie or movies like those that Karan Johar directs (Vasudevan 2000). His movies are a departure from earlier movies that were produced in the Telugu film industry. The narratives of homes and family have moved out into the streets of the city. The narratives are now in the public sphere but at the same time remain individualistic and personal. This is a clear departure from social movies and 'message oriented' movies.

Figure 1. *Title Card of Siva* — Source: YouTube

Siva is the story of a college student who is new to the city. He witnesses the violence and exploitation of some students by fellow students who are active in college politics. The students who win the elections with the backing of local goons and politician do as they please, — disturb classes, harass women, and bully other students, canteen workers and teachers. In return for this support, these students help the goons in their rioting and other illegal activities. The student President is JD, who has the support of local gangster Bhavani (played by Raghuvaran) in collaboration with the politician Machiraju (played by Kota Srinivas Rao). Siva stands up to the intrusions of these outside rowdy people in student politics and runs for the post of president in the student elections. But when one of his close friends is killed and other friends are hurt in an attack by the local goons, he realises that the system that produces such criminals has to be rooted out, as the law is also in the hands of the politician. He says that 'if one JD or Bhavani goes, some other comes in their place'. He quits college, leaves his family as they come under jeopardy, and dedicates himself to wiping out the forces producing such people. In the process, his friends become his supporters and they instruct the local shop owners, merchants and union workers of various factories to stop paying 'mamool' (an illegal fine or tax) to Bhavani and his associates. Bhavani's empire starts to crumble apart as Siva hits his main income sources, and takes down important persons in the gang one by one, and eventually MLA Machiraju deserts him. For Siva, the enmity with Bhavani becomes personal when Bhavani kills his niece and the movie ends with Bhavani falling down an elevator shaft to his death.

The Cinematic City of Hyderabad

The name of the place/town/ city was never mentioned throughout the movie. In the movie, it

is mentioned that it is a Nizam area. The language used by the locals, the canteen worker, and one of the villains is the Telangana dialect. It is interesting to note that the characters are either from the lower classes, or play villains and speak in the Telangana dialect. The lead, and his group of friends, enjoy the college canteen worker's quirky narration of Ramayana — the classic Hindu mythological text always recited in 'pure'[5] Telugu by the upper caste and the learned — in the local Telangana dialect. When narrated in Telangana dialect, it evokes laughter, in stark contrast to the hushed reverence the traditional telling of the story elicits. This kind of marginalisation of a region and its people in the filmic representation, and stereotyping Telangana speaking people as uncouth, illiterate working class, or criminal caused a rise in discontent among Telanganas.

The recognisable locales and specific places suggest that it is the city of Hyderabad. The chase scene of the hero and his niece on a cycle by the villains in a car is shot on Raj Bhavan road, Erragadda bridge, and in the old city *basti* (slum) is easily recognized as Hyderabad. Many people recognise the theatre in the movie as the Ganga theatre, and the final scene is shot in the Swapna Lok complex. The college campus scenes are shot in Keyes High School, Secunderabad. The School is famous and sits right beside a bus-station hub. Almost all the city buses connect to Secunderabad, and it is the main node connecting different parts of the city. The railway station is within walking distance of the School. The School is surrounded by Irani cafes, bakeries, movie theatres and other leisure places. The 'Hotel Hilight', where Siva and his friends have lunch on a regular basis, is still operating in the Kukatapally area.

Even when the narration tries to generalise the setting and make it appear as though the events can happen in any city or town, the recognisable locations become part of the narration and cannot be separated from it (Nowell-Smith 2001). In support of this argument, Barbara Mennel (2008) in *Cinema and Cities* talks about the city depicted *In Things to Come* (1936) which looks like London and it is considered as London for her analysis. The setting in *Alpha-Ville* (1961) is Paris in her analysis, but the Paris in that movie displays *no typical signifiers of Paris* (Mennel 2008: 134). She goes on to say that it is seeing *a familiar city in unfamiliar ways through a narrative that is projected onto the cityscape*. In the movie *Siva* also, the typical signifiers of city, the past of the city, and the people of city are not shown and talked about. The movie and the characters look toward the future. The distortion of the futuristic vision of the young and how it becomes dystopic is delineated in the later sections.

