

Title

**An interdisciplinary case study of creative and sociological aspects of
noir elements in select Hindi films made during 1950-2015**

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**Submitted by
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**Under the Guidance of
DR. PROF. M. C. DIXIT**

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FORM 'C'

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “ An interdisciplinary case study of creative and sociological aspects of noir elements in select Hindi films made during 1950-2015” which is being submitted herewith for the award of the Degree of Vidyavachaspati (Ph.D.) in Sociology (interdisciplinary) Department of Tilak Maharashtra University, Pune is the result of original research work completed by Shri. Chandrashekhar Joshi under my supervision and guidance. To the best of my knowledge and belief the work incorporated in this thesis has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree or similar title of this or any other University or examining body upon him.

Dr. Prof. M. C. Dixit
Research Guide :

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Chapter One

Introduction

Soon after the man's attempts in catching the still images in a camera were successful, a few endeavoured to play with moving images. One of the most known efforts was by William Horner, who invented, devised and patented Magic Lantern called Zoetrope in 1834. It was based on the principle of persistence of vision presented by Dr. Peter Mark Roget in 1824. The basis for persistence of vision was that a rapid succession of images created an illusion of motion. This principle found its most effective reflection in Cinema. It was with this principle, that scientists were able to prepare celluloid film that could record the images with illusion of motion.

Birth and basic principles of Cinema

The efforts of several scientists were put together in the direction of projecting moving images. And, the Cinema was born on 28th December, 1895 at Paris, France. The Lumière brothers, Louis and August, presented one of the first commercial and public exhibitions of a projected motion picture to a paying public (Bordwell/Thompson, 2010, p.456). Most of these were the actuality footage (non-fiction) of the events shot as they happened, like : *Workers Leaving the Factory*, *A Train Arriving at a Station*, *Feeding the baby*, *The Boat Leaving the Harbor* and so on. This first film audience found infinite fascination in the mere recording and reproduction of the movement of animate and inanimate objects. Further, Lumières added a film that had a small story (fiction) unlike their other footage. It was *Watering the Garden*. Here, a gardener is watering a lawn. A boy steps on the hose pipe that holds the water flow. The gardener checks the valve of pipe. The boy removes the foot restoring the flow that startles the gardener. When he realizes the

trick of the boy, the gardener runs after and smacks the mischievous boy. All these actions were deliberately staged for recording in the camera. This impregnated that cinema can narrate a story on the screen.

It can further be observed that the cinema is based on the principle of image. Everything appearing on the screen is the reflection of somebody and/or something and not the actual person or property. What we are mentally prepared to watch is essentially the image as against say, the actual performer during a stage-play. If we manage to go behind the screen during a show, we are not able to see the back of the performer facing the audience. Despite this, we continue to watch movies. And, since we watch movies voluntarily or for the attractions they create for us, *willing suspension of disbelief* thus, becomes another crucial principle of cinema.

However, it is argued that the human emotions a performer expresses to the best of his ability can be as true as the genuine feelings of a person in a particular situation. Be it love, anger, envy, desire, sympathy, apathy or bravery, the audience respond and identify only to the emotions expressed aptly by the performer. That means, the superficiality of expressions gets either outright rejection or these are not appreciated well. Here, the creativity of the performers becomes so important that we tend to watch our favourite artiste, either on screen or in person and get impressed both by his or her screen image and personal appearance. This marks the popularity of cinema in our daily life.

Brief Development of Cinema

After the success of Lumière Show, it was George Méliès' *A Trip to the Moon* (1901) that told a fascinating story of a group of people who travels to the Moon. An interesting attempt as it was, both, the filmmakers and the audience had gone beyond the marvel of the century. The audience was now ready for watching the complete, although short, stories on the screen. Subsequently, Edwin Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) paved the way for crime stories. Filmmakers, with their creations, were graduating like those as great authors, painters or music maestros. Charles Chaplin devised his tramp character with *The Kid Auto Races in Venice* (1914) and went on to create his masterpieces from *The Kid* (1921), *Modern Times* (1936) and *The Great Dictator* (1939) in the forthcoming years. Chaplin is considered as the

world's first superstar and continued to entertain the audience for next few more decades. David Wark Griffith made the world's first blockbuster *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) with a huge production cost of US\$ 110,000 and whooping return of US\$22,000,000 (IMDB figures). Griffith is also known for deployment of editing techniques like cross-cutting for last minute rescue scenes and cutting closer to the actors precisely at the moments of emotional intensity. After the World War I, the filmmaking in Europe suffered and that offered the Americans a chance to grow in film productions both quantitatively and qualitatively. The result was Classical Hollywood cinema that got established almost throughout the world. Chaplin's *Gold Rush* (1925) and *City Lights* (1931), *Our Hospitality* (1923) and *The General* (1929) by Buster Keaton and stretching to other films like *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) had reached across the world. The cinema found its complacency with addition of sound with *The Jazz Singer* (Alan Crosland, 1927) for full expression. The silent cinema, projected with inter-titles and musical accompaniment that varied from place to place, turned into "talkie". Along with facial expressions, the talking pictures started to deliver dialogues of the artistes, background score and music too. Although cinema continued to upgrade itself with newer technologies for its best possible visual and audio quality, cinema at this point was grown as a complete medium.

Roberta Pearson (in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, 1996, p.18) explains the phenomenon as follow :

For many years film theorists pointed to the Lumière and Méliès films as the originating movement of the distinction between documentary and fiction filmmaking, given that the Lumières for the most part filmed 'real' events and Méliès staged events. But such distinctions were not a part of contemporary discourse, since many pre-1907 films mixed what we would today call 'documentary' material, that is, events or objects existing independently of the filmmaker, with 'fictional' material, that is, events or objects specifically fabricated for the camera.

Cinema and other classic arts - Creative Collaboration

Since then cinema has borrowed from different art forms. Cinema, being the youngest of art, has borrowed forms and contents from many of the classic arts. In fact, cinema is a synthesis of all possible arts and is therefore called as composite art.

With a life span of just hundred years, the cinema has acquired the status as the seventh classic art (the other classic arts – Theatre, Literature, Music, Painting, Sculpture and Architecture). With reference to the present study, it is significant to understand how some of these arts have influenced cinema. It is an attempt to view the contributions of these arts to cinema in the light of the present study.

Theatre:

The basic rationale of theatre and cinema arts is to present ‘make-belief’ situation. This is done through actors, performance, sets, music and so on. Unlike theatre, cinema thrives on the realistic (authentic) set up for the actors, actions and backdrop with sets or locations that is it is able to actually show mountain, river, ocean, valley, forest etc while the theatre can only depict it as painted backdrop, a set or in a suggestive manner. However, unlike theatre, it is only the image of the actor that we watch on the screen. This marks the argument for actual presence of the actor on stage as against his image on the screen. Besides, the proscenium arch i.e. the stage boundaries of theatre has given the cinema a sense of frame to accommodate the artistes and the actions as per the requirement of the script. This can be related to the performances of the artistes in the noir films under study as well as creation of frames for particular shots.

Literature:

The literature has always provided the story material for films. The outstanding great work of literature has found reflection of human behavior, social customs and several cultural anecdotes of the respective time. In addition, the imagery elaborated in the literary work has also helped a filmmaker to stretch his imagination and translate it onto the screen in the most appropriate manner. A work of literature is often considered as the mirror to the life style, politics, and social atmosphere of the particular society during the respective times. A number of novels and short stories have been interpreted on the screen. For example, Margaret Mitchell’s best seller of the same title was filmed as *Gone with the Wind* (1939) by Victor Fleming. Francis Ford Coppola’s interpretation of Mario Puzo’s *The Godfather* (1972) was well received. In India, Vijay Anand made in 1964 the celluloid version of R.K. Narayan’s

popular novel 'The Guide' which got much critical acclaim. An argument needs to be discussed here. In literature, the image of the characters, events, nature and other elaborations are the result of the author's imagination. Although these are the same words for all the readers, they reach the readers as per their imagination, maturity, gender, age, socio-economic-cultural status and probably mental set up when reading the literary work. Each reader creates an 'abstract' image for himself that cannot be shared with others in visual terms. However, as against this abstract vision, the image created by a filmmaker is fixed. When a filmmaker portrays, for example, an actor for the particular character written by the author, he translates the 'abstract' image into a 'concrete' image which is same in visual form for all the viewers. When he sketches a character in the form of an actor, he, in a sense, declares that this is the image of the particular character, as designed by him. For example, the images of Raju and Rosie (Novel: *The Guide*) were varied in the minds of the readers when they read. But Vijay Anand, in the form of Dev Anand and Waheeda Rehman (Film: *Guide*), presented these characters and emphasized that they are no other images of Raju and Rosie than these artistes. The filmmaker enjoys the freedom to change, add or delete a scene or a character while adopting from literary work. Since a number of Hollywood noir films are based on popular novels, the point of adaptation becomes significant for the present study.

Painting :

It can be debated that cinema is essentially painting in motion. Many shots, particularly static shots in a scene are devised as a painting would look alike. The characters or the props are located in the frame in such a way that it appears like a painting. In other words, compositions for paintings provide the much required, beautiful frames for the cinema. Although it is acknowledged that the cinema designed the size of a shot i.e. close up, mid shot, long shot etc. these frames were already in existence in the paintings. A portrait size in the painting is termed as a long shot size in cinema. We can see long shots, close ups and other kinds of shots in many of the paintings by the masters such as Raja Ravi Varma, Thakur Singh and so on. Therefore, we can articulate that the medium of painting lent out the size of the frames to cinema. Further, certain areas in a painting voluntarily call for our attention, as we are automatically led to a point in the painting. Leonardo da Vinci

investigated the principle that underlies our notions of beauty and harmony and called it the *Golden Section*. Long before Leonardo, however, Babylonian, Egyptian, and ancient Greek masters also applied the *Golden Section* proportion in architecture and art.¹ Besides, painting indicates the colours – right from the skin of the characters to the drapery and make-up too. For example, the symmetrical frames in the ‘mujara’ song numbers from the Hindi film *Umrao Jaan* (dir : Muzaffar Ali, 1981) are no less than excellent paintings. It is no surprise that Ali goes on achieving visually pleasant frames that have great aesthetic sense. Similarly, paintings have also offered cinema a taste for lighting. Among many others, an example of the famous painting ‘After Bath’ (24x36” – Medium Oil) by legendary painter S. G. Thakur Singh (1889-1976) can be mentioned to make the point. It is only with the dramatic use of colors and lighting that Thakur Singh painted a woman with soaked sari attached to her body after bath. Thus, it is stunning to observe the use of augmented lighting in some of the best works of painting that has been aptly adopted by filmmakers.

It is obvious that art movements emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century were bound to have some reflection of cinema. Many of the art movement during early twentieth century have influenced the film medium. It is significant to understand the 20th century art movement and its relation to films.

For example, in the study of paintings by Pablo Picasso, one can watch the elements of the cinematograph itself buried in portraits and still life. Picasso applied *Cubism* in some of his paintings. For instance, a crank hand doubling as a woman’s nose in a painting created in 1910. Cubism implied movements and the contemporary filmmakers like George Méliès attempted these in their films. For Méliès’s techniques of jarring multiple perspectives, fragmented bodies and body parts reflected comic self-conscious dialogue between apparent art and apparent reality. Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1923) was full of machine motifs. He distinguished between the workers entering the factory and the workers leaving the factory at shift change with mechanized movements reflecting both fatigue of the earlier group and loath of the unwilling entrants. Lang deployed a female robot to lead the working class in revolt. Dziga Vertov made use of *Cubism* in his celebrated documentary *Man with a Movie*

¹ http://www.colorpilot.com/comp_rules.html

Camera (1929). The documentary reflects that Vertov respected machines and the actions that the camera was able to do, enthralled him. Celebrated painter Salvador Dali is known as exponent of *Surrealism* that drew upon irrational imagery and the subconscious mind. It was a modernist approach to film theory, criticism and production that had origins in France during 1920s. Surrealist cinema was characterized by juxtaposition of shots in such a manner that rejects dramatic psychology and frequent use of shocking imagery. French filmmaker Germaine Dulac is credited for directing first surrealist film *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (1928). Subsequently, Luis Bunuel, along with Salvador Dali made *Un Chien Andalou* (An Andalusian Dog, 1929) that presented a number of dreadful images including the infamous slicing of a woman's eye-ball with razor shots. In Bunuel's *L'Age d'or* (1930), a woman begins obsessively sucking the toes of a statue. Many years later, well-known Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman applied surrealism during his sequence of the old man's dream in *Wild Strawberries* (1958). Looking at art as a form of expression and convey the personal vision of the artist has been the key word for the artists practicing *Impressionism* in France. The Encyclopedia of Art History² explains that "Its guiding principle was the realistic depiction of light; Impressionist artists sought to capture fleeting moments, and if, during these moments, an object appeared orange - due to the falling light or its reflection - then the artist painted the object orange. Or if the sun turned the surface of a pond pink, then pink it would be." Claude Monet is regarded as the most popular amongst Impressionist artists. The films based on Impressionism also served as the basis for the filmmaker's exploration of fleeting moods and shifting sensations. These filmmakers expressed their beliefs in poetic, usually complex, essays and manifestos, which helped define them as a distinct group. Filmmaker Abel Gance has been practitioner of Impressionism in his films. His *La dixième Symphonie* (The Tenth Symphony, 1918) is considered as the first major film on Impressionism. Gance deployed double exposures that expressed dilemma of the characters in this film. In his *La Roue*, (The Wheel, 1923) the image of Norma, a character, is superimposed over the smoke from a locomotive, representing the fantasy of the engine driver, who

² <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/impressionism.htm> accessed on 19.04.2015 at 11.04 pm)

is in love with her. In her special video essay, the film scholar Kristin Thompson has mentioned that “the French Impressionist movement can be said to have begun in 1918... its main traits had to do with the representation of subjectivity through camera tricks: point-of-view shots, superimpositions, fuzzy filters, distorting mirrors, that sort of thing. Gance seems to have been the first filmmaker to realize that one could use rhythmic, accelerated editing to portray extreme states of mind”³. Besides, a few more Impressionist films by other filmmakers such as Jacques Feyder’s *L’Atlantide* (Missing Husbands, 1921) as well as female filmmaker Germaine Dulac’s *La souriante Madame Beudet* (The Smiling Madam Beudet) which is also a feminine work and the long duration film (233 minutes in six parts) *Gossette* (both 1923), also earned name for its use of film style. In Germany, *Expressionism* was a keyword in the films that won international recognition. David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (2010) elaborate how the Expressionist movement creped in German cinema during the post-World War I period:

“ Some small companies briefly remained independent. Among these was Erich Pommer's Decla (later Decla-Bioscope). In 1919, the firm undertook to produce an unconventional script by two unknowns, Carl Mayer and Hans Janowitz. These young writers wanted *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* to be made in an unusually stylized way. The three designers assigned to the film – Harmann Warm, Walter Reimann and Walter Rohrig – suggested that it be done in Expressionist style. As an avant-garde movement, Expressionism had first been important in painting (starting about 1910) and had been quickly taken up in theatre, then in literature and architecture. Now company officials consented to try it in the cinema, apparently believing that this might be a selling point in the international market. There appears to be no specific reason behind this decision.

This belief was proved in 1920 when Decla's inexpensive film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* created a sensation in Berlin and then in the United States, France and other countries. Because of its success, other films in the Expressionist style soon followed. The result was a stylistic movement in cinema that lasted several years.” (p.461)

Bordwell and Thompson, continuing the discourse forward with reference to Harmann Warm, maintained that the film image must become graphic art. As they

³ <https://www.fandor.com/keyframe/video-essay-kristin-thompson-on-the-brilliance-and-indulgence-of-la-roue> accessed on 19.04.2015 at 11.58 pm.

continue, “*Caligari*, presented its extreme stylization like a moving Expressionist painting or woodcut print. This depended heavily on mise-en-scene where shapes are distorted and exaggerated unrealistically for expressive purposes. In this style, the actors often wear heavy makeup and move in jerky or slow sinuous patterns. Characters do not simply exist within a setting but rather form visual elements that merge with the setting. In *Caligary*, the Expressionist stylization functions to convey the distorted viewpoint of a madman.” (p.462) This trend was continued by filmmakers like F. W. Murnau in *Faust* (1926) and Fritz Lang in *Metropolis* (1927) and in *M* (1930). In the mid and late 1920s however, due to prominence of foreign films in Germany, the filmmakers could not continue with Expressionism in films. Many filmmakers left Germany to try their luck in the United States. This included Erich Pommer as well as F. W. Murnau and major artistes such as Conrad Veidt and Emil Jannings and cinematographers like Karl Freund who moved to Hollywood. After beginning of the Nazi regime began, Fritz Lang too left the country. Lang carried the influence of Expressionist style to Hollywood that further influenced the filmmakers there. As Bordwell and Thompson (2010, p.463) maintain, “and because many of the German filmmakers came to the United States, Hollywood horror films also displayed film noir’s expressionist tendencies in their settings and lighting...the expressionism never entirely died out as a trend in film style.”

It is argued that this preparation of Cinema had equipped itself to accommodate a number of expressions in form and content. Along with successful functioning of studio system and star system, the film industry had adopted various genres from literature for translating the same on to the screen. Filmmakers and studios too started getting recognition for the films they made with specific genres. Along with Charles Chaplin, another filmmaker Buster Keaton had gained fame with intelligent comedies and satires such as *Sherlock Jr.* (1924) for Metro Pictures. Paramount has a great hit like James Cruze *The Covered Wagon* (1923) that told a story of westward immigration in the 1940s in a self-consciously epic drama style. John Ford, although directed a number of other kinds of films, is well associated with Western for his *The Iron Horse* (1924) and *Stagecoach* made during the later period in 1939. With Musicals, the actors got more popularity as Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers captured the public’s attention massively. They earned huge popularity with *Top Hat* (1935)

and *Shall We Dance* (1937) both directed by Mark Sandrich) as well as *Swing Time* (1936) and *A Damsel in Distress* (1937) both directed by George Stevens. Besides, Busby Berkeley, the choreographer-turned-director got reputation with *Gold Diggers of 1935* (1935) and other films. It will not be out of place to mention the remarks of Rick Altman (in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, 1996) when he says, “During Hollywood’s heyday, the musical played a central role in the American public sphere. Its coherence, homogeneity, and ubiquity guaranteed continuity of interpretation and meaning.” (p.303) A number of filmmakers, with their outstanding films, had earned name in crime and gangster movies. Josef von Sternberg (*Underworld*, 1927). It will not be out of place to mention that the landscape of *Underworld* with dark corners and use of unnatural shadows would greatly influence film noir in the near future. Phil Hardy (in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, 1996) quotes, “Underworld thus adds to the underworld/overworld contrast a social dimension which fleshed out the robber baron element of gangsterdom and would be consistently picked up by later films” (p.305). Mervyn LeRoy (*Little Caesar*, 1931), *Public Enemy* and Howard Hawks (*Scarface*, 1932)

Phil Hardy (in Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, 1996) elaborates the subtle situation with gangster films and also compares the gangster movies with the musicals:

“...highlights a central truth about 1930s gangster films and their reception. Let down themselves by established official society, audiences during the Depression cheered on the gangsters (often folk heroes in real life as well as on the screen), sharing with them, if only in spirit, the delight of putting on evening dress and mixing with those to whom evening dress was a birthright. In this the appeal of the gangster film was like that of the musical, and particularly the ‘show musical’ in which the little people put on a show and finally win the approval of those in charge, but only after fierce opposition, with the added bonus of the immediate translation of one of their number from supporting role to star. There is a further similarity between early musicals and gangster films : the central role of energy in both, be it flashing legs, tapping feet, blazing machine-guns, or car chase. (It is no accident that the intensely dynamic James Cagney was a star of both.) It is this energy and social climbing (both features of displaced sexuality) that makes the early gangster an optimistic figure and the at the same time a tragic one, doomed because his energy can never be enough..” (p.306)

It is further argued that a cinematic expression in another way was quite natural. In the circumstances resulted from Great Depression and World War I and by the émigré filmmakers from Europe, the film noir emerged in Hollywood. The noir is considered as a part of crime movies. It can be agreed that both the filmmakers and the viewers found it fascinating to project a crime story at the earliest period of telling stories on screen. Further, the commercial success of Edwin Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) opened up the possibilities of constructing halls especially meant for film projection which were known as 'nickelodeon'. Such permanent exhibition sites were established in the United States in 1905 and within next two years there were an estimated 2,500 to 3,000 cinema halls were built in America (Paolo Cherchi Usai in Geoffrey-Nowell Smith, 1996, p.36).