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[5] The notion of pure Telugu is either classical Telugu or the Telugu spoken by coastal Andhra, now Andhra Pradesh. Most of the literature, art, films and conversation in formal settings use the Telugu spoken by natives of coastal region. There were many instances where erstwhile Telugu film makers opined that Telangana dialect is lesser Telugu (Srinivas 2013).

The Migrant/Stranger in the City

It is stressed many times in the movie, that the protagonist Siva, played by Nagarjuna, is an outsider. He migrates to the city because his brother was transferred there for his job. It is the migrant who takes the role of a stranger. It is the stranger in the city that defines the city. His separation and slow integration creates interesting perceptions on the city (Clarke 1997, Mazumdar 2007).

Figure 2. *Entry of Siva* — Source: YouTube

The relationship of the stranger to the city is highlighted by David Clarke (1997) in his editorial introduction to *Cinematic City*. The stranger, Clarke says, is symbolic of the ordering of the city which is sometimes 'annihilated' or 'displaced'. He cites David Harvey (1980), who calls the stranger's experience in the city as *the transitory, the fleeting and the contingent* (Clarke 1997: 4). The stranger — Siva — who arrives in the city and is new to the college, is appalled by the apathy of everyone towards the atrocities and disturbances caused by some students and forces outside the college. Siva moves in a detached way, observing the incidents of 'bad students' disrupting the classes, harassing women and mistreating the canteen worker. As Bourdieu says, the city's modernity is overwhelming, and the sounds, the sights and the sensory simulation of the city desensitise the citizen; George Simmel terms this the blasé attitude (Mazumdar 2007, Mennel 2008) and David Harvey (1980) calls it *blasé indifference* (see also, Baeten 2002).

As the stranger becomes familiar with the surroundings, he learns to navigate the urban spaces. The stranger is 'proximate' yet 'distant' (Clarke 1997, Mazumdar 2007), *known and unknown, and charming and horrific* (Mazumdar 2007: 37). In his prior life, he never experienced the desensitization and violence that is an everyday part of the life of city folks. He retaliates and responds violently by ripping out a cycle chain to beat up the miscreants. This incident becomes an iconic scene. To analyse the journey of Siva in the city which is shaped by random events, I use Ranjani Mazumdar's tropes to define the stranger and his rage in the city. Those tropes are '*angry young man'* and the *'psychotic'* and the how Siva — the stranger and *Flaneur* — becomes a gangster and turns from an angry young man and almost becomes psychotic.

Uncanny Urban and its Youth

Freud used the term 'Uncanny,' or rather *unheimlich* which translates as 'unhomely' (McQuire

2008). The familiar becomes unfamiliar and strange, as the domestic is disrupted. This concept of *unhiemlich* has larger social and cultural implications (Eckhard 2011). In *Siva*, homes are virtually non-existent. Except for Siva and Asha, none of his friends are ever seen at home, or in home, or even talk about home. The interior scenes of Siva's home are always uncordial as Siva's sister-in-law resents him and his brother is helpless in relation to her taunts. Siva's sister-in-law is harassed when she goes out to buy groceries. She comes and complains to her husband and asks why they could not live in a good locality. Her husband explains that rents are high in good localities and hence, they cannot afford to live there because he has to save for Siva's education. This increases her resentment towards Siva and she openly scolds him for being a burden. The bad and unsafe versus good and safe neighbourhoods are spatially related to the economic status of residents. The blame for the harassment is not put on the perpetrators but on something as abstract and uncontrollable as space. The visibility and attention to the risk of harassment and sexual violence might be less in elite spaces, but it exists in posh localities as well.[6]

Figure 3. *Siva with his Niece* — Source: Youtube

Although he feels unwanted and a burden at his home, Siva is warmly received and loved by his niece Keerthi with whom he has a strong bond. Asha is seen at home with her brother, only thrice in the entire film. Talking about home, McQuire (2008) says home is not just *a physical structure but a place which instils a sense of cultural belonging and existential shelter* (McQuire 2008: 7). Home is absent for the young adults in the movie. Literal homes are hostile, non-existent, or in villages. The college, streets and the leisure places are also hostile places, as the danger of violence is always beneath the surface. The cityscape is 'unhomely', 'derelict', 'dehumanised' and uncanny (Christodoulou 2011: 44).

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[6] https://www.hindustantimes.com/delhi/at-least-2-women-sexually-assaulted-every-day-in-posh- delhi-localities/story-O4qAWPRoPBET3amuipfC2K_amp.html

http://m.indiatoday.in/story/women-unsafe-in-posh-delhi-online-poll/1/153315.html
m.timesofindia.com/city/mumbai/Mumbais-wild-west-Bandra-Kurla-Virle-Parle-citys-most-unsafe-areas/articleshow/17484597.cms

Uncanny and Urban go together in creating and writing cities in both academic and popular literature (Wolfreys 2008, Baeten 2002). Uncanny is *seeing from the place of other* (McQuire 2008: 9). Uncanny in the urban is characterized by disorientation and spatial estrangement (Eckhard 2011: 13) and embodies one's desires (Christodoulou 2011). With each act of violence and disruption of order and normative rules in urban space, the uncanny emerges.

The movie starts in a classroom, the lecture ends and the students walk out of the classroom. The audience sees dangerous-looking men outside the college. A student points them out to another student who is talking to his friends. The men drag him, beat him and leave him on the street unconscious while everyone looks on. Siva's classmates tell him that as long they remain invisible, ignore and 'unsee' the harassment happening to them and others in the college, they can be peaceful and happy. And, they would remain happy if it was not for his outbursts. This is the one of the stanzas song they sing:

Botany paatam undi, matinee aata undi
Deniko votu chepparaa

History lecture undi, Mystery picture undi
Sodara edi bestu ra

Botany class antey boru boru
History rustu kantey restu melu
Paatalu, fightlu unna film chudu
Break lu, disco lu chuputaaru

This translates, 'There is botany lecture and there is matinee picture / To which one we shall vote / There is history lecture, there is Mystery picture / Brother, tell me which is the best / Botany class is boring / Resting is better than history class / Watch a film with songs and fights / They show discos and break dancing.'

Figure 4. *Students singing and dancing* — Source: YouTube

The youths' problems are as simple as watching a movie or attending a lecture, passing exams or topping them, and deciding whether to love or not. For the friends of Siva, the first

act of violence by a restrained, inward looking, well-mannered and shy Siva — the characteristics of angry young men as defined by Ranjani Mazumdar (2007) — is the first uncanny urban experience on the college campus. The stranger Siva directs his distracted flâneur gaze towards taking control of the urban space like a gangster. The uncanny urban space, and its violence, are hidden under its ordered and rational spaces, which is abruptly uncovered by Siva's act of violence (Christodoulou 2011: 45). Once-safe streets, the college campus and leisure places become nodes of violence, and the underbelly of the city marked by violence, corruption and criminality is exposed. Meetings take place in dark rooms and in the cheap sleazy bars of the city. The youth come into close contact with them and realise that these urban spaces and their crowds are sites of violence (Mazumdar 2007: 30).

The youth work in the hope of achieving a utopian city. They hope the violence inflicted upon them and the deaths of their close friends are sacrifices made toward achieving ideal urban spaces. This hope can be termed a *Utopian Impulse*, as conceptualised by Jameson (cited in Mazumdar 2007: 40). The fatal violence inflicted upon Naresh, the death of Mallik and Chinna, each meticulously violent and horrible, slowly turn the uncanny urban space into dystopian space. Jameson says that the utopian impulse fails to abolish death and that it robs the death of its sting. Here we see the undying hope of youth that the sting, and the value attached to the death of their dear ones should not go in vain. And, as Jameson noted, the utopian impulse remains unrealised, while the hope of the youths quickly turns into an urban nightmare (cited in Mazumdar 2007).

City — For the Youth, by the Youth and to the Youth?

In the movie, the young of the city are represented as makers of the city. The movie is marked by the absence of older people. The oldest urban person is around forty. The only elderly characters in the movie are the grandmother of Siva's friend who comes from the village to the city to claim the body of her dead grandson. The grandson is the opponent of the politician Machiraju who briefly appears a few times and who also gets killed in the end. The city is no place for older persons, and even if they do live in the city, they are in danger.