Emergence of Film Noir

With this background, the entity of film noir can be considered. Film noir is a dimension of crime films. While most of crime movies deal with offences like murder, theft or others and conclude with finding out the culprit, noir films tag a different facet. Here the criminal occupies the central place. This is probably the only way of filmmaking where the criminal is more significant than the crime. A number of Hollywood films made during the decades of 1940 and 1950 reflect an unusual point of view towards the crime, and especially the characters who commit crime out of passion, greed and sexual motivation. The treatment of the characters appeared often harsh and brutal many times. Many of these characters were common people living life honestly. Some had given up the dreadful past and living trouble-free life away from the crime-world but the bad past wouldn't stop to pursue them. The protagonist commit a chance error that opens up Pandora's Box of trouble for him and the fate begins the ruthless pursuit of character until his death. The films like *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, 1944) and *Out of Past* (Jacques Tourneur, 1947) profusely presented these characters. In *Double Indemnity*, Neff (Fred MacMurray), a straightforward insurance salesman at first refuses Phyllis (Barbara Stanwyck) plan of having an insurance policy for her husband without his knowledge. He doubts her honesty initially but then falls for her. This mistake costs him a lot and we, as audience and Neff as the character, have no option but to watch the game then destiny plays with him. The film *Out of Past* narrated a story of Jeff (Robert

Mitchum), a private detective who has left his profession and is living a simple life in countryside. However, Jeff is found out by his ex-client Whit (Kirk Douglas) who hired him to trace his girlfriend Kathie (Jane Greer), ran away with huge money belonging to Whit. Jeff finds Kathie who seduces him and prompts him to forget Whit. When Whit knows this, Kathie ditches Jeff. Now, Jeff has no choice but to face the crime-world at the whims of Kathie and Whit. The film presents dark and cold characters that leave the audience numb. These are just a few examples but a number of films on similar subject matters and treatment were made during this phase.

These films had many characteristics. Most of the films had a style of voice over narration. The films narrated the stories mostly in several flashbacks. This indicated the burden of the past the protagonist was living with presently. The flash back scenes narrated the crimes these characters committed. The *Double Indemnity*, just discussed has been one of the best examples of such narrative. The voice-over narration had its own advantages. Firstly, it projected a drama that might have taken place before the character reached a specific situation that was fatal. It is argued that with this technique, the filmmakers wanted to relate the audiences to the character's mind. Also, the character's narration about the past could find proximity with the audience and created a kind of sympathy for it. The audience could experience the distress of the character so that they could experience and share the agonies.

In a number of such films, women played a major role. Not to say that these were the main characters in the films but the women were wildly ambitious and crooked at times. They preyed on men who were powerful in some way but vulnerable. In the terms of film noir, these women are known as femme fatale. An aura of sexual fascination surrounds the star persona of Marlene Dietrich. (Studlar Gaylyn in Geoffrey-Nowell Smith, 1996, p.240) She earned definitive screen image with playing Lola, the cabre dancer in Josef von Sternberg's *The Blue Angel* (1930). "It was the Sternberg touch and Dietrich's performance in that film as femme fatale insolently indifferent to male sexual debasement that would bring her instant international fame and suggest the beginnings of the Dietrich legend." "Distinguished by a heady visual eroticism centered around their star, the Sternberg-Dietrich films again and again return to her to the role of an enigmatic and sensual woman who inspires masochistic behavior in the men subject to her fatal and provocative charm."

Borde and Chaumeton (2000, p.6-7) illustrate the difference between the police documentary (on particular crime event) and film noir. A different angle of vision becomes the first and foremost. While, a documentary, they say, consider a murder from the official police viewpoint, the film noir penetrates within, from the criminals point of view. The film noir is set in the criminal milieu itself and describes it in depth and with obliging subtlety .. “And in any event, it proposes a psychology of crime that isn’t without its echoes.” Borde and Chaumeton elaborate the second difference that of a moral kind. As against the upright investigations by police in a crime film, in the noir film, the policemen are of dubious character – evil-looking, corrupt brute or even murderers at times. It is for this reason that many of the noir films have the character of private detective that “satisfied both the exigencies of morality and those of the criminal adventure story”.

Robert Siodmak’s *Criss Cross* (1949) was about man doomed because he picked a wrong woman. “From the opening aerial shot across the darkened city and into the parking lot of a small nightclub, *Criss Cross* invokes the indicators of fatality in film noir,” observe Silver, Ursini and Duncan (2012) “ a distanced view of an anonymous urban landscape; the frenetic chords of Miklos Rozca’s score gradually ceding to the dance music from within the club; the preordained movement inwards drawn by an unknown object or person.” (p.68)

It is significant to trace the roots of film noir in diversity. As Silver, Ursini and Duncan (2012, p.11) observes, “on the literary side, noir drew heavily from the works of the hard-boiled school of detective fiction written by the likes of Dashiell Hammet, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, David Goodis and Cornell Woolrich. Also influential were the writings of naturalist authors like Emile Zola and Ernest Hemingway, the later being a particularly potent role model with his clipped and poetic prose style and pointed dialogue”. It can be further observed how the strong story lines and characterizations further strengthened in the major noir films. For example, like *The Maltese Falcon* (Dashiell Hammet), *Double Indemnity* and *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (James M. Cain), *Murder, My Sweet* (Raymond Chandler’s *Farewell, My Lovely*) and his *The Big Sleep*.

Another root for film noir is found in German Expressionism. Dutch angles, low-key lighting, cut lights, light filtered through venetian blinds fall under this discussion. Frontal, subjective camera angles suggest viewers' watching of the scenes closely. These indicate that the audience during such shot size and camera angles are not just onlookers but close observers of the event with curiosity. For example, at the beginning of *Double Indemnity*, Neff reaches office, driving his car wildly, to the office during midnight. While he gets down from the car and entering the office, we see him in a high angle shot very close to the action as if somebody is watching his actions very closely at this odd hour.

Definition of Film Noir

Defining film noir has always been difficult because it is a retrospective category. It was not applied to the films when they were being made. Considering the complex nature of noir films, it is interesting to note when Naremore (2000) writes that it had always been easier to recognize a film noir than to define the term. "One can imagine a large video store where examples of such films would be shelved somewhere between gothic horror and dystopian science fiction; in the center would be *Double Indemnity*, and at either extreme *Cat People* and *Invasion off the Body Snatchers*. But this arrangement would leave out important titles. There is in fact no completely satisfactory way to organize the category; and despite scores of books and essays that have been written about it, nobody is sure whether the films in question constitute a period, a genre, a cycle, or simply a phenomenon."(p.1) The Encyclopedia Britannica⁴ elaborates, Film Noir, as a style of filmmaking characterized by elements such as cynical heroes, stark lighting effects, frequent use of flashbacks, intricate plots, and underlying existentialist philosophy.

In the documentary *Film Noir*, filmmaker Errol Morris (*The Thin Blue Line, The Fog of War* 2003) gives a broad definition:

"Noir is concerned with errors, with confusions. We don't know what's going on but we know something bad is out there controlling events.
For me the great noir films are films about fall guys, the person who

⁴ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/206993/film-noir>, 2013

finds himself caught in a net. The more he struggles, the deeper and deeper he becomes entwined in nightmare."⁵

As Martin (1999) defines, "Classic film noir was Hollywood's "dark cinema" of crime and corruption, a genre underpinned by a tone of existential cynicism, which stripped bare the myth of the American Dream and offered a bleak nightmare vision of a fragmented society that rhymed with many of the social realities of post-war America."(p.ix) Obviously, Martin is commenting on socio-economic conditions in the US that prompted to make this style of filmmaking.

Hirsch (1981) further defines Film Noir, "is a descriptive term for the American crime film as it flourished, roughly, from the early forties to the late fifties. It embraces a variety of crime dramas ranging from claustrophobic studies of murder and psychological entrapment to more general treatments of criminal organizations....In range of theme and in visual style, it is both varied and complex, and in level of achievement it is consistently high, film noir is one of the most challenging cycles in the history of American films. (p.21)

"Film Noir is one of Hollywood's only organic artistic movements", defines Film Noir Foundation and continue the elaboration further as :

"Beginning in the early 1940s, numerous screenplays inspired by hardboiled American crime fiction were brought to the screen, primarily by European émigré directors who shared a certain storytelling sensibility : highly stylized, overtly theatrical, with imagery often drawn from an earlier era of German "expressionist" cinema. Few, if any of the artists in Hollywood who made these films called them "noir" at the time. But the vivid co-mingling of lost innocence, doomed romanticism, hard-edged cynicism, desperate desire, and shadowy sexuality that was unleashed in those immediate post-war years proved hugely influential, both among industry peers in

⁵ (<http://www.listal.com/list/british-film-noir>)

the original era, and to future generation of storytellers, both literary and cinematic.⁶

The Wikipedia website defines *Film noir* is a cinematic term used primarily to describe stylish Hollywood crime dramas, particularly those that emphasize moral ambiguity and sexual motivations and covers many aspects of film noir and elaborates the same as :

“Hollywood's classic *film noir* period is generally regarded as stretching from the early 1940s to the late 1950s. *Film noir* of this era is associated with a low-key black-and-white visual style that has roots in German Expressionist cinematography, while many of the prototypical stories and much of the attitude of classic noir derive from the hardboiled school of crime fiction that emerged in the United States during the Depression.”⁷

Film Noir is tagged with several aspects like literary, artistic and philosophical. Around the first quarter of 20th century, Sigmund Freud and Jean-Paul Sartre had influenced literary world through their theories of psychology and existentialism respectively. A quote enlighten us more elaborately :

“Top-flight Paramount cinematographer John F. Seitz contributed mightily to the *film noir* edifice through his work on *This Gun for Hire* (1942), *Night has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), *Sunset Boulevard*, *Appointment with Danger* (1951) and *Detective Story* (1951). Most of *Double Indemnity*'s pivotal sequences transpire in dark settings typical of the *noir* style, either nighttime exteriors or destabilizing interiors rife with shadows. This point is hammered home from the beginning, with Neff's late-night return to the office to tell his story. The ensuing semiotics insistently communicates damage or danger, even in seemingly innocuous environments. The immaculate veneer of suburban tranquility, where area children play stickball in the street, contrasts with the dominant venetian blinds inside the Dietrichson home that suggest a prison-like interior of both physical and psychological confinement. When Neff first meets Phyllis, she is alluringly dressed in only a towel, yet unattainable placement-wise. She occupies a superior position atop the stairway, while Neff stands below. Such positioning would become a much-imitated *noir* trope.”
[<http://filmnoirboard.blogspot.in/2015/01/double-indemnity-1944.html>, accessed on 19.03.2015 at 9.10 pm)

⁶ <http://www.filmnoirfoundation.org/filmnoir.html> accessed on 6 July 2015 at 7.12 pm)

⁷ http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Film_Noir

“Between the Great Depression and the start of the Cold War, Hollywood went *noir*, reflecting the worldly, weary, wised-up undercurrent of midcentury America. The author explores the genre's origins, its look, its politics, and its geography, and shows how *noir*'s poignant cynicism took hold—and why it remains embedded in the national psyche today,” defines Ann Douglas (2007) the film noir and further elaborates, “Noir is premised on the audience’s need to see failure risked, courted, and sometimes won; the American dream becomes a nightmare, one strangely more seductive and euphoric than the optimism it repudiates... noir provided losing with a mystique.” (article ‘Day Into Noir’ by Ann Douglas [Professor of American Studies in Columbia University] Vanity Fair, March 2007 issue)

Film Noirs relates with a variety of genres. It may be a gangster film dealing with police investigation or simply a projection of social problem. Critics have been debating on whether film noir is a genre or not. They attempt to apply the characteristics of setting, characterization, themes and so on to define noir as a genre. A number of films like *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Detour* (1945) are set in urban places while *Out of the Past* has rural set up. Further, the characters of private detective, popularly known as private eye in noir films, or femme fatale, the woman leading the protagonist to doom, are often associated with film noir. However, a number of noir films do not have these characters.

“To this day the debate goes on as to whether “noir” is a film genre, circumscribed by its content, or a visual style of story-telling, identified by its visual attributes. The debate – in which there is no right answer – is only one of the things that keep noir fresh for successive generations of movie lovers.”⁸

Interestingly, some of those involved in the making of the classic noirs later acknowledged to have known of creating a distinctive type of film. Billy Wilder, one of the major noir filmmakers, once mentioned “...you’re trying to make as good and as entertaining a picture as you possibly can. If you have any kind of style, the discerning ones will detect it.” (Porfirio, Robert and Silver, Alain and Ursini, James, *Film Noir Reader 3: Interviews with Filmmakers of the Classic Noir Period*, 2002, Limelight Editions, p.101)

⁸ <http://www.filmnoirfoundation.org/filmnoir.html> accessed on 6 July 2015 at 7.12 pm

The term *film noir* (French expression for "black film") was first applied to Hollywood movies by French critic Nino Frank in 1946, was unknown to most American film industry professionals of the era. Cinema historians and critics defined the canon of *film noir* in retrospect.

As discussed, noir films were primarily made in the US by the German filmmakers and first identified by French film critics. This three-tier journey of film noir offers it a unique position. Commercial success of these films demonstrated that there was an audience for crime dramas with morally reprehensible protagonists.

Since the acts of crime usually are committed in the dark, the noir films frequently use low-key lighting producing stark light and dark contrasts and dramatic shadow patterns. Sharp, unfiltered light especially on the character's face showing it as unwrapped as possible featuring his exposure or vulnerability to situations, cut-lights and chiaroscuro lighting for creation of strange and ambiguous atmosphere marked the style. Some of directors such as Fritz Land, Robert Siodmak, Michael Curtiz and others introduced dramatic lighting techniques and remarkable psychologically expressive approach to deploy mise-en-scene to Hollywood cinema. Amongst the 1930s film that reflected noir elements were *20,000 Years in Sing Sing* (1932) featuring Spencer Tracy and Bette Davis as well as *Private Detective 62* (1933) both directed by Curtiz.

With Ida Lupino, we can cite a single example of woman noir filmmaker. Her *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953) is a remarkable example of tense film with a sadist killer in it. Interestingly, the film does not have a single female character. Portraying the story of two fishermen who are taken for ride by a crazy killer, Ida used the hot, barren desert, almost like a character, showing the severity of her main two characters undergoing sufferings at the hands of the murderer.

Besides, *Shanghai Express* (1932) and *The Devil is a Woman* (1935) both directed by Josef von Sternberg mooted elements of classic noir as these depicted exciting eroticism and elaborate visual style.

As it is observed, crime, usually murder, is an element of almost all *film noirs*. It is supplemented with greed and jealousy as the frequent criminal motivation. A crime

Investigation of crime either by a private eye or a police detective, many times acting alone, is the most prevalent but not a dominant, basic plot. In other frequently recurring themes, the protagonists are implicated in heists or con games, or in homicidal schemes often involving adulterous affairs. False suspicions and accusations of crime are frequent plot elements, as are betrayals and double-crosses. Amnesia is far more common in *film noir* than in real life, and cigarette smoking can seem virtually mandatory.

Film noirs tend to revolve around heroes who are more flawed and morally questionable than the norm, often fall guys of one sort or another. Certain archetypal characters appear in many film noirs—hardboiled detectives, femme fatales, corrupt policemen, jealous husbands, intrepid claims adjusters, and down-and-out writers. As can be observed in many movies of an overtly neo-noir nature, the private eye and the femme fatale are the character types with which film noir has come to be most identified, but only a minority of movies now regarded as classic noir feature either. For example, of the nineteen National Film Registry noirs, in only four does the star play a private eye: *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *The Big Sleep* (1946), *Out of the Past* (1947), and *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955). Just two others readily qualify as detective stories: *Laura* (1944) and *Touch of Evil* (1958).

Film noir is often associated with an urban setting and a few cities—Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and Chicago, in particular—are the location of many of the classic films. The city is often presented in noir as a labyrinth or maze. The scenes of action, particularly concluding actions are frequently placed in bars, lounges, nightclubs, and gambling dens. The climaxes of a sizeable number of noir films take place in visually complex, often industrial settings, such as refineries, factories, trainyards, and power plants—most famously the explosive conclusion of *White Heat* (1949). In the popular and, frequently enough, critical imagination, in noir it is always night and it always rains.

NEO NOIR

The influence of film noir did not fade away completely although the socio-economic-political and cultural situation changed in America. The young breed of filmmakers like Roman Polanski, Martin Scorsese and others were heavily influenced

by the style of film noir. They deployed noir elements in the wake of changed situations. In an introduction to neo noir, Lee Horsley, Lancaster University explains the situation conducive to rise of neo noir :

“In both Britain and America, tensions, doubts, failures and signs of dissent gathered force as the events of the 60s, from the assassination of Kennedy on, undermined confidence and strengthened the spirit of protest. As Mailer implies in *The American Dream*, after the trauma of the assassination the 'dream' turns to a vision of violence and murder. At the end of the 60s and in the early 70s, American society was being shaken by riots in the black ghettos, the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, the growing opposition to the Vietnam War, higher crime and unemployment rates, Watergate and increasingly vociferous demonstrations of counter-culture discontent. Though the changes in British society were less dramatic, there was nevertheless a comparable movement away from the mood of the 60s. The early 70s saw bitter confrontations between Government and unions, the collapse of the boom in the stock market and the property market, rising unemployment and inflation and worsening conflict with the IRA. Both countries, then, were experiencing the kind of political and social malaise that made the cynicism and satiric edge of noir seem all too appropriate”.⁹

The contemporary refashioning of noir themes is a manifestation of the flexibility and responsiveness to social change that have characterised noir from its inception and of the continued vitality of the form. The transformations of the genre in neo-noir have helped to clarify some of the constant, recognisable elements of 'the noir vision', most importantly the moral ambivalence of the protagonist and his (or in neo-noir often her) ill-fated relationship with a wider society that itself is guilty of corruption and criminality.

True film noirs invariably confront the idea of the need to communicate visually and verbally the inchoate, the helpless, the terror-stricken, just as they need to confess, lie and reveal. Neo-noirs often mimic these qualities. Yet like, but very much unlike, the aesthetic self-consciousness of the French New Wave-inspired cinema of the 1960s and 1970s, the neo-noir exists alongside the classic film noir in mutated form and has among others these four prominent characteristics:

⁹ (<http://www.crimeculture.com/Contents/NeoNoir.html>, accessed on 13.08.2015, 9.55pm, a website with five million hits every year)

In the Chapter From Film Noir to Neo-Noir, Martin (1999) points out “The history and evolution of film noir is inextricably tied to that of the American film industry of the post-Depression era. Noir, in its manifestation as both classic film noir of the forties and fifties and new-noir of the seventies, eighties and nineties, is symptomatic of the time and place in which it was produced, a reflection of the production policies, artistic tendencies, and technological developments prevalent within the film industry at any given moment in its history.” (p.11)

Silver, Ursini and Duncan (2012, p.9) ask as to why, this movement, called neo-noir, carried on unabated for over three decades? They refer to the book ‘Film Noir, An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style’ by Todd Erickson published in 1987 for coining the term neo-noir by this author and offers a list of filmmakers like Francis Ford Coppola and Frears amongst others mentioned above.