The agency of any change rests in young people who are below thirty. Older persons like Asha's brother — a police officer, and Siva's brother — a government employee — are shown to be helpless. As discussed earlier, the absence of the family is omnipresent in the movies. None of the young peoples' parents are present, or even talked about. Siva lives with his older brother and so does Asha. The presence of family and elder family members denotes stability, and the absence of family signifies the unstable, lonely and distressed lives of the young in the city (Harvey 1980). The city is oppressive, and the lack of stability for the city's inhabitants is characteristic of a dystopian city (McArthur 1997).

In the movie, the city is predominantly a space of the youth. The future of the 'city in ruins' rests in students like JD (a 'bad' student) and his gang who get involved with the local rowdy group. The brighter future for the city rest with students like Siva ('good' student) and his friends. They are sincere in their studies, feel responsible towards the society and their

family, but occasionally bunk classes for some fun and movies.

The urban spaces are conducive for the young forming social bonds beyond their families. The stability not found in their families is compensated for by forming strong social bonds outside the family. These urban spaces are at the same time threatening, as violence lurks around almost every street corner. However, spaces such as the college canteen, the hotels, ice- cream parlours and tea stalls become places for establishing long lasting friendships, loyalties through camaraderie, as well as the discussion of politics.

The youth are represented as accepting everyone with no discrimination on the basis of gender, class or religion, which seems like a utopia existing only in fictional narratives. This raises the question whether the ownership of the city resides only in the youthful, while older groups are relegated to the fringes as mere spectators or victims/subjects of the changes that take place. Why is a certain age group privileged over the other? Is this changing relationship of the city and its culture reflected in the movie of that point of time? (Gandy 2006)

Asha — Modern Woman of the City

Asha (played by Amala) is introduced to Siva by his friend and described as the 'most active girl in the college'. She is a college student, a liberal young girl of the city, and for a while this is celebrated. She enjoys the freedom and access to the city equally as her male friends and sometimes speaks in Hindi. She visits ice-cream parlours alone and goes to the evening show at the theatre with male friends. She waits confidently at bus stops and seems comfortable at a gym which is considered as the male domain (where only men are seen working out).

Her upper-middle-class status is reflected in her education, makeup and dress, which allow her access to these typically male-dominated urban spaces. Her nonchalant and irreverent attitudes do not limit her, even if the city ever tries to do so. The city provides anonymity, endless opportunities and entertainment, as it helps this aspiring and free-spirited woman to explore the city (Phadke et al. 2011).

Her modernity is reflected in the ease by which she dons western wear and also slips into traditional wear with no fuss. The modernity of the city girl and her freedom is clear when she replies to Siva's concern that people might gossip if they rode a bicycle together, 'Do you think it is the 1940s or did you come from Srikakulam forests?' She is friendly with men and women, and she can also go on dates with a boyfriend to a restaurant. This is a deviation in the depiction of women in Telugu movies. Even in the movies that came after *Siva*, the women meet their lovers in secret, and are scared and guilt ridden. She has a casual relationship with her brother who is modern and liberal just like her. The gender of Asha is never stressed and she is an equal to the men and the representation of Asha in the movie is empowering and positive. This freedom, and access, ends when she is threatened by the villains. In the beginning of Siva's and Asha's friendship, Asha tells Siva that she does not want to get married as she hates cooking, household chores and other wifely duties. She gets married to Siva, and under his protection stays at home, restricted to wearing sarees and being the perfect housewife and hostess, while doing the same things she said that she hated about marriage. The freedom to loiter is also not

for married woman. If a woman's safety is threatened, the only solution is marriage and remaining at home.

The City as Site of Conflict: Making of a Dystopian City

The city during the day is shown by washed out colours and excessive sunlight. The heat is oppressive and blinding. The streets are mostly empty, but the crowds gather and watch the spectacle when violence erupts in the urban space. The streets and other public places are sites of conflict. Here the sites of spectacle, like the college campuses, streets, Irani cafes, restaurants and the shopping mall in the final scene, become sites of violence thereby unleashing the uncanny shock of urban (Mazumdar 2007). The violence that they hate and restrain within themselves, in turn, becomes their only means of fighting it. Siva becomes like the anti-protagonists except for being on the moral side.