Some of the titles made during this period received apt attention from critics and audience. Roman Polanski’s *China Town* (1974) was about a private detective hired to expose an adulterer finds himself caught up in a web of deceit, corruption and murder. It featured Jack Nicolson and Faye Dunaway. Martin Scorsese’s *Taxi Driver* (1976) drew inspirations from 1940s classic noir and placed the story in contemporary New York in the eyes of a taxi driver (Robert De Nero). Jodie Foster supported him. Lawrence Kasdan’s *Body Heat* (1981) presents a story of corrupt protagonist (William Hurt) with Kathleen Turner in her first femme fatale. Ulu Grosbard’s *True Confessions* (1981) was a comprehensive story of two brothers during WW-II period featuring Robert De Nero and Robert Duvall. Quentin Tarantino’ *Reservoir Dogs* (1992) depicted betrayal amongst the group of criminals while his *Pulp Fiction* (1994) presente four stories of terrible violence and subsequent redemption. Curtis Hanson’s *L. A. Confidential* (1997) portrayed three policemen in the time of corrupt LA who adopt their own ways to trace out the murders. Bryan Singer told an unusual tale in of *The Usual Suspects* (1995) where a lone survivor in a gunbattle on the boat twists his story. *The Black Dahlia* (2006) by celebrated director Brian De Palma was about the investigation of murder of a starlet that shocked America during late 1940s. The elements of obsession, love and corruption elevated the film to be a neo noir. Many of the neo-noir films are set in 1940s. It is argued that the atmosphere of the period

continued to fascinate the later generations of filmmakers as equally as the filmmakers who created the classic noir during the period.

Historical Perspectives of Film Noir

As mentioned, the film noir is a style of filmmaking discovered by a French critic, based on German Expressionism and made in the United States. Obviously, these were non-American filmmakers, mainly from Germany who fled to America after the troubled Nazism. However, they reached in America when the nation was facing the ill-fruits of World War-I and the Great Depression.

While elaborating the historical perspectives, the emphasis is on the noir films emerged in Hollywood and beyond including India during 1940s, 1950s and 1960s which is considered as classic period of film noir.

A reference is invited from the paragraph on ‘Culture and society in the Great Depression’ from Britannica website that says -

For Americans, the 1930s will always summon up images of breadlines, apple sellers on street corners, shuttered factories, rural poverty, and so-called Hooverilles (named for President Herbert Hoover), where homeless families sought refuge in shelters cobbled together from salvaged wood, cardboard, and tin. It was a time when thousands of teens became drifters; many marriages were postponed and engagements were interminable; birth rates declined; and children grew up quickly, often taking on adult responsibilities if not the role of comforter to their despondent parents. It was a time when the number of women in the workplace actually increased, which helped needy families but only added to the psychological strain on the American male, the traditional “breadwinner” of the American family.

Further, James R. McGovern (2000, p.4) elaborates the dreadful circumstances as a result of the Great Depression in America:

The country Roosevelt inherited had been deeply chastened by three years of Depression; the effects on the American people were as clear as they were disturbing. Metaphorically, the Depression resembled a maelstrom, a downward spiral with the near-simultaneous failures of production, employment, and consumption. The great fear among consumers, induced by the failure of the stock market and over 5,000

commercial banks between 1929 and 1932, prompted cutbacks in their spending.

On the top of it, American Film Critic and scholar Andrew Dickos (2002, p.60) explains how this situation in the post-Great Depression and post-World War-I in America paved the way for noir cinema.

“It is perhaps most useful to consider the development of the film noir as the confluence of cinematic changes that, in themselves, are found in other kinds of films without the specific resonances and appeals that in ply with one another establish the coherent mythology that we recognize as noir cinema. The nexus of these changes occurred at a crucial time in the nation’s history and in the history of film. Around 1940, with war looming in Europe, the artists of films, theatre and literature who emigrated in America found the apparatus of Hollywood at their disposal; too often however, Hollywood withheld its consent for artistic freedom. They adapted, for better or worse, to a world that was ruled by commerce but which sought to utilize the artistry it imported. The distance was essential, for these artists combined experiences distinctly at odds with the optimism promulgated by most studio fare at the time. (Fritz) Lang, (Billy) Wilder, Otto Preminger, (Robert) Siodmak, Dieterle, and later Ophuls were at the same place at the same time; and they along with their native counterparts from Huston and Welles to Polanski and Fuller, created the look of noir cinema in their filmmaking and practically held it accountable for the passions and unsavory destruction of their characters. Noir cinema was, in fact, born in the entertainment marketed of the big “no” to the depression-era cheeriness that movies sold as an escape valve to audiences coping with the ruder realities of American life. There were gangster films in the 1930s but none that implicated the darker side and the universal weaknesses of modern movie-going audiences quite the way noir characters did.

What the American hard-boiled school did on paper, what Cornell Woolrich wrote to a sizable readership, matched perfectly the subject matter of the early films noirs. The terror of the noir landscape was explained through the increased interest in Freudian psychology – again, popularized as never before through the influence of émigré intellectuals – and the impact of desolation and dislocation stemming from the ravages of war and the philosophical investigations nourished by them. The changes ensconced in a modern world of social and cultural upheaval reflected everything from the class structure

underpinning American society to the altered role of women, to the threat of organized crime; and they often contoured the human psyche in ways that showed an America quite ambivalent in the pursuit of its dream. Often little was stated of these changes – certainly not in any marketing ploy by the Hollywood publicity machine – but all these developments converged in a cinema that suggested their essential value in a dramatic world that appeared to the changing consciousness of the American moviegoer.”

It is clear from the above references that noir films emerged in a particular mood of the nation in America. As discussed, the filmmakers of noir films were not aware of this style of filmmaking. Discussions on these films were restricted to critics and researchers. The film noir as an academic subject was taught only in film schools in Europe and America.

As Andrew Spicer (2010) puts it, amnesiac films noir feature the films that distill the central noir elements of fear, paranoia, guilt about the past, and sense of foreboding. ‘They intensify the instabilities of identity, loss of control of and vulnerability, and the sense of alienation in a strange and hostile world that characterize films noir as a whole (p.6-7)’. He cites Alfred Hitchcock’s *Spellbound* (1945) and Joseph L. Mankiewicz’s *Somewhere in the Night* (1946) and recent film *Memento* (2000) as examples of such films.

Due to German occupation during the period of World War-II, the Hollywood films could not be released in France. However, in the post-war France, a number of American films were exhibited. These mainly included *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941), and the three films made in a single year of 1944 – *Laura* (Otto Preminger), *Murder, My Sweet* (Edward Dmytryk) and *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, 1944). Looking at this series, the French film critic Frank Nino found a different kind of darker shade in these films. He observed that these films dealt ‘less with the solution of crime than with an exploration of the human frailties of the protagonists and the psychology driving their behavior. He termed it as film noir’ (Holmes, 2011, Ch.6).

The first film to have noir elements is *M* (1931) by Fritz Lang, made in Germany. Fritz Lang was one of the giants of German silent cinema. His films helped to win a

strong international audience for German films and maintain an aesthetic distinctiveness that offered a serious alternative to Hollywood (Janet Bergstrom in Nowell-Smith, 1996, p.196). An Austrian by birth, he served at the front during the World War I, was wounded several times and wore monocle for rest of his life. In 1918, Lang shifted to Berlin and made a number of films *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* (1922), known for the use of criminal psychology and *Metropolis* (1926) that conveyed dramatic contrasts through artificial and monumental worlds. Both these are considered as remarkable films. Lang's *M* was a sound film and featured a story of a psychic man who would lure children with balloons and then kill them at isolated places. When police interrogates the local criminals, it appears that none of their members is involved in the crime. To combat the subsequent questions, the crime world, along with police, haunt the criminal. Peter Lorre played his first major role in this film. Interestingly, the first film Lang made, after fleeing to Hollywood, was a noir film. It was *Fury* (1936) for Metro-Goldwin-Meyer. The film was about the mob violence. When a wrongly accused prisoner barely survives a lynch mob attack and is presumed dead, he vindictively decides to frame the mob for his murder (IMDB)¹⁰. Janet Bergstrom (in Nowell-Smith, 1996, p.197) comments that "one of the Lang's most powerful films, *Fury* shows the inhabitants of a small town turning into a lynch mob under instigation from the media, but it also shows how revenge dehumanizes people – not only the mob, but also the hero himself". Lang's next in Hollywood was also a noir – *You Only Live Once* (1937) with Sylvia Sydney and Henry Fonda. The film was a story of a public defender's secretary and an ex-convict who get married and try to make a life together, but a series of disasters sends their lives spiraling out of control¹¹. In the words of Janet Bergstrom (in Nowell-Smith, 1996, p.197), "in Lang's German films, the spectator is in a superior position of knowledge to the characters. This omniscience is undermined in the American films, where circumstantial evidence plays a large role, and where appearances are often deceptive for the spectator as well as the characters. In *You Only Live Once* circumstantial evidence and Lang's evidence framing, lighting, and point-of-view editing lead the

¹⁰ http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0027652/?ref_=fn_al_tt_9, accessed on 14.03.15 12.23 am

¹¹ http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0029808/?ref_=nm_filmg_dr_27 accessed on 15.03.15 10.35 pm

audience to believe that the ex-convict committed another robbery, despite his fiancée's trust in his innocence. As in *Fury*, at the end of the film romantic love is wholly believable and social change still seems possible". Being a painter himself and having spent some time in Berlin, Fritz Lang was heavily influenced by German Expressionism and composed his frames based on it.

The Maltese Falcon (John Huston, 1941) was a private eye story that nearly launched the film noir style. Featuring Humphrey Bogart and Mary Astor, the film had all the elements of noir that bestowed it the emergent of film noir.

The popularity of noir films rose greater heights when *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, 1944) got to fame. Billy Wilder was born in Austro-Hungarian Empire (now Poland). He worked and France and later in Germany as journalist and later as screenwriter. However, his Jewish legacy forced him to flee Germany and he moved to Hollywood. After contributing very creatively on the script for Ernst Lubitsch for his famous *Ninotchka* (1939, featuring Greta Garbo), the Paramount Pictures gave Wilder a chance to become a film director. *Double Indemnity* was his third film. Released in May of 1944 but set in 1938 Los Angeles, *Double Indemnity* was the first American crime film to really concentrate on killers who are *not* gangster types. Instead, unremarkable personalities are presented, on the surface not much different from the casual filmgoers who attended *Double Indemnity* showings.¹²

Hirsch (1981) has precisely explained the background for emergence of these women characters:

"The war stimulated the domestic economy, but the work force was significantly different from what had been in the years of pre-war isolationism. Because men were needed in the armed services, women for the first time entered job market in large numbers, and the place of women, both at home and on the job, changed radically. It is, in fact, in the way that it reflects the new status of women in American society that film noir is most closely connected to its period. Like everything else that noir touched, it transformed the new role of women into a negative image. Passed through the noir filter, the "new woman," forced by social circumstance and economic necessity to assert herself in ways that her culture had not previously

¹² <http://filmnoirboard.blogspot.in/2015/01/double-indemnity-1944.html>, accessed on 19.03.2015 at 9.10 pm

encouraged, emerged on screen as a wicked, scheming creature, sexually potent and deadly to the male. The dark thrillers record an abiding fear of strong women, women who steer men off their course, beckoning them to a life of crime, or else so disrupting their emotional poise that they are unable to function.

Noir's treatment of women is thus symptomatic of the way in which the genre transforms reality: women who in real life were strengthened by their wartime experience, while their husbands were away, appear in films as malevolent temptresses, their power confined almost entirely to a sexual realm, their strength achieved only at the expense of men. Noir's parade of weak, uncertain, woefully neurotic men and fire-breathing dragon ladies is thus a night-marish distortion of contemporary realities."(p.19-20)

Jacques Tourneur, a Frenchman began his career as an office boy at MGM and rose to become a director of horror classics like *Cat People* (1942) and *I walked with a Zombie* (1943) and an interestingly a horror parody called *The Comedy of Terrors* (1964). In the noir world, Tourneur is known for a very classic *Out of the Past* (1947) with handsome Robert Mitchum (Jeff) and the beautiful Jane Greer (Kathie). Jeff wants to forget his criminal past but fate leads him to Kathie for whom he falls. As Silver and Ursini (2012) elaborate this masterpiece, "With the beginning of the flashback, the mood and the look of film also changes entirely. The airy, day-lit mountain scenery is replaced with night exteriors and interiors, often in crowded bars, noisy nightclubs and maze-like city streets. The shift signals a descent into dark past which so haunts this noir protagonist." (p.55)

Tay Garnett's *Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946) can be considered as one of the best examples of femme fatale. It featured Lana Turner as Cora Smith (along with John Garfield) and is often described as a prototype of future femme fatale. Although the film does not reflect usual characteristics of visual style and scenes-in-dark, it mainly thrives on the other characteristics like major influence or function of femme fatale and consequent elements of betrayal and cruelty. The film presents cruelty both subtly and brutally. For instance, Cora schemes to kill her husband, Nick with the help of her boyfriend Frank. In their first attempt, the filmmaker does not show murder physically. Rather a cat is seen electrocuted thereby suggesting the possible pains Nick might have undergone.

One of the last noir from classic period, *Kiss Me Deadly* (Robert Aldrich, 1955) reflect the distinct qualities. In the beginning sequence, a woman is running fast on a road during night. She is gasping but we don't see her chaser. While on a car-ride with a stranger, we see the credit titles sliding down from top, instead from bottom. The filmmaker keeps secret about the villain as he (filmaker) shows only the legs, with particular kind of shoes of the culprit in his every appearance till he is presented in full at the end. The film is full of violence as most of characters get rough treatment physically, from torture to killing of femme fatale in the blast of radio-activity box.

Although Robert Siodmak was born in Germany, his Jewish background forced him to flee to Paris at young age. He worked in French film industry for some time as a filmmaker and then moved to US in 1940. Robert Siodmak made a number horror and comedy films in Hollywood, but yet he is known for a number of films that are considered as classic film noir. After *Fly By Night* (1942) featuring Richard Carlson and Nancy Kelly, his first noir for Paramount, Siodmak moved to Universal and made a number of noir films in a row. These prominently included *Phantom Lady* and *Christmas Holiday* both in 1944, another two films in 1945 - *The Suspect* and *The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* and yet another three films in 1946 - *The Dark Mirror*, *The Killers* and *The Spiral Staircase*. As Silver, Ursini and Duncan (2012, p.78) remarked, 'Siodmak almost single-handed turned Universal into a film noir factory'. David Parkinson, a film critic and historian, has mentioned that "Siodmak didn't patent the noir formula, but he showed how to blend German expressionism and French existentialism with American angst and, in the process, he directed more canonical landmarks than anyone else in the new genre's heyday. Dismayed by the world around him, Siodmak examined societal injustice, domestic turmoil, gender conflict, sexual repression, psychological trauma and the rise of the career criminal. Preferring to shoot on controllable studio sets rather than on location, he used deep-focus photography, precise camera moves, meticulously designed mise-en-scène and sculpted lighting effects to create milieu beset by paranoia, greed, lust, obsession and violence. Multiple flashbacks, rapid cuts, mirrored images and unsettling (musical)

scores reinforced the sense of urban alienation, moral decay and nightmarish paranoia.”¹³

Another German immigrant filmmaker was Max Ophüls. He had directed at least 10 feature films in France, Italy and Holland before he had to flee first to Switzerland and then to US because of he was a Jew.

Edgar G. Ulmer, who had assisted to German Expressionist director F. W. Murnau and during the later period Robert Siodmak and Billy Wilder, is known for making films in almost every genre in Hollywood. Amongst his famous noir films is *Bluebeard* (1944) about Gaston Morel (played by John Carradine), an artist in Paris, who hires models and after finishing their portraits, he strangles them if they do not match his perfection. His next films in the series were *Strange Illusion* (1945), *The Strange Woman* (1946) and *Ruthless* (1948). These are well-known for their German Expressionist lighting and set designs. On his stylist horror film *The Black Cat* (1934), Silver, Ursini and Duncan (2012, p.51) commented, ‘this remarkable picture was designed in the style of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919) and was scripted by Peter Ruric, who wrote noir fiction as Paul Cain’.

The great French director Jean Renoir fled to Hollywood after Germany invaded France in May 1940. This master of French Poetic Realism made a few films there but significantly that his final Hollywood film was the nourish, *The Woman on the Beach* (1947), which basically ended Renoir’s ties with an American movie industry that tried to fit into a conventional mold a director who thrived on freedom. Robert Ryan and Joan Bennet portrayed the main characters in *The Woman on the Beach*. It was a story of a Coast Guardsman suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress who becomes involved with a beautiful and enigmatic seductress married to a blind painter.

Besides features, Hollywood created a few films which can be described as Docu-Noir. These films dealt with subject-matters which were based on true stories or happenings. For example, in *Crossfire* (Edward Dmytryk, 1947) drew upon anti-

¹³ (<http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/how-get-film-noir-master-robert-siodmak>, accessed on 29.03.2015, 00.14 hrs)

Semitic ethos that prevailed in the US after the revelations about the horrors of Nazi concentration camps.

The film *The Naked City* (Jules Dassin, 1948) went ahead to include the voice over narration in documentary tone. It was based on a newspaper files on tenement neighbourhoods of New York city besides dark photo-journalism of Arthur Fellig. Anthony Mann, one of the noir's most prestigious directors, drew a story actual case file from the US treasury department for *T-Men* (1948).

They point out that these films were significantly influenced by neo-realist movement of Italian cinema. "Many of these ground-breaking neo-realist films," emphasize they, "shot on practical locations with minimal budgets, were particularly relevant to noir..as noir films began to mix studio scenes with real locations while basing their stories on non-fiction sources like newspapers, magazines and public records, their style changed, and Italian neo-realism joined German expressionist and French poetic realism in the list of affiliated film movements." (p.81)

Hollywood noir also featured boxing noirs with examples like *Champion* (Mark Robson, 1949) with Kirk Douglas in the central character, *Fat City* (John Huston, 1972) and more prominently *Raging Bull* (Martin Scorsese, 1980) that showed the fight game as also 'the moral and emotional price of success'.

Film Noir beyond Hollywood

Besides Hollywood, a number of filmmakers from other countries have tried film noir. In Australian cinema, some of the filmmakers have utilized 'American models to explore indigenous themes and issues' (Spicer Andrew, pp.1-10). For example, *Goodbye Paradise* (Carl Schultz, 1983) depicted a disgraced policeman, who uncovers a secessionist coup and becomes embroiled in a typically noir world of false appearances, corruption and betrayal. Australian noir films also projected a private eye in the film like *The Empty Beach* (Chris Thomson, 1985) that was about a tough and cynical Sydney investigator while *Grievous Bodily Harm* (Mark Joffe, 1988) presented a complex and accomplished work. Amongst the overtly political noir, *Far East* (John Duigan, 1982) and *Heatwave* (Phillip Noyce, 1982) were prominent in

investigating civic corruption. *Lantana* (Ray Lawrence, 2001) projected a complex psychological character study.

We find an interesting example of film noir during the same period in a small country like Finland. It is *The Way You Wanted Me* (1944) directed by Teuvo Tulio. “A dark frenzied tale of a fallen woman, Maija, the film careens across roads of melodrama at the speed of light... from an idyllic first love on a rural island to the hell of Helsinki bars and bordellos. From youthful abandon in the sun to a night of decrepit darkness, a young woman’s journey to perdition is one of relentless betrayal by men and by fate... decidedly a film noir, it presents hyper-expressionism and a tragedy played out in dark nights of the soul... flashback and down-beat ending, but not just these elements, more the parasitic fatalism that feeds on each new betrayal and degradation.”¹⁴.