Figure 5. *Sunny, tropical, City washed out by the Sun* — Source: Youtube

The college dropouts Siva and his friends acquire a legion of cars, guns and other weapons, and seem to live comfortably. The narrative does not show the source of the money for acquiring the weapons and material comforts. It is tacitly understood that they get their money and resources through the same means as do the villain and goons, but without the use of force and exploitation. They happen to be on the right side of the moral binary and, hence, the means used for the steady flow of money and resources are forgiven and overlooked. The irony in the statement of Siva, 'if we kill one JD or Bhavani, another Bhavani and JD will take his place' is evident when Siva kills Bhavani and might eventually replace him. The protagonist Siva, like Ranjani Mazumdar's (2007) angry young man, fights for the good of other people and to reduce the frustration of the young with failed promises of development, and visions of a better future.

There are only handful scenes of the city at night, when gruesome murders or violence are committed. The horror is palpable and the tension runs through every frame. During the first night of the city depicted in the cinema, the brutal violence committed on Naresh and the scene of his face being smashed on a boulder shocks the audience. This kind of violence, and the eerie silence intermittent with equally horrific background music, breaks with the conventional film violence shown in earlier movies.

Figure 6. *Use of shadows and darkness*. Source; YouTube

The movie gets even darker as it progresses, and in the second night scene a politician is killed. The days are still hot and sunny, washed out but the night scenes and interior scenes get darker. The cinema uses low-keyed lighting and shadows to convey the narrative's progression towards darker tones. The night scenes display the darkest side of the city spaces as an urban concrete jungle with ominously dark shadows lurking within the light (Mennel 2008). For example, larger than life shadows of Chinna (friend and associate of Siva) are displayed while he is being chased by goons of Bhavani (anti-protagonist). Their projection onto the high walls of the apartment captures the proximity of violence to the citizens of the city. Only the high concrete walls separate the safe spaces from the violent spaces of the city streets (Krutnik 1997). The city sleeps through the violence when the first act happens in a residential area, and it seems distant from and unaware of the violence unfolding on the streets.

Figure 7. *Chinna running away from goons* — Source: YouTube

Figure 8. *Goons on the concrete; Urban Violence* — Source: YouTube

The city is haunted by death (Mazumdar 2007: 151). For Mazundar, death in the cityhas the ability 'to do each other the greatest injury, without any one of them being actually wrong (Mazumdar 2007: 26). The villain Bhavani is not seen until an hour into the movie, Bhavani is, like Siva, restrained and marked with brevity. We witness Siva becoming as cruel as Bhavani and the movie ends on ambiguous note on whether Siva becomes Bhavani or not. With each death, Siva gets closer to becoming a gangster and the city becoming a dystopian city.

Hyderabad is wary of immigrants and, although outwardly welcoming, the anxiety of what strangers bring to the city underlies the fear. Many academic writings concern this anxiety (Luther 2006) and some argue that immigrants who do not understand the culture of Hyderabad are responsible for diluting it (Pandey 2015). For example, the communal riots that happened in 1978 and in 1990 (due to the repercussions of the Babri masjid demolition) were blamed on politicians and the unaccommodating immigrants (Vittal 2002, Engineer 1991). The communal riots have become an annual event since the 1990s and communal riots broke out in 2000s, as well as more recent years (Kruizinga 2008). This communal tension is hinted at when Siva's family is visited by some men donning Tilak (Red powder put on forehead — indicating religious identity) asking for donations to build Lord Ganesh's temple (alluding to building the Ram temple at 'Ayodhya').[8] The assertions of identity and marking the differences has become aggressive with the increasing entry of migrants from different backgrounds (religious, cultural, linguistic, economic and ethnic), which is an ugly side of the cosmopolitan city. This anxiety and suspicion in the cinema is represented by illiterate and uncouth locals who speak in Telangana. The earlier migrants, and some new ones, are middle class, educated and work in government sectors. This cultural stereotyping and the suspicions fostered the Telangana movement since the Andhra Pradesh state was formed in 1956. The grievances of local Telangana were left unaddressed and fuelled agitations in the 1970s, early 1980s and late 1990s until the formations of a separate Telangana state in 2014.

Sanjay Baru (2007) notes that Hyderabad was undergoing interesting changes around the time the movie *Siva* was released in the 1980s. In earlier times agricultural profits from the coastal areas were invested in Madras, Vijayawada and Vishakhapatnam in the Andhra region.

From the 1980s, it was invested in Hyderabad. Industrialisation was spurred by private investment and facilitated by state subsidies. There were also distressed sales of land in Hyderabad for many decades after the 1956 police action, as rich Muslims emigrated to the Middle East and other foreign countries, and middle class and poor Muslims to other parts of India where the Muslim population is large (Luther 2006). This situation was taken advantage of by land grabbers, rowdies and politician (Engineer 1991). The chief ministers and other major ministers of Andhra Pradesh were from coastal Andhra. As a consequence, the businesses and industries in city were set up by first-generation immigrants and upper castes from the coastal Andhra peasant class (Baru 2007).

In *Siva*, the noble wish of the immigrant/stranger and his friends who speak the Andhra dialect to cleanse the city of its Telangana-speaking criminals indicates the underlying prejudices and the politics of the times. At the time, the city and the nation were going through a period of rapid industrialisation and were ready to usher in globalisation and its by-product of consumerism. Hyderabad did not industrialise as early as Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, but from 1980s the cityscape changed along with the changing economic, social and political processes (Baru 2007). The final two scenes of the film are important for understanding the global city that Hyderabad has become and its transition towards a dystopian city.

Siva's bond with his niece and love for her is symbolic of the innocence and hope that still exists in him. This hope is evident in that although he has no qualms about hurting enemies, he will never kill despite his close friends' death. Siva arranges for his brother to get transferred to another town, distancing him from his family. His house with his wife Asha is always teeming with his 'followers' who were once simply his friends. The house keeps receiving people with complaints and grievances, which Siva helps to solve. Asha is always anxious for her and her husband's safety. The moral lines between Siva and Bhavani, good and bad, moral and evil, are blurred with death of Siva's niece Keerthi. If the depictions of deaths in the movie are unconventional in the Telugu narrative pastiche, the murder of a child was almost non- existent before, and unthinkable and devastating in reality as well. When Bhavani loses everyone's support, he kidnaps Siva's niece Keerthi. At the same time, an arrest warrant is issued for Bhavani. Upon learning that he has lost everything and will be jailed, he kills Keerthi not with rage, but in a chillingly calm way.

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[8] The main issue about Ayodhya is that Hindus believe that the site of Babri Mosque is the birthplace of Ram and a temple was destroyed to build a mosque. Some sections of Hindus demand the temple be built on that location. This dispute became a cause for communal rife amongst Hindus and Muslims, and a cause for numerous communal riots. The politicians keep bringing up this issue for political mileage.

Figures 9 and 10: *Bhavani and Keerthi* and *When Bhavani decides to kill Keerthi* — Source: YouTube

The fuzzy boundaries of the moral divisions between the legal and non-legal and the legitimate and criminal, in the city are attributed to industrialisation by Ranjani Mazumdar and is a reflection on dystopian forms in urban life (Mazumdar 2007: 27). With industrialisation and globalisation, the city has become complex and dangerous, and with the death of a child — dystopian. The image of the city is now marred by violence (Mazumdar 2007: 28) and the complexities are captured in cinema. With the arrest warrant issued for Bhavani, Siva had won; the angry young man had won. But with the murder of his niece, he turns *psychotic* and his rage is internally directed toward revenge.

The fight between Siva and Bhavani does not use a background musical score. The fight on the top of the Swapna Lok Complex (a shopping complex) uses the diegetic sound of the traffic below. The shopping complex, traffic sounds (honking of cars, revving noise of bikes and cars), surrounded by tall buildings and an under-construction elevator (where Bhavani falls to his death) are some of the main visual markers of the city. These markers are used in the climax fight scene which symbolises that violence and conflict have become part of the city and is inseparable from its imagination and representations (Mazumdar 2007).