Japan

It is noteworthy that some of the best known Japanese filmmakers like Akira Kurosawa and Nagisa Oshima have tried their hands on noir films. Kurosawa’s *Drunken Angle* (1948) was much before he came to be known internationally with *Rashomon* (1950). Kurosawa made *Drunken Angle* and most of his subsequent films with frequently featured actor Toshiro Mifune. This particular film was about drunken doctor with a hot temper and a violence-prone gangster with tuberculosis form a quicksilver bond. The films effectively displayed the post-War, bombed out Japan. “Although Kurosawa himself said he was inspired by Dostoyevsky when he wrote the script for *Drunken Angel*, he brings a decidedly anti-feudal message to the film as well.”¹⁵ His next *Stray Dog* (1949) is about homicide police detective Murakami who, on a hot summer day, loses his pistol on a bus ride. Ashamed and angry for self-negligence, Murakami searches fanatically for the pistol but is able to get it only when he takes help of a wiser detective, Sato. Maintaining the atmosphere as the backdrop of the film, Kurosawa leads Murakami searching for his pistol through the sweltering

¹⁴ http://filmsnoir.net/film_noir/the-way-you-wanted-me-finland-1944-pretty-little-angel-eyes.html, accessed on 29.03.2015 20.02 hrs

¹⁵ (<http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/620-drunken-angel-the-spoils-of-war>, accessed on 29.03.2015, 21.33 hrs)

streets of Tokyo like a stray dog. Explaining the ‘excess’ in the film and the difference between Hollywood and Japanese noir, Chris Fujiwara in Criterion Collection essays (2004), says that “Its openness to this multiplicity is a key aspect in which (despite surface similarities) *Stray Dog* differs from American *film noir*. Violence as catharsis; the possibility that physical action can solve, by metaphor, a political, social, or moral problem; the ability of individuals to perform acts that have symbolic validity for their societies—these are the basic conditions of American action cinema, including that hybrid or offshoot or mutation labeled film noir. In *Stray Dog*, action solves no wider problems—only the immediate ones of recovering the gun and catching the criminal—and yields no relief. It’s tangential to the larger sphere of society, as Kurosawa stresses in the climactic sequence by shifting our attention from the cop and the culprit to a young woman practicing piano nearby; and even within its own sphere (of narrative cause and effect), it is unsatisfying and inconclusive, as Kurosawa makes us feel by lingering on the murderer’s tortured scream and, in the final shot, on Murakami’s silent gaze out the hospital window.”¹⁶) His another noir film, *The Bad Sleep Well* (1960) was about a revengeful man who marries the daughter of a corrupt industrialist in order to seek justice for his father’s suicide. Kurosawa commented sharply on the corrupt corporate world and its impact on the city during the post-war Japan. We find the story elements predominant in Hindi film *Baazigar* (directors : Abban-Mustan, 1992). Kurosawa’s yet another noir film, *High and Low* (1963) was about an executive of a shoe company becomes a victim of extortion when his chauffeur’s son is kidnapped and held for ransom. It can be recalled that this story was adopted for Hindi film *Inkaar* (1977) directed by Raj N. Sippy with certain elements of noir in it.

Nagisa Oshima, another celebrated Japanese filmmaker whose career extended from Japanese New Wave in late 1950s is known for erotic films like *In the Realm of Senses* (1976) and *Diary of a Shinjuku Thief* (1978). Oshima has made a couple of films which are known as noir. One of them is *The Sun’s Burial* (1960). It was a disturbing portrait of Japan’s lost, post-war generation that was threatened by the possibility of World War II. His *Pleasures of the Flesh* (1965) was a story of a corrupt

¹⁶ <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/604-excess-in-stray-dog>, accessed on 29.03.2015, 22.57 hrs.

businessman who hands over huge money to his girlfriend to take while serving term in jail. Oshima dared to show the girl spending all the money while she knew that the business man would track down and kill her for his money. Oshima's *Violence at Noon* (1966) was about difficult circumstances concerning a horrible murder and rape case. Oshima presented a breathtaking investigation of criminality and social decay through this film. *A Colt is my Passport* (1967) directed by Takashi Nomura is often described as a Nikkatsu (the famous Japan Motion Picture company) movie and "a hip acid noir with a 60s patina and a surreal spaghetti-western score". "A twist on a classic noir motif has a hit-man as existential hero, committed to an austere private code that elevates him above the yakuza hoods that want him dead after a mob hit goes wrong."¹⁷ Besides these two prominent filmmakers, a few other Japanese filmmakers like Masahiro Shinoda (*Pale Flower*, 1964), --- have also attempted noir films. Seijun Suzuki, through his films like *Underworld Beauty* (1958), *Gate of Flesh* (1964), *Branded to Kill* (1967) and others, challenged Japanese notions of proper behavior, sexuality, and gender roles but his films attacked the very core of Western storytelling techniques.¹⁸

Britain

Britain has made a few noir films during this period. Alternate titles has been a curious characteristic of British noir. One of the best known British film noir is *The Third Man* (1949) by Carol Reed. The film was about a pulp novelist Holly Martins who travels to postwar Vienna and investigates the mysterious death of an old friend, Harry Lime. The story revolves around love, deception, and murder. The film offers brilliant performances by Orson Welles Joseph Cotten and Alida Valli. It was enriched with Anton Karas's suggestive score with the folk musical instrument zither, Graham Greene's razor-sharp dialogue and cameraman Robert Krasker's dramatic use of light and shadow especially during the last sequence in the labyrinths of sewage.

¹⁷ http://filmsnoir.net/film_noir/a-colt-is-my-passport-koruto-wa-ore-no-pasupoto-japan-1967.html, accessed on 31.03.2015, 00.41 hrs.

¹⁸ <http://filmexpression.blogspot.in/2010/02/ankokugai-no-bijo-underworld-beauty.html>, accessed on 01.04.2015m 00.51 hrs.

Prior to this film, Carol Reed had made a suspense drama, *Odd Man Out* (1946) which is also known as British film noir.

Brighton Rock (1947) directed by John Bolting is a blend of excellent literary work by Graham Greene and performance by Richard Attenborough. As compared to the other British films of the period, this film is considered striking unusual for its darkness and brutality. Richard Attenborough's presentation of brutal teenaged gangster Pinkie Brown was appreciated well. Made during the same year, *I Became a Criminal* (AKA *They made Me Fugitive*, 1947) directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, was Clem, an ex-serviceman looking for some excitement and easy money during post-war world. His girlfriend Ellen leads Clem to Narcy, a gangster. However, Clem and Narcy separates on an issue. Narcy's scheme to trap Clem in a killing of a policeman and takes over Ellen. Clem breaks out from the prison for revenge. Irving Rapper worked mainly with Bette Davis the legendary actress including his *Another Man's Poison* (1951). The film was about a successful mystery novelist Janet Forbisher (Bette Davis) who is desperately in love with the fiancé (Anthony Steel) of her personal secretary (Barbara Murray). Janet murders her husband so that she can run off with her lover. Unfortunately, Janet's dishonest husband's partner in crime George Bates (Gary Merrill) enters the picture and blackmails Janet so that he can assume her dead husband's identity. John Harlow's *Appointment with Crime* (1946) was exciting post-war thriller excellently conceived with detailed, inventive characterizations, and one of several above average crime films. The film featured William Hartnell, the famous British actor in the main role. Reflecting Hollywood recipe for murder, especially around sexual undertone, director Reginald Le Borg presented femme fatale in *Bad Blonde* (AKA *The Flanagan Boy*, *The Woman is Trouble*, 1953). The story revolved around Johnny Flanagan, a merchant seaman, who after winning a boxing match is introduced to Vecchi, a promoter of the game. Johnny falls for Vecchi's beautiful wife Lorna and has affair with her. Lorna informs that she was pregnant and persuades Johnny to kill her husband. Later, Johnny commits suicide when he knows that Lorna had lied to him. *Heat Wave* (AKA *The House Across the Lake*, 1954) directed by Ken Hughes, presented a tale of Kendrick, an author who visits a calm lake area for the purpose of writing an incomplete novel. In a party, he meets and gets attracted towards Carl, an pretty wife of a rich man, Beverly. Kendrick and

Beverly get friends but in the process, Carl seduces Kendrick. While boating in fog with the two, Beverly meets an accident and gets injured. Carl, instead of saving him, throws Beverly out of the launch. When Kendrick discovers that Carl has done this to go back to her ex-lover, he informs the police about the crime. It can be noted that some of British noir films such as *Bad Blonde*, *Head Wave* and others were produced by Hammer Studios and are known as Hammer Noir.

France

It is interesting to know about the film noir in France as the French “invented” the noir elements in Hollywood films. As against the backdrop of German or French émigré, we find a film by USA-émigré Jules Dassin. His *Rififi* (1955), apart from the noir elements, is often remembered for a 30-minute sequence without using a single word in audio. Both Dassin and *Rififi* got tremendous appreciation. “After making such American noir classics as *Brute Force* and *The Naked City*, the blacklisted director Jules Dassin went to Paris and embarked on his masterpiece: a twisting, turning tale of four ex-cons who hatch one last glorious robbery in the City of Light. *Rififi* is the ultimate heist movie, a mélange of suspense, brutality, and dark humor that was an international hit, earned Dassin the best director prize at the Cannes Film Festival, and has proven wildly influential on the decades of heist thrillers that have come in its wake.¹⁹ We cannot neglect the only noir film by the critically acclaimed filmmaker Louis Malle. His *Elevator to the Gallows* (1958) was about an adulterous couple Florence and Julien kill her inconvenient husband and on the top of it, his runaway car is stolen by boys-on-the-street. After making a strikingly different noir *Le Doulos* (The Finger Man, 1962) with more striking Jean-Paul Belmondo in lead role of a dangerous criminal, Jean-Pierre Melville appeared with another stroke, *La Samourai* (1967) with Alain Delon and Nathalie Delon played the main characters. The film was about Jef Costello, a professional killer, hired to kill a nightclub owner. Although he has tried an alibi for himself, a witness to the crime frenzies Jef. With pressure from both the police and the syndicate that hired him, Jef is cornered in a peculiar situation. *Le Jour Se Levè* (Daybreak, 1939) directed by the exponent of

¹⁹ <http://www.criterion.com/films/654-rififi>, accessed on 01.04.2015 21.25 hrs.

French Poetic Realism Marcel Carnè. It was a psychological drama featuring the very famous actor Jean Gabin. It is significant to note the a combination of film noir and sci-fi from one of the masters of French New Wave (*enfant terrible* of *nouvelle vague*) Jean-Luc Godard. With his love of life Anna Karina, Godard made *Alphaville* (1965) consigning Eddie Constantine against Anna. Enriched with Raoul Coutard's dazzling cinematography, the film portrayed an U.S. secret agent who is sent to the remote space city of Alphaville. He has to find a missing person and free the city from its tyrannical ruler. "*Alphaville* was never meant to shock, depress, or disgust, and thus it seems as decorous and decent in 1998 as it did in 1965. And it is the work of one man, one recognizable man, not the work of a cynical, calculating committee. Indeed, the computer-controlled villains in *Alphaville* bear more than a passing resemblance to the bottom-line driven villains in the motion picture industry. To understand and appreciate *Alphaville* is to understand Godard, and vice versa," says the noted critic and film professor Andrew Sarris.²⁰ Claude Soutet, one of most underrated French filmmaker made *Classe tous risqué* (The Big Risk, 1960). It was France-Italy co-production about an Italian criminal Abel who flees to France to escape from police. Meeting with Eric Stark, his savior, Abel begins a journey of honor, friendship and debt. The film featured Lino Ventura and Jean-Paul Belmondo (again, just fresh after Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless*, 1960) in the main roles. Bertrand Tavernier, the famous French filmmaker who had been a pupil of Soutet, praised the film very personally. Appreciating the performance of Jean-Paul Belmondo, Tavernier wrote, "in *Classe tous risques*, Belmondo shows us a completely different side of his great gift as an actor, his remarkable versatility, by making credible an authoritarian character with radiant charm, by stunningly fusing virility and childlike innocence..."²¹.

²⁰ <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/38-alphaville>, accessed on 02.04.2015, 20.49 hrs.

²¹ <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/519-classe-tous-risques-beautiful-friendships>, accessed on 02.04.2015, 21.34 hrs.

Italy

The cycle of noir films in Italy was followed by the neo realism. These borrowed the characteristics of neo realism like shooting on locations, working with non-professional or amateur actors and the stories about the ordinary, working class people. Luchino Visconti's *Obsessione* (Obsession, 1942) is often called as seminal work. The film told a story of Gino, a drifter who begins an affair with inn-owner Giovanna and together they plan to get rid of her older husband. It had purely Italian provincial touches, such as a wonderfully detailed local opera competition etc. Further, the film presented a classic kind of doomed love triangle. Appreciating the film, Gary Morris, in a DVD review wrote, "*Osessione*, with its barren landscapes, driven characters, and sexual frankness, is rightly credited as the pioneering work of neorealism. One of the most striking aspects of this is the unabashed lust with which Visconti treats the illicit relationship."²² Luchino tossed away the neo realism when he made *Le Notti Bianche* (White Nights, 1957) with noir elements of sexual undertones and betrayal in the story of a humble young man Mario (Marcello Mastroianni) who seduces a woman Natalia (Maria Shell), awaiting the return of her lover since a long time.

Another film *Riso Amaro* (Bitter Rice, 1948) by Giuseppe De Santis, narrated a story of Francesca and Walter who are two-bit criminals in Northern Italy. To avoid the police, Francesca joins a group of women rice workers. She meets the voluptuous peasant rice worker, Silvana, and the soon-to-be-discharged soldier, Marco. Walter follows her to the rice fields, and the four characters become involved in a complex plot involving robbery, love, and murder. The film is also known for the voluptuous Italian actress Silvana Mongano. Released in the same year, *Gioventù Perduta* (Lost Youth, 1948) by Pietro Germi precisely presented that can be called as sociological study of rise in crime in the post-War Italy. The film was a chilling portrayal of a 20 year youth who turns criminal due to the prevalent situation. The legendary Italian filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni's debut *Cronaca di un amore* (Story of a Love Affair, 1950) was a love triangle of Paola, a beautiful woman, her rich husband and the ex-lover. Bernardo Bertolucci, another celebrated Italian filmmaker was only twenty when he directed *La commare secca* (The Grim Reaper, 1962). Francesco

²² <http://imagesjournal.com/2002/reviews/visconti/>, accessed on 03.04.2015, 01.34 hrs.

Rosi, after assisting the masters like Visconti and Antonioni and a couple of films, came up with a masterpiece *Salvatore Giuliano* (1961). With this film assuring Rosi his future as political filmmaker, he unfolded the mystery of a young criminal (title role played by Pietro Cammarata) gunned down anonymously. Michael Ciment (author of fifteen books on cinema) writes, With *Salvatore Giuliano* (1961), Francesco Rosi developed the style and method that would make him, during the sixties and seventies, the greatest political filmmaker of his time. He further states that “Having mastered his craft, Rosi inaugurated with *Salvatore Giuliano* a new kind of realism that, while strongly influenced by neorealism, went beyond its immediate model by examining such issues as power and the relationships between the law and lawbreakers, while also shedding light on the causes and consequences that determine the ways in which society functions.”²³

Korea

In South Korea, that earned significance for her cinema during the last decade, *Old Boy*, (2003, Park Chan-wook) that won Grand Prix award at 2004 Cannes Film Festival, is considered as the best known noir of the country. Besides, as Nikki K.Y. Lee and Julian Stringer (2013) have mentioned, with references cited, that Hollywood noir and crime/action thrillers and European gangster/crime films were popular fare in post-Korean War (1950-53) period. At this time, the Korean filmmakers also started to deploy generic elements from thriller and gangster movies, thus making alternative new genre to locally popular melodrama. Referring to the popular film *Black Hair* (Lee Man-hee, 1964), they mention that “it marks out something new for South Korean cinema – the generic adaptation of film noir elements into a noir-ish gangster movie replete with the atmosphere of emotional existentialism”. Martin Cleary (2011 newkoreancinema) in his review of this film, writes “*Black Hair* is a film noir which plays out its gangster drama ... a wronged gangster sets about punishing his wife and immediately delivers some recognizably dark characters and visual images.” Another important film is *Memories of Murder* (Bong Joon-ho, 2003). It was based on real happening during late 1980s when small Korean village rape and brutal murder of ten

²³ <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/315-salvatore-giuliano>, accessed on 04.04.2015, 00.22 hrs.

women within a period of four years but the killer was never brought to justice. Noted director Bong Joon-ho took the challenge to recreate the scenes with the serial killer's psyche and police procedural by two detectives. David Jays in his review of the film mentions, "building into a portrait of a society displaying its fractures and fears, a corrosive suspicion of its own institutions, Bong's unpredictable comedy becomes a somber, forensic examination of failure." (Sight and Sound, March, 2004)

Noir in Hindi films

As these films started reaching across the world after the World War-II, they began making impact on the filmmakers from respective countries. The other genres like musical, comedy, suspense or horror were adopted knowingly by the filmmakers in other countries. Even the genre like Western which existed only in Hollywood, was adopted with local flavors in different countries.

India was no exception. Indian filmmakers were also exposed to Hollywood and world cinema. A number of filmmakers such as Dev Anand, V. Shantaram, Raj Kapoor and others have mentioned in their autobiographies that they had watched a variety of international films during their career in-making period in India and abroad. It is obvious that they were becoming more aware of their surroundings, were attempting different and more mature themes along with technical excellence. After the pioneering efforts of Dadasaheb Phalke, a number of filmmakers had enriched the medium of film. V. Shantaram had already succeeded in using atmosphere and ambience sound for background effects in *Duniya Na Mane* (1937). Ardeshir Irani, who is credited for making *Alam Ara* (1931), the first Indian talkie, had also released the first Indian colour film *Kisan Kanya* during the same year. Dance maestro Uday Shankar's ballet film *Kalpana* (1948) was applauded in India and abroad for its innovation and artistry. In a way, it is argued that Hindi film industry was ripe enough for more serious experiments in filmmaking.

Like any other country, Indian film industry was bound to have reflections of world cinema. Although none of the filmmakers who have made noir films in Hindi have referred to have known this style of filmmaking, their films have featured these elements, say, unknowingly. For instance, *Mahel* (Kamal Amrohi, 1949) projected strangeness both in the story and also behavior of the characters. With visual style, the

film finds proximity with noir. During the later period, Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand, Raj Khosla and Shakti Samanta, who made their films in certain style, were later identified as the main exponents of Hindi films with noir elements. In that context, *Baazi* (Guru Dutt, 1951) can be considered as the first major Hindi film with noir elements. The body of similar films continued during the decade of 1950 that witnessed the surge. These films were not many in numbers but their frequency was almost constant. *Baazi* presented a smalltime gambler who turns a great gambler firstly to meet medical expenses for his sister and later to impress the female doctor he loves. The film had a number of ups and downs for the main character showing uncertainty of life amongst the lower class people and their quest for better life. Dev Anand, Kalpana Kartik and Geeta Bali featured in the main roles. The film marked the creative collaboration of Guru Dutt and Dev Anand for the first time and continued in many more films in the future. This was followed by Guru Dutt's subsequent *Jaal* (1952) and was about two suspicious characters, Tony and Lisa, amongst the fishing community in Goa. Their smuggling activities disturb the peace and culture of the local people till police arrests Tony for his crimes. This film also featured Dev Anand, Geeta Bali and Purnima in the major roles. *Jaal* was based on *Bitter Rice* (1949) by the Italian director Giuseppe De Santis. Guru Dutt and Dev Anand had watched the film together in Mumbai. Dev Anand surely liked the male lead as, "Vittorio gasman had all the shades of villainy in him" (Anand, 2007, p.116). Guru Dutt himself featured in *Aar Paar* (1954) when he played unemployed taxi driver who takes up different jobs including as a car mechanic for livelihood. A gangster takes benefit of this jobless young man for participation in a bank robbery. It was the third film in a row where Guru Dutt excelled in presenting noir elements effectively. Meanwhile, Dev Anand produced another film *House No. 44* (1955) on the same style and was about a pavement dweller and a small time pickpocket who is gradually reformed. Interestingly, M. K. Burman a.k.a. Mandi Burman, the art director and assistant director of *Taxi Driver* (1954) directed this film brilliantly and appears his only film for Navketan, a film company owned by Anand brothers. Burman deployed the unique style that became hallmark for the films Dev and Vijay Anand made together in later years. Raj Khosla, once an assistant to Guru Dutt, continued the style in *C. I. D.* (Crime Investigation Department, 1956) where it was

the police investigation of a murder. During this period, Shakti Samanta made two films that echoed noir elements. The first was *Inspector* (1956) and subsequently *Howra Bridge* (1958). While *Inspector* was a thriller family drama, *Howra Bridge* was a murder mystery with a lot of music in it. Vijay Anand's *Kala Bazaar* (Black Market, 1960) was a much sophisticated noir film. It was about a bus conductor who, after losing his job for petty reasons, settles down on black marketing of cinema hall tickets and turns rich in a short time. Vijay Anand, through a powerful script, maintained that people can turn criminal in the absence of lack of proper education. It must be mentioned here that Vijay Anand had a wonderful chemistry with his elder brother Dev Anand and the brothers made a series of superb films that were both appreciated for their artistic values and also earned huge commercial success. In *Jewel Thief* (1966), Vijay Anand presented a thriller about a criminal that did not exist. The story was well-planned conspiracy to turn a jewel expert into a jewel thief. Vijay Anand blended the components such as betrayal and strangeness in such a way that reflected like noir elements. Around this time, Yash Chopra directed *Ittefaq* (1968) about an escaped prisoner who barge into a luxurious bungalow and controls the housewife in it at gunpoint. With performances by Nanda and Rajesh Khanna, the filmmaker shocked the audience when we find that the housewife has committed a murder. Surprisingly, the film had no songs, particularly during this period when each filmmaker would attempt to include a number of song and dance numbers to ensure commercial success of his film. This was the film by the actor before he turned the first superstar of Hindi cinema. Along with Shakti Samanta, another filmmaker from sheer commercial set up whose film featured some noir elements like betrayal, strangeness and violence in *Zanjeer* (1973) was Prakash Mehra. The protagonist of the film has nightmarish memories of killing of his parents by a gangster wearing bracelet and that haunts him throughout his childhood and youth till he kills the murderer. Amitabh Bachchan rose to fame by portraying this protagonist with tremendous dazzling impact. Interestingly, this was the film that reflected the actor's image as an angry young man and that remained iconic with many more films in the future. One of them was Yash Chopra's *Deewar* (The Wall, 1975). It showed how a dockyard worker takes up crime and turns a prominent smuggler in a short of

span of time. Chopra brought into play betrayal, violence, sexual motivation, femme fatale that can be identified as noir elements.

Looking at the Hindi film noir perspectives, it can be observed that the socio-economic and cultural references are changed for the situation in which the characters are placed. It is essentially the post-Independence period that marked the disillusionment amongst the youth of the nation. The lack of education, unemployment and resultant poverty were the main reasons for some youngsters opting for criminal activities.

During the late 1980s, filmmakers such as N. Chandra and Vidhu Vinod Chopra made two films that featured noir elements. N. Chandra's *Tezaab* (Acid, 1988) presented a story of young college student who wanted to serve the country, was driven into the world of crime. The filmmaker had already attacked the rotten social system and bureaucracy in his earlier two films, *Ankush* and *Pratighaat* (made in 1986 and 1987 respectively). He made more harsh attack in *Tezaab* when he portrayed the representative socio-economic condition that compelled the protagonist of the film to be a criminal. The film was received well as it mirrored the contemporary society in it. Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *Parinda* (Bird, 1989) was a story of two village brothers, Kishen and Karan, who, after the death of their farmer father, immigrate to Mumbai in search of livelihood. While Kishen takes up crime to earn money for Karan's education, it is Karan who joins Kishan's gang to take revenge of his friend's killing by the gang. It was one of the earliest attempts to look at human side of underworld, a style adopted by a number of filmmakers later. At the end of 20th century, Ram Gopal Varma presented *Satya* (Satya, 1998) about a young immigrant in Mumbai. When he combats injustice by small size goons, they ensure that Satya is put behind the bar under false charges. In jail, Satya is befriended with Bhiku Mhatre, a gangster and joins his gang after release. Satya with his adventurous acts secures important position in the gang. However, he maintains that crime is always paid for. Varma completed his trilogy of crime with two more films : *Company* (2004) and *Sarkar* (2007) where vengeance played a major role. Rakesh Omprakash Mehra's debut film *Aks* (Reflection, 2001) was an interesting account of mindless gangster that kills high profile people in a mysterious way. Sriram Raghavan appears to be the only filmmaker who is aware of the film noir in Hollywood and about a few films in India

that have certain noir elements. It is obviously that he has utilized the noir elements in all his major films till now. These are : *Ek Hasina Thi* (2004), *Johnny Gaddar* (2007) and *Badlapur* (2015). His debutant was a story of a middle-class working woman who is betrayed by her client and put in the jail under false charges. She manages to escape and takes revenge. Raghavan had made excellent use of the charming face of the actor Saif Ali Khan who would not seem to be a betrayer. Urmila Matondakar's performance, firstly as a victim and then a tough woman as well as brilliant cinematography by C. K. Muraleedharan made the film an admiring work of art. Raghavan continued to feature noir elements in his subsequent film *Johnny Gaddar*. It is considered as a hardcore noir. In *Johnny Gaddar* (Sriram Raghavan, 2007), Vikram is a criminal with all the three kinds of W vices – woman, wealth and wine. He joins a plan to earn a huge amount through a deal along with three partners. However, he betrays all of them to fulfill his ambition for better life with the wife of one of these partners. Raghavan's *Badlapur* presents a strange account of a good man turning terribly bad for revenge and the bad man suddenly twists to be a generous good man!

It is seen that some of the Hindi films do possess noir elements. Barring a few recent examples, all the films selected for study may not be a noir film in full. But, some films reflect noir elements in theme, others in characters, a few in settings and yet are hardly recognized as film noir.

The Hollywood film *The Invisible Man* (1933), a horror movie, directed by James Whale is considered as classic noir. With reference to this film, the researcher has considered some of suspense Hindi films like *Mahel* (1949), *Woh Kaun Thi* (1964) and *Kohra* (1964) to study as films with noir elements. These films strongly reflect the noir elements. *Kohra* is another suspense theme that was presented with a number of *Dutch* angles, venetian blinds and other graphic elements that added strangeness to the visuals. The film was a rare example of a woman who killed another woman for the sake of moral ethos. In *Woh Kaun Thi?* Here the doctor becomes a private eye to find out the reasoning of the odd things happening with

him. The convoluted plot reveals twin sisters and the scheme to extract the doctor's huge inheritance by leading him to insanity.

Sarkar is the story of a strong man who runs parallel governance. Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma has made a statement at the beginning of the film : When the system fails, a power will rise. The whole film revolves around this statement. The filmmaker completes his trilogy of crime films.

All these films presented stark noir elements like betrayal, greed, temptation, strangeness, sexual motivation, brutality and other peculiarities close to noir movies. This was added with socio-economic and politico-cultural background peculiar to Indian society.

A comparative study of the differences between the entertainment values of English and Hindi films classified as film noir has been studied in detail. How the contents of the films lead them to categorize them as film noir? Do the sociological aspects of Hindi films bestow them any characteristics of film noir?

The film categorized as film noir mainly presents negative aspects of society in a subtle manner. The way of expression -strange ways – no heroes or heroines in conventional meaning, also no black or white characters. These are characters of life. The situation, destiny turns villain painting the characters as gray. Thus the characters and drama involving them seeks many upheavals in unusual manner. Even the murder, the bloodshed is bizarre. The technique in which all these elements are presented becomes significant here. It also becomes audience film in the sense that the audience has to develop its sensibility of appreciation with studious set of mind and reception. As the study of visual medium is different from other studies, such films establish filmmaker-audience relationship and find a sense of completion in the process.

Hence, this research tends to recognize the noir elements used in Hindi cinema.

Review of Literature

Review of literature available on film noir in general and Hindi films with possible noir elements in particular, have been integral part of the entire research project. It has made valuable contribution to the research. A number of books by the scholars both India and abroad were studied for the purpose. Besides, booklets and scanning through a number of periodicals were attempted to explore the term film noir and its application or inclusion in Hindi films.

Theoretical framework

While reviewing the available literature, it was necessary to set some parameters to concentrate on the exploration of film noir in general and Hindi noir films in particular. Accordingly, information was sought through different sources on universal level and gradually narrowing down to the specific type. For this purpose, a number of books elaborating various aspects of film noir were reviewed. While doing so, an attempt was made to understand the creativity in these films as well as socio-economic and cultural-political-historical aspects of noir films – both in Hollywood and Hindi cinema.

It was essential to review ‘A Panorama of American Film Noir (1941-1953)’ by Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton, translated from French by Paul Hammond, City Lights Books, 2002 which is considered as the first full-fledged study of film noir. Raymond Borde (b. 1920), founder of the Cinematheque de Toulouse, has written extensively on film history while Etienne Chaumeton was the film critic of the Toulouse newspaper *La Depeche* until his death.

Borde and Chaumeton (2002) do not offer any specific definition of film noir. However, they acknowledge “its presence of crime that gives film noir its most distinctive stamp. Blackmail, informing, theft, or drug trafficking weave the plot of an adventure whose final stake is death. Few series in the history of cinema have, in just seven or eight years, accumulated so many hideous acts of brutality and murder.” As they emphasize, “sordid or strange, death always emerges at the end of a tortuous journey. Film noir is a film of death, in all senses of the word.” (p.5 *ibid*)

“We’d be oversimplifying things in calling film noir oneiric, strange, erotic, ambivalent, and cruel,” write Borde and Choumeton (p.2). But then, it gives a clue to form the major characteristics of film noir. Although all these characteristics may not be noticed in a particular film, but a single or combination of these characteristics can be applied to a film for identifying it as a noir.

Discovering the source of film noir, Borde and Choumeton emphasize that literature and more specifically the detective novels by Dashiell Hammet, James M. Cain, Raymond Chandler, Graham Greene, W. R. Burnett and on were the immediate resources. They do not forget to mention that during the earlier phase i.e. till mid-1940s, for seemingly financial reasons, there was a total submission of the cinema to literature. “Later, the noir-inflected film will free itself from this tutelage by becoming one of the richest seams of the American market,” they clarify (p.16). It can be observed that hardly any of Hindi film with noir elements was based on any published literary work and that most of these were the original scripts.

Elaborating violence and murder in noir films, they observed that it had always been kept to a realistic style with genuine locations and certain documentary look. “It’s easier to describe a series of ten murders by pen than it is to film them. Added to which, the screen is a magnifying mirror, and a single act of violence, artfully suggested, has more impact than a text in which the crimes mount up,” highlights Borde and Choumeton (p.17). Further they maintain that descriptions of atrocities during the War, the tortures of the Gestapo unfolded on the other side of the ocean and retained an exotic, unreal aspect. “.events themselves also habituated people to violence and prepared the way for a crueller kind of cinema...in America, things were easier, and film noir was able to create a synthesis between realism and cruelty.” (p.21-22) They argue that this undoubtedly polarized all the dark desires of the average spectator and ask weren’t the acts of violence committed on children (*The Window*), on the disabled and the sick (*Panic in the Street, Kiss of Death*), on Jews or black people, a means of inexpensively assuaging, or an imaginary plane, certain secret wishes, conscious or not? With this elaboration, it is possible to understand the volume and reasons for sudden and harsh violence in noir films.

Psychoanalysis, they underline, was to exercise an even greater influence on the scriptwriters, dialogue writers, producers and their public than literature. “Psychiatry no longer believes in traditionally defined good or evil. It knows that criminal behavior patterns often hide self-destructive reactions or guilt complexes, while moral conscience (the super-ego) is linked to the instincts it represses by means of an entire network of complicity,” they maintain (p.19-20 *ibid*). At a point, they argue that noir made gangsters more psychologically complex and sympathetic, horror more quotidian and detective fiction less rational. This helps us to comprehend the mental set up of noir characters who fall for sexual desire, greed for money and other temptations almost unknowingly.

At the end of the book, they also offer chronological index of the main films at the end of the book. Apart from the major noir films of the 1940s, a number of films have been classified in different categories like criminal psychology, crime films in period films, gangsters, police documentaries, social tendencies and so on (p.161-163) besides a long list of noir films (p.166-67).

Another important book on the subject is ‘Film Noir’ by Alain Silver and James Ursini (ed. Paul Duncan, 2012). They have also introduced some of the best known noir filmmakers which help the reader to know briefly about the master craftsmen of film noir. Calling film noir as a “fatalistic nightmare,” they explain its characteristics as “..filled with odd synchronicities, unexplained events an chance encounters, creating a chain of events that ultimately drags its unlucky protagonists to their foreshadowed end.” (p.39) They offer examples of an unjustly accused businessman in *Phantom Lady* (Robert Siodmak, 1944), the straying husband in *Pitfall* (Andre de Toth, 1948) and others for whom the life had become a core nightmare. This also includes treatment of femme fatale that leads the protagonist to untoward end of life. Silver, Ursini and Duncan emphasizes on the femme fatale characters like Kitty (*Scarlet Letter*, Fritz Lang, 1945) and Vera (*Detour*, Edgar G. Ulmer, 1945) who authors identify that most of the female protagonists in film noir exist in tandem with male figure. “From *Double Indemnity* to *Gun Crazy*, no matter how dominating the woman may be,” they mention, “without a male figure of equal prominence there is no story, without a man to destroy there is no femme fatale.” (p.131) It is very important to watch how the authors brings out social perspectives of femme fatale

when they observe that Gilda and Nora, the title characters also victims of society which both empowers and enslaves sexually potent women. (p.131) Pointing out the burden of the past as one of the major themes of film noir, the authors mention a number of noir protagonists, the individuals who are often dogged by their past. One of the interesting examples is from *Spellbound* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1945) where the psychiatrist becomes obsessed with her patient who had block his past and the crime associate with it.

In his seminal book 'What is Film Noir?' (2011), author William Park projects a theory of genre in a full chapter. After this pre-cursor, Park allots another chapter in defining film noir as a genre. He poses a question as to whether film noir spreads itself all over the family of crime films or is a genre in its own right (p.20). "One can construe hard-boiled detective films as a genre..." writes he, "its wisecracking tough guy protagonist makes them easy to identify. But neither such films or the visual style and narrative structures of *Citizen Kane* [Orson Welles, 1941) fit all the films alleged to be film noirs." (p.21). Thus, he emphasizes that numerous critics balk at seeing noir as a genre, claiming it as too amorphous to qualify. Park enlists dozens of professions of the characters in noir films and maintains that no job or profession or skill makes one immune to corruption. "Film noir can happen to anyone. It is a situation," he underlines. (p.24). Park explains the difference between the classic and neo versions [neo noir] lies in the depths of evil they portray. "Noir thrives on pessimism, cynicism, and paranoia. It depends on ambiguous sexual identities, instabilities, and the crossing of traditional boundaries. It feeds on political corruption and moral decadence. Given these conditions, the twenty-first century seems well on the way to providing a suitable habitat," comments Park at the conclusion of the chapter (p.28). Interestingly, Park dedicates a complete chapter on Alfred Hitchcock and attempts the relationship of his films to noir. He refers to Naremore for noting many similarities between Hitchcock's work and film noir. He continues to refer British thrillers being a source of film noir and coinciding of Hitchcock's arrival in Hollywood and so called classic or historic period of Hollywood noir. He further brings to notice that reviewers compared both *The Maltese Falcon* and *Double Indemnity* to Hitchcock's earlier work; favorite Hitchcockian themes and motifs that also characterize film noir such as the wrong man plot and the rear window motif; and certain noir character types, such

as the obsessed detective and the psychopathic killer. (p.90) Park goes on analyzing in brief Hitchcock's masterpieces such as *Spellbound* ('it is a good example of how a film noir alters the conventions of the whodunit'), *I Confess* ('Hitchcock adds new dimension to the noir convention of the false step and allows his hero's virtue to entrap him and lead to an implicitly guilty past'), *Rear Window* ('a perfect example of the ambiguity or tight rope walk Hitchcock performs when it comes to the battle of the sexes'), *Notorious* ('seem to belong in Hitchcock's spy thriller category but it too twists the conventions of that genre into a film noir'), *Psycho* ('it begins as a film noir , even to the extent of being filmed in black and white when Technicolor had become a norm') and on. (p.101-111) Park deals in detail with *Vertigo* and assesses it as not only Hitchcock's most profound work, but also consummates film noir. (p.105) He argues that in this film, the city [of Los Angeles] had become a puzzle, a maze, a labyrinth like human sexuality which have no easy ways out. Park maintains Hitchcock's skills in dealing with two deaths in the film with his [Hitchcock's] vision of life and with the most fundamental conventions of film noir .. "the confused and erring protagonist, the crime, the femme fatale, the multiple investigations, the good girl, the multiple double crosses, and the labyrinthine city. It remains as the best example of the genre ever made and the triumph and climax of a brilliant period." (p.111) William Park discusses certain other aspects of film noir such as style and particularly period style also, he throws light on objections regarding the entity of film noir by various authors like Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson as well as Neale who charged that there was nothing new in the film noir and that the idea of noir confused different genres, respectively. He deals with these objections diligently and attempts to examine the problems raised with examples and illustrations. For instance, while femme fatale is regarded as women's Gothic films by certain critics, Park demonstrated how "like a black hole, the power of noir has drawn them toward its dark centre. (p.40-49)

Park finally concludes the long discussions on film noir with his comments on its category as retrospective and genre as also on period and style. He offers lists of films with categories like police work law and order, psychological and moral disturbances, social issues, whodunit and others.

With these references to James Naremore, it is significant to know how he, in his influential book, 'More than Night : Film Noir in its context' (2008), highlights the characteristics of noir like private eyes, femme fatales and criminal gangs. He also elaborates various aspects of film noir including styles of noir and budgets and critical discrimination as well as deals with issues of censorship and politics in relation to noir films besides some case studies and noir in 21st century. Naremore begins his discussion on noir by asking if noir was American in origin, why did it have a French name and further that if the heyday of noir was 1941-1958, why did the term not enjoy widespread use until 1970s? "A plausible case could indeed be made that," he writes, "far from dying out with the old studio system, noir is almost entirely a creation of postmodern culture – a belated reading of classic Hollywood that was popularized cineastes of the French New Wave, appropriated by reviewers, academics, and filmmakers, and then recycled on television." (p.9) Naremore devotes a complete chapter to the noir mediascape where he argues that noir itself was a kind of mediascape which he calls as "loosely related collection of perversely mysterious motifs or scenarios that circulate through all the information technologies, and whose ancestry can be traced at least as far back as ur-modernist crime writers like Edgar Allan Poe or the Victorian sensation novelists.(p.255). For illustrating the term "mediascape", Naremore refers to anthropologist Arjun Appadurai according to whom it is "made up of both the capabilities to produce and disseminate information (newspapers, magazines, television stations, film production studios, computers, and so on), and the images created through such media."