Figure 10. *Final fight between Siva and Bhavani* — Source: YouTube

Barabara Mennel (2008) talking about deaths in city in the movie *Metropolis* says that after the fall of a villain from the top, the hero on top is now the head of the metropolis. In *Siva*, it is the migrant standing atop of a mall that controls the city now. The violence in a mall and the everyday life proceeding as normal is the ‘Co-existing of Events’ (Narkunas 2001: 156). The malls are signs of urbanism and growing consumerism that is transformed into the site of a final struggle for dominance. As Mennel says, ‘The contemporary urban development of malls

is subversively portrayed with iconic horror as a site of danger' (Mennel 2008: 145).

Conclusion

The city has been represented as unliveable and oppressive (Krutnik 1997, McArthur 1997). The chase scene of Siva and his niece on his bicycle on wide roads, then running in the slums, and finally catching the bus to get away from the attackers, traverses the city and represents the claustrophobic spaces where one seems to be trapped (Tolentino 2001). But, at the same time they provide opportunities to escape into safe spaces. Tea stalls, hotels, college canteen, the streets and a shopping complex (in the final scene) become the spaces where the showdown happens and either one of the parties (villain and hero) will establish, maintain or destabilise the existing power relations. There is no privacy in a dystopian city, or in a gangster film. Anthony Vilder says that private experiences become public in the modern metropolis, and the streets are the prime sites of narrative action in gangster films (cited in Mazumdar 2007: 152) The uncanny city reveals the ambiguities and insecurities of city dwellers when the violence, hidden under the order of urban surface, bursts its seams. In the uncanny and dystopian city of *Siva* everyone is a stranger, and is as scared and insecure as everyone else (Tolentino 2001). Women are unsafe as masculinity controls all its spaces. This masculinity finally subdues Asha who reluctantly moves away from masculine spaces into domesticity. The dystopian city offers only violence as a solution to the problems of crime and violence. Since *Siva*, the tropes of dystopian gangster cities have been depicted in many movies such as *Gaayam* (1993, directed by Ram Gopal Varma), *Antham* (1992, directed by Ram Gopal Varma) *Gulabi* (1996, directed by Krishna Vamsi), *Pokiri* (2006, directed by Puri Jaganath) and *Jalsa* (2008, directed by TriVikram Srinivas). It must be noted that many of the Ram Gopal Varma's movies themselves after *Siva*, and his movement to Bollywood, have been 'Gangster 'movies like *Company*, *Satya*, and *Sarkar* which deal with even more of the complexities of city that can now be explored.

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Appendix 4 – Conferences

ANDHRA UNIVERSITY
VISAKHAPATNAM

Two-Day National Conference on
Youth in Contemporary Society: Attitudes of Exclusion and Attempts for Inclusion
(23rd - 24th March, 2018)

Organised by
Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy (CSSEIP)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify Mr./Mrs./Dr./Prof. T. DEEPTHI KRISHNA

Department of Centre for Regional Studies, University of Hyderabad has participated/presented a paper/ given a plenary talk/Chaired a session/in the two- day National Conference on **"Youth in Contemporary Society : Attitudes of Exclusion and Attempts for Inclusion"**, sponsored by University Grants Commission, New Delhi on the topic Uncanny and Dystopian City : Youth and Violence in the Movie 'Seva'

Prof. P.D. Satya Pal Kumar
Convener

Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

This is to certify that

Deepthi Krishna Thota

of **University of Hyderabad**

presented a paper titled

Gendered Cinematic City of 1990s: Domesticity, Career and Tradition vs Modernity in Telugu Movies

at **Graduate Research Meet 2018**

Emerging Trends in Humanities and Social Sciences

held on October 26 & 27, 2018.

Mr. A.K. Hazarika Student Convenor	Dr. K. Keshavamurthy Faculty Convenor	Dr. A. Mahanta Faculty Convenor	Prof. M.K. Dutta HoD, Dept. of HSS, IITG

Representation of Urban Exclusions: A Study on Films of Hyderabad

by Deepthi Krishna Thota

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