Phil Hardy (in Nowell-Smith, 1996) blames it to the changing socio-economic and cultural scenario in America during post-WWII, that portrayal of criminals in crimes films started shifting to women's position from seducer to seducee instead of masculine energy of the main male. "The rise-and-fall structure is replaced by that of the investigation, often in a present that is seemingly stretched to fill the running time of a film, leaving the central character, as it were, trapped in a ceaseless present (*The Big Clock*, John Farrow, 1948) in which time is forever running out," he elaborates. Phil Hardy has an interesting observation when he sees the changing landscape of crime films and the contrast between the over and the underworld. "...In a number films noir of the 1940s, corruption ruled and that two worlds sat side by side with

representatives of each world often having a role within the other world as well. Thus the police were expected to be corrupt and the man running the local night-club was expected to be a criminal (*The Big Sleep*, Howard Hawks, 1946; *Murder my Sweet*, Edward Dmytryk, 1944)". Phil further argues that what came to be at issue and under examination was not the group and society but the individual and (his) divided self. Closely examining the change of crime films into film noir, Phil points out that John Huston's *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) adapted from Dashiell Hammett's novel and one of the earliest films noir, was a convenient starting-point from which to examine changes in the narrative strategies of the crime film and the emergence of noir as the dominant form of the genre throughout the decade.

Janet Bergstrom (in Nowell-Smith, 1996, p.196-7) elaborates the first noir film *M* (Fritz Lang, 1931) in detail. "Peter Lorre portrays a serial child murderer whose crimes terrorize an entire city", as she writes further, "The twin forces of the police and the underworld, at times deliberately juxtaposed through editing to emphasize the similarities between their organizations and motives, race against each other to capture the person responsible for disrupting the both spheres of business." Janet makes an efficient remark when she says, "if the underworld is the dark mirror of the police, the murderer's unconscious compulsion to repeat his crime is the dark side of his rational self, and he is helpless to control it".

Steven M. Sanders (in Mark T. Conrad, 2006) projects certain philosophical aspects of film noir in his chapter on Film Noir and the Meaning of Life (p.92-101). He argues, "I want to suggest that film noir presupposes something general that gives it its philosophical interest: a metaphysical and moral atmosphere that is the basis of *all* its protagonists' problems and anxieties rather than a specific anxiety or difficulty. The thread running through the design of film noir is the sense that life is meaningless per se, not that one life just *happens* to be going wrong for the time being and in one particular respect. The philosophically most prominent feature of film noir, then, is its portrayal of the problematic fabric of life as such. In this respect, every noir film thrusts its protagonist into crisis because of the very character of life itself." Obviously, Sanders is pointing to the lives of the characters who have taken wrong turns abruptly and carrying on the burdens of crimes, thereby making their own life miserable and therefore, meaningless.

Elaborating moral stance on film noir, Sanders states that almost without exception, film noir drama is enacted against a secular backdrop; noir characters are typically depicted as living in a godless world. “Belief in God and an afterlife,” he maintains, “are seldom part of the noir protagonist’s back story, and religion is rarely, if ever, invoked as providing solace for or solutions to the problems he or she must face. Film noir’s moral universe is filled with psychologically flawed characters: there is a penchant for shyster lawyers, bought-and-paid-for politicians, cops on the take, down-at-the-heels private detectives, businessmen on the skids, prison escapees, ex-cons, psycho killers, party girls, drifters, opportunists, victims, and any number of ethically compromised anti-heroes.” It is but natural that the when noir film characters adopt illegal means, they lead immoral life. This further provides them mental burden from which they cannot survive for a long.

Sanders makes a marvelous observations when he says that ... existentialist freedom is nothing less than the pulled thread in film noir’s Freudian fabric, which treats the far-reaching effects of the past (*The Dark Past*, Rudolph Mate, 1948), psychosexual dislocation (*Vertigo*), and psychopathology in general (*Undercurrent*, Vincente Minnelli, 1946) in ways very different from, if not, indeed, inconsistent with, existentialism’s emphasis on free choice. How *can* one’s criminality, be the result of free and conscious choice if, one is a product of, the deterministic tyranny of that past over which one had no control? It is precisely for this reason that film noir exploits the voice-over, confessional flashback: the technique provides the kind of narrative closure that mirrors film noir’s inherent fatalism. The view thus knows the ending to come in these films because the future is prefigured in the past.

Andre Spicer and Helen Hanson (Ed. 2013) have attempted to deal with various aspects of film noir. Elaborating the pre-cursors to film noir, the book talks about the atmosphere of uncertainty, doubt and fear with troubled social and political context following the World War-II and argues that ‘noir served as the most authentic version of the inherent corruption and complacency of postwar life, when forced consensus and idealized conformity were prized above all other considerations’. He also emphasizes on how the ‘earlier manifestations and experiments with doomed protagonists, fatalistic narratives, unsparing presentations of institutions, and brutal character motivations in a range of films from the early 1930s made in the years

before the Production Code came widely into force'. Illustrating film noir in Asia in this book, Nikki J.Y. Lee and Julian Stringer stresses that Asian noir is an arguably impossible intellectual construct and that 'it exists as a mere category of convenience behind which lurk a range of more stubbornly complex stories concerning the historically specific characteristics of multiple regional film industries'. Through these edited articles, we find deliberations on crime, horror and noir. A separate chapter has been devoted to the politics of film noir. Amongst other creative aspects, it is equally important to find the analysis of acting and performance as well as ambience in film noir. Andre Spicer and Helen Hanson have also gone beyond to include noir in radio and television. Jesse Schlotterbeck, her chapter (no.25) on Radio Noir in the USA in this book mentions that the timeline of radio noir and film noir were quite similar. "The film noir cycle, often dated from *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) to *Touch of Evil* (Welles, 1958), overlaps almost exactly with the era when radio was producing dramatic programming and using an audio style that has a number of interesting and suggestive alliances with the forms and style of film noir," she writes. Further, Steven Sanders in his chapter (no.26) on Television Noir in this book, discusses the most important types, themes and styles of television noir and emphasizes that television in the 1950s and 1960s adapted noir themes and styles and gave the semi-documentary police procedural and private detective story from classic film noir a new lease on life. "The classic television noir programs were broadcast from early 1950s to late 1960s, and noir narratives and visual styles have appeared on television almost without interruption ever since in a wide variety of forms, from weekly broadcast series to cable series to the made-for-television movie format. Moreover, with its vast international audience, television now can transmit the legacy of film noir on a global basis," he points out. Steven Sanders further observes that as television noir developed from the 1980s, it expanded its scope to encompass a variety of hybridized forms, thematic elements and stylistic patterns found in exemplary models of film noir in television genres. "This provides an indication of how well noir has stood up in the seventy years since the first noir films began to appear. The pervasiveness of noir themes, styles, and narratives in television programming of such great variety indicates that television noir has managed to transcend its own time even as it reflects it. Like its film noir predecessors, television

noir is capable of communicating something significant about us and the condition of our lives,” writes he. In this book, Lalitha Gopalan has attempted to trace noir films in Hindi made mainly from 1980s onwards. She observes that growing number of compendia on film noir, the lists of films added, subtracted and discovered defy any settled definition of a canon; rather, revisionism plagues film noir more than any other genre. Referring to Corey Creekmur’s ‘Notes on C.I.D.’ (University of Iowa), Lalitha highlights consonance between opening segments from Fritz Lang’s *The Big Heat* (1953) and Raj Khosla’s *C.I.D.* (1956). With more references, Lalitha brings to fore how Creekmur rearranges the crime cycle by Guru Dutt Productions and Nav Ketan Productions in 1950s to suggest that there were accents of film noir style in these films and that *C.I.D.* was one such distinctive case of noir designated retrospectively. Thanks to the legendary cinematographer V. K. Murthy whom Lalitha considers responsible for the house style of Guru Dutt films, which according to Creekmur, showed a deep familiarity with American cinema and noir style. She moots *Raakh* (Aditya Bhattacharya, 1989) what she calls as the first Bombay (Mumbai) noir belonging to the long lost, and now cult classic. She refers this film and its reincarnation *Raakh Redux* (2011) and attempt to compare cause and action logic with neo-noir films by Seijun Suzuki and Jim Jarmusch. She has dealt quite elaborately on *Johnny Gaddar* (Sriram Raghavan, 2007) which she calls as ‘counterfeiting noir’. “Reeling us into a crime film with details of routine business between cops and thugs, the film changes course by switching codes : a caper logic takes over the narratives, which is thickened by double crossing and a long fencing match with noir ensues,” writes Lalitha highlighting the nexus between the police and criminals, one of the characteristics of noir. However, there is need to analyze in detail the classic B&W films made in 1950s and 1960s that formed the classic era of Hindi film noir.

Nevertheless, in her seminal book *Bombay Cinema : An Archive of the City* (2007), Ranjani Mazumdar, has dealt with crime films on urban settings where a chapter dwells upon some film noir-like aspects of a few films. Ranjani dedicates another chapter ‘Gangland Mumbai’ that looks at the cinematic articulation of terror in the newness gangster films such as *Parinda* (Vidhu Vinod Chopra, 1989), *Satya* and *Company* (both by Ram Gopal Varma, 1998 and 2002). She argues that the underworld’s linguistic, cultural, and performative styles have been most vividly

captured in film. "...gang life and the gangster's world are classic ingredients for a thriller genre and noir cinema. Since, film noir is mainly located in urban space, Ranjani's observations and analysis of how the city life, including that of over and underworld, as reflected in Hindi films are significant. She devotes a whole chapter 'Desiring Women' on formation of a moral discourse on women that sought to divide their existence within the modernist categories of public and private. "This discourse offers us interesting insights into women's relationship to the city, which was in cinema to a large extent mediated through the figure of the westernized vamp," she mentions. However, this does relate to the study of the characters of femme fatale, indianized in Hindi films for research.

"While the body of work dealing with film noir explores the psychology of the postwar experience in American cities, non-Western cities remain inadequately debated in relation to film," Ranjani argues at her introduction (p.xix) in the book. This also calls for the relevance of the present study as it attempts both creative and sociological aspects of Hindi films made from 1950 to 2015.

In his voluminous book, film historian B. D. Garg mentions Vijay Anand with reference to *Kala Bazaar* (1960) and says that "he (Vijay) showed a surprising degree of narrative skill, always writing and editing his own films," (Garg, 1999, p.) but never mentions about the noir element in this or other films by Vijay Anand. Garg also refers to Raj Khosla film *CID* (1956) as 'a crime thriller'. He refers to other films *Kala Pani* and *Woh Kaun Thi?* with a comment 'established Khosla as a filmmaker with a talent for crime and mystery film. Garg further refers to *Baazi* (Guru Dutt, 1951) (Garg, 1999, p.147) relating to 'underworld of Bombay'. However, the film historian never mentions about these films as having noir elements.

Also a booklet 'Film Noir : The Art of Darkness' was published during the Pune International Film Festival, 2002 and contained articles on the topic, reviews of some Hollywood and Bollywood noir films and interviews with a couple of noir filmmakers. The discerning critics like Priya Sarukkai-Chabria, Deepa Gahlot and Nasreen Munni Kabir attempt to trace the roots of noir films by Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand, Raj Khosla and others. In an introduction of the film *C.I.D.*, Nina Arora writes that Dev (Anand) and Waheeda (Rehman)'s roles were pure Hollywood film

noir, modeled on *The Big Sleep* and *The Maltese Falcon*. “*C.I.D.* couldn’t afford to crawl too far under puritanical barbed wire into Chandlder’s pornography, dirty money and a trail of corpses. But in keeping with genre, *C.I.D.* wasn’t about murder so much as why and how far the murderer could go,” explains she (p.25). While the filmmakers like Vijay Anand and Ram Gopal Varma, prominently known for noir elements in their films and interviewed for this booklet, they do not even slightly mention about this style of filmmaking. This emphasizes the need for a doctoral-level research to trace out the characteristics of film noir in Hindi films, supplemented with sociological aspects and arrive at a distinct conclusion.

A scanning through the newspaper articles reveals that neither the filmmakers nor the film critics were aware of the noir films. Most of them have explained the uniqueness of the films, particularly those Hindi films selected for study (by filmmakers like Vijay Anand, Guru Dutt, Raj Khosla and so on) but have hardly mentioned noir elements in these films. For example, as Afsana Ahmed writes in her article ‘Dev’s obsession with Stardom must go’ (Asian Age, Mumbai, dated 27.11.1996), “Bridging the gap between commercial cinema and art films, Vijay Anand used the conventions of his genre and added his own innovation to create something different.” A non-credited article in Illustrated Weekly (Mumbai, June 29-July 5, 1991) says “... the film (*Woh Kaun Thi?*) introduced a new concept in suspense that was hitting the screen for the first time. Another un-credited article ‘Raj Khosla – A Glorious Trend Setter’ in Nagpur Times (Nagpur, 30 July 1977) illustrated “... Raj Khosla always gives a new outlook and unexplored approach bearing his personal stamp...(be it) mystery film like *Woh Kaun Thi?*... such was the dynamism of his presentation and magnetism of his approach which only a highly stylish-definite filmmaker like Raj Khosla could bring into being...”

Only the obituary ‘A Sibling Partnership’ by Gautaman Bhaskaran (The Hindu, Chennai, 25 February 2004) precisely mentions “...Vijay Anand’s touch of neo-realism seen in some of his early works *Kala Bazaar*, spirit of film noir (inspired by Martin Scorsese’s *Taxi Driver*)... his grip over visuals pushed and complemented the narrative.”

Thomas Sobchack (1996) observed that “the subject matter of a genre film is a story. It is not something that matters outside the film, even if it inadvertently tells us something about the time and place of its creation. Its sole justification for existence is to make concrete and perceivable the configuration inherent in its ideal form. That the various genres have changes, gone through cycles of popularity, does not alter the fact that the basic underlying coordinates of a genre are maintained time after time.”

With this classical, literary definition, the film noir may be challenged as a group of films that, though identifiable in look (lighting, nighttime urban settings) and iconography (seedy hotels, cars, lounges, cigarette lighters, smartly dressed femmes fatales etc. resists the appeal “to make concrete and perceivable the configuration inherent in its ideal form,” for there is no ideal form upheld in this modern group of commercial films.

Sobchack further notes : “There is little room in the genre film for ambiguity anywhere – in characters, plots, or iconography. But even when seeming ambiguities arise in the course of a film, they must be either de-emphasized or taken care of by the end of the film”. (199)

Andrew Dickos (2002, 02) brings the definition of screen genre to his discussion of genre and its application to the film noir because “it is an important touchstone for any critical evaluation of and divergence from the issues raised in its wake”. He maintains that film critics have described the film noir as a deflection from genre or as an emanation from it.

A survey of previous work done in the research area was done at the TMU, Pune University and other research-oriented institutions such as Film and Television Institute of India and National Film Archive of India, Pune. However, the libraries of these organisations didn't house any book or research project on the proposed topic.

Thus, with overall review of literature, it can be seen that volumes have been written, researched and argued about the Hollywood film noir but the instances of study about noir elements in Hindi films are rare. Thus research needs to be done regarding noir elements in Hindi films. Except a small number of film critics and filmmakers, hardly any academic researcher seems to have attempted in-depth study of Hindi Cinema for

noir elements. This calls for thorough research on the topic and hence reflects the significance of the present study.

Since the term film noir was first coined in 1946 and the first full scale study of the style was published in 1955 ('A Panorama of American Film Noir (1941-1953)' by Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton), the Hindi filmmakers were not expected to know this term as easily as they knew say a Western, Musical or Suspense genres.

It is interesting to watch that many of the top grade Hindi filmmakers such as Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand, Yash Chopra, Raj Khosla, Shakti Samanta, Pramod Chakravarty and during the recent times, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Ram Gopal Varma, Rakesh Omprakash Mehra have attempted a few films that are identified with noir elements.

Although a number of Hindi films have been made in the style of *film noir*, these have not recognized as the genre by either the Indian and foreign critics. Perhaps, the gross entertainment value of these films might have diverted the critics from giving them the due credit. However, it is observed that some of the Hindi films possess the characteristics of *film noir* or reflect noir elements in various ways. The research revolves around the Hindi films selected for this study.

Research Methodology

Research Problem

As Wilkinson and Bhandarkar (1977, p.62) states, the formulation of the topic into research problem is the first step in scientific enquiry. Obviously, unless the problem is posed, there cannot be an answer. The cinema was born outside India. During the decades following the introduction of this medium in India in 1896, a number of filmmakers followed the trends prevailing particularly in Hollywood. Different genres such as suspense, comedy, action, drama, adventure musical, action-thriller, horror, romance and even Bond movies etc. were adopted in indianized form by Hindi filmmakers. As Bollywood continues to "get inspired" by Hollywood movies, it has adopted themes and styles of several of these genres. On this background, how is it possible that they have never attempted *film noir*? Probably they might not have adopted the noir material in toto. It required a total creative freedom for the

filmmakers to attempt such kind of films but that even the serious filmmakers such as Guru Dutt and Bimal Roy could not enjoy it due to commercial constraints. Again referring to Wilkinson and Bhandarkar (1977, p.61) when they state that personal values play an important role in selection of a topic for research, I take this opportunity to mention that I have been fascinated by the film noir ever since I learnt about this style of filmmaking when I participated in the Film Appreciation Course by Film and Television Institute of India and National Film Archive of India in 1989. The idea of noir films has been haunting me since then although I was not sure about how to study the topic precisely. The fascination to study the films having crime in dark grew so terrible that even the pens used for writing the notes were in black and red ink! Besides, the video interviews of the personalities were supplemented with shades of noir in the visuals.

Therefore, the present research is the study of some of the gangster or crime films that rose to become *film noir* material. While selecting film for the present study, it was ensured that at least some of the characteristics of the Hollywood film noir are present in the Hindi films. For example, a murder is an inherent distinction of Hollywood noir. A crime or murder is rampant in the American society. However, it is considered as not so frequent in Indian social life. Therefore, Shrinivas Bhanage, the veteran and professional filmmaker, advised to consider the films with a crime that does not necessarily relate to murder.

It is observed that some of the Hindi films do possess noir elements. Barring a few recent examples, all the films selected for study may not be a noir film in full. But, some films reflect noir elements in theme, others in characters, a few in settings and yet others reflect glimpses of noir elements.

Although a number of Hindi films have been made in the style of *film noir*, these are hardly recognized as the genre by either the Indian and foreign critics. Perhaps, the gross entertainment value of these films might have diverted the critics from giving them the due credit. However, it is observed that some of the Hindi films possess the characteristics of *film noir*. Some of the Hindi films selected for this study are noir in nature in certain sections. These films are deprived off the category of being noir films which they richly deserve. The films classified as *Film Noir* certainly are different from the regular crime thrillers. One needs to identify them and offer them

the due recognition as *film noir* classics. Besides, certain characters from some films (such as *Deewar*, *Muquaddar Ka Sikandar*) possess the characteristics of *film noir* while some others (such as *Awara*, *Madhumati*, *Solava Saal*, *Barsaat Ki Raat*) include certain elements of *film noir*. One of the most fascinating aspects already traced out is in the treatment of song numbers that present these qualities (for example, ‘naina barse rimzim rimzim’ from *Woh Kaun Thi?* or ‘na mein dhan chaahu’ from *Kala Bazaar*).

Assumption

Crime films form an important segment of cinema. As in the films of any country, Hindi films are no exception. Some of these crime films have however, went ahead to highlight or discuss the psyche of the criminals rather than usual who-done-it or police investigation stories. Here, the mindset of the criminals becomes important as most of them are not seasoned or born criminals but turned to crime out of unfavorable situations. Treatment to these characters and their stories reflect certain characteristics like oneiric (dreamlike), strangeness, erotic, ambivalence and cruelty, although not all the films embody these elements in equal measures. These are known as film noir which happens to be a significant phase or cycle on Hollywood made during 1940s to late 1950s. These were the films associated with low-key lighting and black-and-white visual style that found roots in German Expressionist cinematography. This visual style, supplemented with a story of fallen guy and femme fatale preying them created a dramatic tension all its own. Mostly, these films mirrored the atmosphere in American society following the post-Great Depression and World Wars period. Although a few Hindi films reflect noir elements, they are hardly recognized as noir films by critics or researchers. Perhaps, the overdose of entertainment values has prevented these films from gaining the very status they deserve. Most of these films were made during the post-Independence era and are continued to be made sporadically till date. The socio-political, economical and cultural atmosphere that prevailed in the Independent India since then eventually got reflected in these films. Thus, the hypothesis attempts to study the creative and sociological aspects of selected Hindi noir films made from 1950s to 2015. It aims to

study as to why these films did not get the recognition as noir films when they were made and/or even during subsequent period. Further, it is equally significant to understand if the respective filmmakers were aware of film noir of Hollywood or from any other country and that their creative treatment for their films with noir elements was a conscious effort or otherwise. As Indian filmmakers have adopted almost every style of Hollywood filmmaking, a strange doubt appears sometimes as to whether they have ever tried this unusual kind of filmmaking. This will be attained through a process of closely watching films, reviews of the films and interviews with the respective filmmakers, film historians, film teachers and film researchers.

Aims and objectives

The research has undertaken the in-depth study of various aspects Hindi film noir. It has further studied the sociological aspects of these films. The research aims -

- To explore whether the Hindi films possess the similar qualities as those of Hollywood *film noir*.
- To understand whether the filmmakers were aware that they were using noir elements in their films.
- To comprehend how the sociological conditions have made impact on development of stories and characters appeared in these films and depicting noir qualities.

Research Design

As Wilkinson and Bhandarkar explains (1977, p.52), a study/research design is a plan comprising the researcher's decisions about the procedure for data sampling and analysis of data for a given study that aims to fulfill the purpose of study. In other words, research design is the conceptual structure within which research would be conducted. Since the purpose of the study is to find out whether the filmmakers of Hindi noir films were aware of what they were doing consciously and during what social conditions, it is obvious that an Exploratory method (as no previous substantiate studies were found related to the said subject) was attempted for the study. Methodologies of narrative analysis, as explained by Hansen, Cottle, Negrine

and Newbold (1998, ch.6) for the moving images have been applied. Besides, the tools for examining the meanings, myths and ideologies contained in moving image narratives have been utilized. Further, orientations have been sought to James D. Halloran [in Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998, p.10 and 11)] where he mentions about addressing media research with particular references to the emergence of a more holistic, processual, critical approach (since last three decades as he states), which sought to remove the media from centre stage, and place them in a wider social context.” It is quite relevant for the present study to adhere to Halloran’s statement – “It took a long time to appreciate ... that what appears on our screens may be influenced by a wide range of historical, social, political economic and cultural factors.” Accordingly, watching the films closely, again and again, has been the major process for exploring the noir qualities in the selected Hindi films.

Sample design

While selecting the samples for data collection, the researcher has used a type of judgment sample. As checked in the libraries of National Film Archive of India and Film and Television Institute of India, there was only one directory entitled ‘Hindi Cinema 1913-2000’ (2002) compiled and published by Rajendra Ojha. However, this compilation does classify films as social or action films and not as crime films. The lists sought from internet are not exhaustive. In short, there was no viable source showing categorizing the Hindi films made over the decades. Therefore, it was impossible even to identify crime films that could be further studied for exploring noir elements. In view of this, the researcher could identify a few films that he was aware of. Secondly, he consulted some authorities on India cinema who could guide him further on the topic. Considering the fact that most of the filmmakers who either knowingly or unknowingly included the noir elements in their films are no more, the researcher had to depend on certain studious filmmakers who could respond to my questions diligently. For this purpose, the researcher has preferred to opt for use of judgment sample of non-probability sample. In view of the constraints of this study, purposive sampling has been employed. A few authors have advised purposive sampling for research. For example, Robson (2000) emphasizes that “the principle of selection in purposive sampling is the researcher’s judgment as to typicality or interest... it is an approach commonly used within case studies” (p.141-2). Another

scholar Ted Palys from Simon Fraser University underlines that there was no one “best” sampling strategy because “the “best” will depend on the context in which you are working and the nature of your research objectives...[and] purposive sampling is virtually synonymous with qualitative research”. Stressing on expert sampling, he mentions that the researcher is looking for individuals who have particular expertise that is most likely to be able to advance the researcher’s interests and potentially open new doors. It is for this reason that the researcher has chosen this type of sample as the researcher was aware of the expertise of selected personalities who could satisfactorily reply his potential questions relating to the study. The researcher consulted a few authorities on Indian cinema who could suggest films to be considered for study on the topic of research. Accordingly, P. K. Nair, the founder-director of National Film Archive of India, filmmaker Sriram Raghavan and historian Ashish Rajadhyaksha and filmmaker Srinivas Bhanage were consulted for suitable titles for the study of noir elements. As a result, the following films were selected for study of exploring noir elements:

1. *Baazi* (dir: Guru Dutt, 1951)
2. *Jaal* (dir: Guru Dutt, 1952)
3. *Aar Paar* (dir: Guru Dutt, 1954)
4. *House No.44* (dir: M.K. Burman, 1955)
5. *CID* (dir: Raj Khosla, 1956)
6. *Howra Bridge* (dir: Shakti Samanta, 1958)
7. *Kala Bazaar* (dir: Vijay Anand, 1960)
8. *Kohra* (dir: Biren Nag, 1964)
9. *Woh Kaun Thi?* (dir : Raj Khosla, 1964)
10. *Ittefaq* (Yash Chopra, 1968)
11. *Zanjeer* (dir : Prakash Mehra, 1973)
12. *Deewar* (dir : Yash Chopra, 1975)
13. *Parinda* (dir : Vidhu Vinod Chopra, 1989)
14. *Satya* (dir : Ramgopal Varma, 1999)
15. *Aks* (dir : Rakesh Omprakash Mehra, 2001)

16. *Company* (dir : Ramgopal Varma, 2001)
17. *Paanch* (dir: Anurag Kashyap, 2003)
18. *Darna Mana Hai* (dir: Prawaal Raman, 2003)
19. *Bhoot* (dir : Ramgopal Varma, 2003)
20. *Sarkar* (dir : Ramgopal Varma, 2004)
21. *Ek Hasina Thi* (dir : Sriram Raghavan, 2004)
22. *Johnney Gaddar* (dir : Sriram Raghavan, 2007)
23. *Ragini MMS* (dir : Pawan Kripalani, 2011)
24. *Badlapur* (dir : Sriram Raghavan, 2015)

To have further insights into the study, the following film personalities were also interviewed with a pre-set questionnaire:

1. Shri Shyam Benegal (renowned filmmaker and recipient of prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award for lifetime achievement in the field of cinema). A celebrity status, he is an authority on Cinema both from India and abroad.
2. Shri Rakesh Omprakash Mehra who is known for outstanding film such as debut film *Aks* (1996), *Rang De Basanti*, *Delhi-6* and *Bhag Milkha Bhag*. Mehra's debut film *Aks* is an expression of a dead man into a living man, reflecting noir elements.
3. Shri Sriram Raghavan, the director of films like *Ek Hasina Thi*, *Johnny Gaddar* and *Badlapur* that reflected noir elements.
4. Shri C. K. Muraleedharan, cinematographer of *Ek Hasina Thi* and *Johnny Gaddar*.
5. Ms Pooja Surti, scriptwriter of *Ek Hasina Thi* and editor of *Johnny Gaddar*.
6. Shri P. K. Nair, curator and founder-Director of National Film Archive of India, Pune
7. Shri Ashish Rajadhyaksha, film historian and
8. Shri K. Hariharan, filmmaker and film teacher

Thus, apart from filmmakers, the researcher has also interviewed film historians to focus the area of study concerning various aspects of the Universe for the research study as a part of primary data collection.

Method of data collection

The films selected for the study are watched at least 3 times i.e. observation method. The researcher had viewed some of these films earlier. Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998, p.140) advise to watch a film at least three times. “The first time any of us watch a moving image product, we watch the story. It is only on the second and third viewing that we start to thoroughly see the construction.” However, watching of the films with certain academic viewpoint offered me fresh insights. The close observation of these films has helped me to point out the audiovisual information that reflected noir elements. This was supplemented with the opinions of the personalities knowing Hindi noir films – either they had made films with noir elements or were experts as critics or historians or teachers of cinema including noir films. “For a small scale study, about 490 minutes films will be more than enough. A maximum for any study could be about twenty films analyzed in depth.” (p.140) Accordingly, the researcher has selected 24 Hindi films that fulfill the requirement of study material set for the purpose.

Tools of data collection

Besides the notes based on personal observation method of the films selected for the study, a large volume of data has been collected through interviews of the personalities. A questionnaire comprising questions on general nature about Hindi film noir as well as certain questions directly addressed to filmmakers who had utilized, knowingly or unknowingly, noir elements in their films. Most of the questions in the questionnaire were open-ended so that the respondents could be free to reply my questions elaborately. The questionnaire was served individually.

The secondary data comprises reviews of the selected films, interviews of respective filmmakers and references from the books reviewed as already existing literature.

Creative Analysis

Since my research involved observation method and views of the discerning personalities, I have opted for Qualitative research method for my study. Thus, such methods appear under the qualitative approaches banner, enshrining as they do certain principles of researcher interpretation, what Kracauer (1953) called for in terms of qualitative, hermeneutic or humanistic procedures. Research of this nature involves *an act of interpretation* on the part of the moving image researcher. For Kracauer, quantitative analysis fails, because – in trying to break down meaning into quantifiable units of words, expressions or statements – it destroys or obstructs the object of study, rendering the examination of the text as a meaningful whole impossible.

Interestingly and more significantly, the researcher is convinced by the views of Bonnie S. Brennen when she says (Brennen, 2013, p. 2-6) that documents of material culture, including – films – are produced under specific political and economic conditions, and that any or all of these cultural products can provide us with insights about our society at a particular historical place and time. The cultural approach to communication that she takes understand the communication process as a means of production that is based on the discourse of individuals and groups and is produced within a specific cultural, historical and political context. She maintains that research which looks at aspects of information and/or entertainment in mass communication, and visual communication and new media, quantitative researchers tend to see communication as a behavioral science. “They draw on scientific models of communication and use a variety of methodological strategies to measure the effects of different types of communication on various groups in society. In contrast, qualitative researchers consider the diversity of meanings and values created in media. Rather than focusing on media effects or influences, they attempt to understand the many relationships that exist within media and society.

Pointing to historical perspective, Brennen mentions that while quantitative social science research remained the dominant approach to mass communication research throughout much of the twentieth century, some researchers did not see the need for social science to “imitate the natural sciences in form or method” (Christians and

Carey, 1989, p.354 – referred by Brennen). She further argues that the researchers who questioned the dominant social science perspective of mass communication often envisioned communication as a cultural practice, through which issues of power, class and social identity could be negotiated. Like Postman, other researchers found that quantitative methods could not help them to answer central questions regarding the role of “communication as the social production of meaning” (Jensen, 1991, p.18 – referred by Brennen), and researchers began to turn to alternative theoretical perspectives and qualitative methods to understand communication as a social and cultural practice.

On this background, the researcher has adopted the qualitative research method for my study of noir elements in Hindi films.

It is expected that this research work would contribute substantially to the study of selected film from creative, sociological and historical perspectives. This research work has also attempted to explore other areas of Hindi films not dealt with so far. This highlight further provides an angle for in-depth studies in the Hindi films. This case study can be one of the rare approaches towards doctoral level observations in Hindi *Film Noir*. A careful and critical analysis of selected Hindi films is for the first time offers them as *film noir*, a quality so far neglected and the title they deprived off till now. The serious attempts by the prominent filmmakers such as Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand, Raj Khosla and others have been promptly studied.

...

Sociological Perspectives

Marshal McLuhan treats “the medium is the message” or the medium of a given social object as the touchstone for both the cultural and material elements of the society in which the object exists. It can be argued that a film is a social object as it deals with the things happening in the society. This can be said at least about the Hindi films with noir elements since these present the stark social requisites. The film *Aks* can be called as a message itself. The antagonist in *Aks* once declares that the society did not realize that Raghavan was also its face and that the society did not like (Raghavan’s existence with vices).

While discussing the six major sources of American film noir, Borde and Chaumeton (2012) points out that three of the sources of are sociological : a new realism about violence in the wake of World War II, a rise in the American crime rate and a widespread institutionalization and popularization of psychoanalysis. (Chapter 2)

It can be said in the case of number of Hindi films with noir elements. Rather, it is an attempt to look for the socio-economic conditions prevalent in the country that may have given clues to the filmmakers to create the characters and their stories. There can be direct references to characters emerging out of any specific phase in the history of India after Independence, it has been attempted to look for the phenomena like Partition, wars with China and Pakistan, failures of Nehruvian ideology, famines, migration of the displaced, regional imbalance in development and their possible impact on the population. It has also been attempted to assess how the menace of poverty, lack of education, unemployment and migration have lead or attracted some to world of crime. It is argued that some of the characters discussed in this chapter were materialized out of these social conditions.

The present study is about Hindi noir films, particularly, sociological aspects attached to these films. Besides the creative characteristics, the sociological study is equally significant as noir films are mainly based on crime that gets reflection from society. After a long discussion on uniqueness of these films, Raymond Borde, Etienne Chaumeton and Paul Hammond (2002) concludes “..the moral ambivalence, criminal violence, and contradictory complexity of the situations and motives all combine to give the public a shared feelings of anguish or insecurity which is the identifying sign of film noir..(p.12)” Thus, noir film it is cinematic expression meant to describe stylish Hollywood drama. Oneric (dreamlike), strange, erotic, ambivalent and cruel are some of the characteristics of these films. In the Hollywood noir films, it is observed that murder is an essential part of the crime story. It well suits the American society and culture as murder is quite common act of crime there. However, in the Indian social atmosphere, murder is not so predominant and therefore, it is felt that any crime of serious nature can be the base for Hindi noir films.

Every city has specific characteristics. It has its own culture and politics. Combination of all this creates an identity for a city and this identity is reflected in its population or citizenship. The citizens of a particular city are quite conversant with this identity. However, when an outsider immigrates in this city for a job or profession, it becomes very difficult for him to get acquainted with such identity. Many times, s/he finds clashes with him/herself or with local citizens in an attempt to understand and adjust with such traits of a particular city. Since the locations of noir films are mainly urban, many of the Hindi films with noir elements are based in Mumbai. These films project Mumbai with all its characteristics such as a dream world for aspirants, commercial centre, business hub, employment generation, crime syndicates, underworld activities and so on. Dr. Sujata Patel (p.328) mention, “In both popular and academic literature, Bombay is typically characterized as India’s most modern city. In view of its range of manufacturing, finance and service activities, Bombay has been described as the first Indian town to experience economic, technological and social changes associated with the growth of capitalism in India. Though colonial capitalism fostered dependent economic development and unevenness in urban growth, Bombay represented for many commentators what is possible despite these odds. It symbolized the paradigm

associated with achievements of colonial and post-colonial India both in its economic sphere and its cultural sphere.”

To understand the nature of Mumbai for the present study, it is attempted to have a look at it as presented through film songs. A number of songs from Hindi films have sketched Mumbai with different viewpoints and the images conceived of the city. The reason for referring to song numbers is all these lyrics are penned the poets who were outsiders and that they have sketched Mumbai as per their observations and experiences of the city. Secondly, being lyricists, they have pinpointed the characteristics of Mumbai within minimum words possible. Another interesting facet of this caricature of Mumbai through film songs is that many of such songs are from crime films!

Beginning with *C.I.D.* (1956), the filmmaker presents the city from viewpoint of his character who is a pickpocket. The song number *ye dil hai mushkil jeena yahan* (lyricist : Majrooh Sultanpuri, music composer : O. P. Nayyar, singer : Mohammad Rafi). According to him, the life in Mumbai is uphill struggle and no trace of humanity in this bustling city – all facilities of life but without heart – a place for gambling, starving, insults and grief yet idles managing to make both ends meet – and lastly, homeless are ridiculed as vagabonds. Another attempt is to project the city as a shocking place. In *Haadsaa* (Akbar Khan, 1983), the song number *ye bambai shaher haadson ka shaher hai* (lyricist : M. H. Hashmat, music composer : Kalyanji Anandji) the filmmaker has projected life in Mumbai as a chain of shock and goes on elaborating - joy and grief with a stroke of difference, even betrayals are charming – pace of life doesn't allow feeling of missing loved ones – neglecting reality, everyone is rushing and aiming high and higher like skyscrapers. *Ee hai bambai nagaria tu dekh babuva* (*Don*, Chandra Barot, 1978, Lyrics : Anjan, music composer : Kalyanji Anandji, singer : Kishore Kumar). It illustrates the City with magic touch, dreamlike strange, can change your fate quickly, people immigrate here leaving their native places, kins to throw a dice, to awaken the sleeping fate, to cash on the cheque of the fate, people are rich and poor, a different life altogether.

Bambai nagaria (*Taxi No.9211*, Milan Lutharia, lyricist : Vishal Dadlani, music composer : Vishal Shekhar, singers : Vishal Dadlani and Bappi Lahiri), the thriller film expresses that millions of people come here and stay on and get cheated by

falling in love with the city, on the golden way, no place to sleep, the city offers an intoxication for a few while it is a punishment for many.

As against this, we find two different expressions. The song number *do diwane shaher mein, raat mein ya dopahar mein* in *Gharonda* (Bhimsain, 1981, lyricist : Gulzar, music composer : Jaidev, singers : Bhupendra and Runa Laila) presents a couple searching for home which appears to be a distant dream for them. The dreaming couple however, imagines their habitation firstly in the under-construction building and ironically then in the open space of the city. Another, rather harsh expression is *seene mein jalan, aankhon mein toophan sa kyu hai?* in *Gaman* (Muzaffar Ali, 1979, lyricist : Shehryar, music composer : Khayyam, singer : Suresh Wadkar). The filmmaker attempts to present the city through the eyes of a taxi driver's character. While the words express storm in eyes, pain in chest, heart as lifeless like stone and why every citizen is a troubled-one, the images show us cross-sections of people, working hard, constantly rushing towards some direction, seemingly unknown to us.

In Hollywood, the noir films were made during the Depression following the WWI period. And in India, these films are mostly made in the post-Independence era that mainly projected polluted politics, poverty, corruption, unemployment, bureaucracy, nepotism and such other evils that disillusioned the common man of the country. It is peculiar to Indian socio-cultural values that most of the lead characters make every attempt to lead a life with honesty and pride. However, as if the destiny, they had no option but to take up crime for their very existence. This offers enormous scope to deal with a variety of sociological aspects of these films.

As mentioned above, crime is the base for noir films. A range of crimes and criminals is rampant in the films under study. For example, Shekhar in *Kismet* (1943, Gyan Mukherjee) is a petty thief. Ashok in *House No. 44* (1955, M. K. Barman) is a pickpocket. Madan in *Baazi* (1950, Guru Dutt) is gambler while *Kala Bazaar* shows Raghuvir as a black marketer of cinema hall tickets. These are small-size criminals and are stilling the pangs of hunger and not dreaming for ivory tower comforts of life. *Johnny Gaddar* (2006, Sriram Raghavan) shows the greed of Vikram, one of the four major criminals, leads to a series of murder of his peers – to grab the whole lot of money from a deal. He is in relation with one of his partner's wife, Mini. Mini is

prompting Vikram to earn more and more money to fulfill their dream of settling in Canada. It is the reflection of earning easy money within the shortest time possible. Ranjani Mazumdar (2007,150) has aptly mentions that gang life and the gangster's world are classic ingredients for a thriller genres and noir cinema. She gives examples of *Parinda* (1989, Vidhu Vinod Chopra), *Satya* (1998) and *Company* (2002 both by Ram Gopal Varma) and maintains that these films present a distinct shift in the journey of gangster. The restlessness that pervades the lives and world of these gangsters is uncommon for the common viewership. While the members of the gang live purely on trust for each other, there is no precursor to the betrayal and subsequent brutality. The world of Anna in *Parinda*, his home, the oil factory (also used for drug trafficking) and other places offer centres of illegal affairs. The criminals in *Satya* do their job like a 9to5 employment in their respective areas (Mumbai) whereas the criminals in *Company* are involved in international crime world. Also, these criminals function like a corporate style of working in these films. Thus graduating from small-size criminals, the 'desires and aspirations' of gang world have increased substantially with the changing time and society. They are no more interested only in luxurious cars and elite lifestyle, but are vowed to strike multi-million deals which can be seen in the above mentioned examples.

In view of this, it is significant to trace the sociological perspectives of the crime and the criminals. In the sociological terms, crime is a social deviance. According to K. L. Sharma (2007), 'The behavior of man, which does not conform to accepted norms, is called social deviance.' He maintains that violation of accepted norms amounts to an unmoral, anti-social and anti-legal action and is the result of overcrowding, slums and lack of appropriate means of social control emanated mainly from industrialization and urbanization. "If a person does not share the accepted values and norms of society, he may be called a criminal or deviant as his activities would be against the expected behavior vis-à-vis the norms and values."(ibid) In the absence of uniform patterns of change and industrialization, crime is also a differentiated and ramified occurrence. Sharma further elaborates that crime is a socially and legally undesirable behavior and hence invites punishment. "Whatever may be situations in which a person indulges in criminal acts, there is never one single cause because crime is a complex behavior and it is caused by a multiplicity of factors."(ibid)

Joël Farges (in Christophe Jaffrelot, 2012, 658) mentions that the Nehru government needed money (to implement several of its schemes) and decided to tax the industry heavily... “The (film) studios reacted strongly and followed illicit practices to evade taxes. Black money thus found its way into the film industry, arousing a lust for greater profits. It became impossible for the government to control the illegal manipulations of honoraria by stars as they heavily influenced the electorate. They were beyond all laws and regrettably, the film world became a hub for all the capitalists who wanted to evade taxes and amass wealth.” It can be argued that the chain of black money did not stop at the stars and the studio-owners. It percolated down to the box office which is often called as collection window of the film industry. Referring the Adam Smith’s theory of demand and supply¹, it can be stated that only a limited number of cinema halls catered to the huge population of billions in the country. The films, although irrational, were dream world for most of the audience who rushed to cinema halls every month, every week, everyday as suitably and to satisfy their inherent desire to be in the tinsel town. The films, especially in India, are considered as escapist entertainment. The people, tired of their daily routines and complicated life, wanted momentary relief which is promptly cashed on by the shrewd filmmakers. It is obvious that the spectators crowded the scarce number of cinema halls. The number of occupancy in cinema halls was limited and the demand was too high to cater to the large number of viewers. It is obvious that the tickets were booked in advance by certain section of agents and they were sold illegally at higher rates at the time of the shows. The viewers, fascinated by the opportunity to watch their favorite stars and exotic locations did not mind to pay extra money. Also watching the films together with a family was an event for many. It is a known fact that legendary Marathi filmmaker Raja Paranjape (1910-79) was garlanded by the group of black marketers on silver jubilee week celebration of his film *Pathalag* (1964). They had earned such a huge income during the 25-week run of the film that they felt like felicitating their bread-winner (Rasarang periodical, September, 1964). According to unconfirmed report, many of such black market ticket sellers are informers to the police officers. Since the Department cannot employ them officially, they are encouraged to sell cinema hall tickets illegally for livelihood while the police

¹ The Wealth of Nations, 1776, Book I, Chapter 7, Para 9 - as mentioned in Wikipedia.

neglect this crime conveniently (Telephone interview: Mr Suresh Khopade, IPS). One such reflection was found in Raghuvir (played by Dev Anand) in *Kala Bazaar* (1960, Vijay Anand). Actually, Raghuvir has no criminal background. He is a bus conductor but loses his job when he attacks an eccentric passenger. A large variety of petty job workers are shown in the film as Raghuvir tries to find a new means of livelihood. At last he is attracted towards black marketing of cinema hall tickets which he sees as the most profitable means to earn money. Raghuvir instantly gains proficiency in the business, defeats his rivals and almost rules at the major cinema halls in Mumbai particularly when there is heavy rush. Another reference emphasized is impact of Raghuvir's criminal acts on his mother. Although a mystical reference, the mother continues to suffer from illness although she is now staying in a luxurious house unknowingly bought out of black money earned by Raghuvir. She collapses when the police arrests Raghuvir from the home. The filmmaker attempts to morale it as the punishment of a son's deeds to the mother.

Poverty

Two contradictory scenes from the film *Deewar* (1975, Yash Chopra) can be considered to understand the justification of the right to live with or without poverty in a metro. Vijay, a dockyard coolie devastates a gang of extortionists to fight out the recurring unjust acts by an illegal entity. Astonishingly, his guts and courage are rewarded with an offer for gold smuggling. Vijay accepts it to justify his hunger and later on turns a prominent smuggler. Had he not accepted the offer, Vijay probably would have remained a coolie throughout his life.... A few years later, Vijay's brother Ravi becomes a police officer. Ravi is assigned to arrest Vijay for the crime and obviously, the former is not keen to take it up²..... Incidentally, Ravi shoots at an escaping adolescent thief and finds that he has stolen just a pair of breads. Ashamed, Ravi reaches to the boy's family with food packets. The boy's illiterate mother slams Ravi for his unknowingly unjust act committed now by a legal entity. However, the father (a retired municipal school teacher) justifies Ravi's act saying that all the starving people in the country need not necessarily steal for hunger. Thus, the film supports the Sanskrit metaphor 'bubhukshitam kim na karoti papam?' ('why a hungry

² Ravi is younger brother to Vijay. They have spent their early days together on footpath. Besides, Vijay has sacrificed his childhood for the upbringing of Ravi and so there is obvious sense of obligation.

man should not commit a sin?'...anonymous), well-rooted in Indian culture in the first scene while it defies the same in the second incident.

It can be observed that in any part of the world, the most important ground for crime is poverty and its basic reason, unemployment. Madan in *Baazi* (1950, Guru Dutt) is a former taxi driver and has seen lives of rich people as his passengers. It is obvious that he too must be looking for a better life-style for himself. He has lost his job and presently is a small time gambler but with good skills. When opportunity strikes, it is not easy for him to grab the work of a higher grade gambler because of his social conditions. But he manages to accept the job for two reasons : one for the medical treatment of his sister and two, to live a better lifestyle to impress the lady doctor (treating his sister and) who had made a secret place in Madan's heart. Ironically, it is a high angle shot indicating Madan's vulnerability to any kind of job due to unemployment. A few subsequent shots mirror unemployment scene in this newly independent country. Sociologically, the film repeatedly highlights poverty and the poor in the first decade of the Independence. It presents a tolerant poor population on one hand as also the revolving poor people against poverty. References to Independent nation reflects both aspirations of the people from the new Government as well as frustrations faced because of non-fulfillment of even the basic requirements of life. The block CU shot of a one rupee coin prominently showing the year 1940 relates to British raj period. Repeated high angle shots showing the pavement dwellers reflect a pitiful look towards their plight. Also the characters of Mother and her two sons – Vijay and Ravi in *Deewar* are suddenly forced into dire poverty because of disappearance of their only family-head.

The reason for transformation of Madan from small-size gambler to a professional one in *Baazi*, Raghuvir from a bus conductor to prominent black marketer of cinema hall tickets in *Kala Bazaar*, Vijay from a dockyard coolie to major smuggler in *Deewar* is poverty. So, poverty seems to be the motif behind these crimes. Being one of the major reasons for crime, the issue of poverty has been dealt with different perspectives. Chandhoke and Priyadarshi (1999) pose the persistence of extensive poverty in times of general prosperity that raises the other troublesome questions confronting democratic societies. How to ensure equality of opportunity in the face of rising economic inequality? They ask and mention that deprivations which

characterize the lives of the poor put them at disadvantage in terms of their capability to actualize the opportunities presented by economic growth....

In their debate on poverty in India, Chandhoke and Priyadarshi maintain that poverty should not be limited to lack of income or purchasing power but must include a wide array of living standard and social indicators bearing on human-capability deprivation. They argue that the persistence of these deprivations could be significant in determining how equitably the opportunities of economic growth are shared and what happens to socio-economic inequality in the future.... "Also contemporary India is positioned in terms of poverty and the related phenomena of food insecurity and unemployment". Elaborating the poverty in a relative sense, Chandhoke and Priyadarshi continue to state that economic poverty is generally understood as the lack of means for providing material needs or comforts. Since income or wealth (representing purchasing power) is often seen as the most common means of obtaining such needs, poverty is generally associated with a lack of income or wealth. When income or wealth in a society is unequally distributed, some people have more means at their command than others. The lowest segment of the population having lesser means is considered poor in comparison to the upper segments. In the extreme case, Chandhoke and Priyadarshi say that the poverty is characterized deprivation of the most basic needs like adequate food, shelter, clothing, access to health care. Anyone suffering from such extreme deprivations is considered poor in the absolute sense. Absolute poverty also reflects what is socially considered a minimum level of resources that should be the right of every member. This threshold of minimum, socially acceptable living condition is often quantified as a minimum income level or poverty line.

Among the relatively poor are those whose extreme lack of means result in deprivations that not only severely affect their well-being, but threatens their very survival. It is emphasized that the nature of absolute poverty makes it socially, morally and politically difficult to accept or overlook...This clearly shows the division between haves and haves not. All the characters involved in the crime and discussed fit in to this case.

It is also limiting to think of poverty essentially in terms of material deprivations relating to basic needs. One must also take into consideration sociological

deprivations rooted in underlying structural inequities and inherent disadvantages. Even when resources are available, people may not be able to take full advantage of them because of pre-existing disadvantages ranging from social constraints like caste and gender to personal impediments like old age and physical disabilities. Income-based approach to poverty is again found severely taking into account these other kinds of deprivations. In the film *Deewar*, although Vijay has acquired a lavish house, his mother refuses to stay on when she realizes that the house is bought out of illegal money.

Yogendra Atal (1997) admits that inspite of absence of a dependable theory of poverty in social sciences, poverty and the poor are visible and their situation is intolerable... “long periods of unemployment, or a sudden loss of job, can create hardship for the person and his family and even lead to their impoverishment; poverty thus created may pose difficulties for the family in providing adequate education to its young for a brighter prospect in future”. This is precisely the case which is reflected in the characters of Madan in *Baazi*, Raghuvir in *Kala Bazaar* and Vijay in *Deewar*. Poverty has not only deprived them of their right to education but also withdrawn their aspiration to live a good life, at least in the initial part of the film.

Deewar (1975) presents more or less true sociological picture of the period it was made in. The film is told in a single flash back. Flash back denotes memories but not necessarily good old days. Similarly, the past has not been good with the people in the film. Its story mainly revolves around the three characters in the family: Mother and her two sons Vijay and Ravi. This family of a union leader of a coal factory finds sudden displacement after the only bread-winner disappears following a threat from the factory-owners. It opens up the Pandora’s Box for the doomed family. The mother obviously has to take up odd jobs for survival. The elder son, realizing the younger brother’s quest for schooling, decides to shine shoes, thus reflecting the menace of child labor portraying the socio-psychological dimensions to the problem. This happens at a time when neither the Government’s schemes for compulsory school education with food subsidies or educating parents of the importance of education for their children were very effective nor the laws against the child labor or National Policy for Child Labor were in vogue as compared to current times. The reasons and socio-economic background forces Vijay to work as a shoe-shiner which clearly

indicates poverty and sacrifice his childhood to facilitate education for his younger brother. The film narrates several incidents of this disintegrated family as they spend life on footpath, under-bridge and downright dwelling. The defense lawyer in *Kala Bazaar* attempts to maintain that Raghuvir and his team members had turned criminal in the absence of proper education thus again referring to the insufficient schooling facilities.

Because of the slower rate of economic growth as against the speeding growth of population, India remains an overpopulated country. The lack of balance between the two, results in poverty, unemployment, migration, and slow mobility as well as unevenness regarding standard of living and styles of life. As a result every Indian is not able to get the basic needs food, shelter and clothes besides proper education, medical aid and health facilities, sanitation, social security. K. L. Sharma (2007) states that the size of population, rate of growth and population composition, and its geographical distribution are important factors in determining the requirements of infrastructure, such as education, housing, health services, food supply etc. (in some parts of the country). It is also difficult to get gainful employment and there is a lot of unproductive labour in India. The small-size criminals mentioned in this chapter form this element because they are on one hand, employed in some illegal work and their existence is not useful to the society or nation, on the other.

Durganand Sinha (1997) maintains that apart from being associated with its worst symptoms like early death of children, ill-health, malnutrition, poor growth, insanitary living conditions, illiteracy, and miseries of various kinds, and unemployment, poverty implies denial and lack of power, prestige and participation in activities that are supposed to shape one's life. While categorizing poverty, psychologists have also used socio-cultural indices to identify the poor and disadvantaged groups. The criteria commonly used are quality of diet, nature of residence, institutionalization, membership of cultural social and economic groups, civic amenities and educational facilities. It can be seen that many of the characters in the films under study lack in any kind of official power. Vijay in *Deewar* is a dockyard coolie in the beginning of the story. Madan in *Baazi* is a small time gambler. Raghuvir in *Kala Bazaar* is a black marketer of cinema hall tickets. None of these characters is shown participating in any cultural or social activities.

As against this, the character of Nandkumar (played by) Vijay Anand in *Kala Bazaar* belongs to affluent class and gets opportunity to obtain higher education abroad. Even, the character of Raja Amit Kumar Singh (Vishwajeet) in *Kohra* (1964, Biren Nag) hails from feudal family and he too is a highly educated person.

The reason for all these characters becoming story-worthy or unique is their grabbing of timely opportunities for better life style and their ability to revolt against the situation. The protagonist in the film *House No. 44* is named as Ashok - a simple name that could hardly be a criminal's name at least on the screen stories. Film director has specifically maintained this identity of a common man that can turn him into a criminal, if and when compelled. When Ashok is thrown away from the verandah of Nimmo's house, he blames it to the rains that compel him to take shelter. There have been millions of people in India which do not get even the basic human need like a shelter. It is therefore, that Ashok argues that a helpless person can behave anyway (even wrong way) because of the situation. After a few petty stealing, Ashok thugs a person who happens to be a thug himself. He is Sundar and is astonished by Ashok's skills. Impressed, he enrolls Ashok in his crime syndicate headed by Captain. Here, is it argued that chance encounters play a major part in such stories and scripts. Since a roadside person is not expected to have a better life style, his betterment can only be possible with chance encounters with fate. And so it happens here.

In *Kala Bazaar* (1960, Vijay Anand) Raghuvir, a bus conductor suddenly loses his job as he pushes away an irate passenger for abusive language. Now, while searching for new job, he scrolls through a number of vending professions but finally gets attracted to the illegal occupation of black marketing of cinema hall tickets. During second half of the film, Raghuvir is a reformed but is tried in the court of law for his past offences. Here, the defense lawyer argues that it was the lack of education that led Raghuvir to crime world, and every child in the country should be given basic education before it turns delinquent. The filmmaker has repeatedly placed learned and educated characters around Raghuvir who is a school dropout because of poverty. This clearly emphasizes the importance of education for an individual and of course, the educated society at large. Firstly, Raghuvir's encounter with a lawyer when he snatches away his money bag. At this moment, Raghuvir is more impressed with the volume of money the lawyer possessed rather than his volume of education. Then, he

is fascinated by the highly educated Nandkumar (whom he had sold the cinema tickets with extra charges) and Alka who expects others to rise to her level. A character ironically placed in the films is Krishna Dhawan. He steals books because he cannot afford to buy them. He has a post-graduate degree and is obsessed with reading and learning more and more. To fulfill this, he takes a private tuition for Raghuvir's sister and earns some money. In a conversation with Raghuvir and Krishna Dhawan, director shows a book cover of 'Meri Kahani' (Hindi, 'My Story') with Pandit Nehru in a thinking face on it...Raghuvir effortlessly taking the same pose, reflecting Nehru's influence on the youth. Social and cultural values play a great role in the film. It appeared that a section of youngsters was heavily influenced by the ideas of nation-building, honest dealings, brotherhood in the atmosphere of newly independent country.

Bazzi presents severe insecurity for the characters of Hindi noir films and the reflection of social and cultural values. The owner of the Star Club happens to be Dr. Rajani's father (K.N. Singh). In his double-standard life, the father is known as a patron for a number of poor people. However, as a father, he wants his educated daughter to get married to a learned boy and wouldn't certainly like a roadside man as his son-in-law.

Menace of Migration

The aspect of poverty has also facet of migration. Social scientists have elaborated in detail the various reasons for migration. Ramesh Thapar (reprinted 1978) has estimated that over one million persons migrate from rural areas to urban areas every year in India (Seminar, 1961). With reference to 1941 census report on India, Thapar observes that apart from industrialization 'another and much more potent reason that is usually realized, is the fact city life has begun really to appeal to the ordinary middle class or lower middle class' and goes on pointing out that whether it is 'push and pull' (p.20) factor or there can be movement only when things are better somewhere else and they may be better because things are bad at home. He attempts to balance that in India today, push offers a greater motivation for migration than pull. 'The economic hardships in a village for an average person constitute a much stronger motivation for him to see work in a city than the so-called attractions of cities of

which he can very rarely take advantages of'. Taking the argument of Thapar ahead, it can be mentioned that the two brothers in *Parinda* have moved to urban area to overcome the scarcity caused by famine in their homeland.

Chandra, Mukherjee and Mukherjee (2000) illustrate the multitude of problems like backwardness, inequality, impact of colonialism etc. for solution by the then government. "The newly formed independent government also had the long-term tasks of promoting national integration, pushing forward the process of nation-in-the-making, facilitating rapid economic development, removing endemic poverty, and initiating the planning process. It also sought to bridge as quickly as possible the gap between mass expectations aroused by the freedom struggle and their fulfillment, to get rid of centuries-long social injustice, inequality and oppression... This mood was to persist for most of the Nehru years."³ However, due to the factors like industrialization, urbanization and the refugees from Pakistan, the rate of migration into the cities accelerated after 1951. Chandra, Mukherjee and Mukherjee point out that the problem of migration was aggravated in a number of cities or regions because the speakers of the state language were in a minority or had a bare majority.⁴ Because of regional imbalance of development, most of the population from the deprived or underdeveloped areas flocked to metro cities that provided enough or more opportunities for work and income, and subsequent lifestyle. The metros, for example, Mumbai, provided better means of communication, transport etc. attracting people

³ Independent India embarked on its tasks with a benefit of an outstanding leadership, having tremendous dedication and idealism besides the presence of a strong nationwide party, the Congress. Beside the great Nehru stood a group of leaders who had played a notable role in the freedom movement. There was his deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel a leader who possessed a strong will and was decisive in action and strong in administration. Then there were the learned Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the erudite Rajendra Prasad, and C. Rajagopalachari, endowed with razor-sharp intellect. All these leaders had skills and experience to run a modern and democratic administrative and political system which they had acquired through organizing a mass movement, building up a political party, and participating colonial legislatures for decades. They also possessed a great deal of talent in consensus-building. The national movement had brought together different regions, sections of society and ideological currents around a common political agenda. (Chandra, Mukherjee and Mukherjee)

⁴ For example, in Mumbai, in 1961, the Marathi speakers constituted 42.8 per cent of the population. In Bangalore the Kannada speakers were less than 25 per cent. In Kolkata the Bengalis formed a bare majority. In the urban areas of Assam, barely 33 per cent were Assamese. (Chandra, Mukherjee and Mukherjee)

from rest of the country and obtaining a cosmopolitan look. This further developed the 'sons of the soil' movements which has been more virulent, when there is actual or potential competition for industrial and middle-class jobs, between the migrants and the local, educated, middle-class youth. The friction has been more intense in states and cities where 'outsiders' had greater access to higher education and occupied more middle-class positions in government service, professions and industry and were engaged in small businesses, such as small-scale industry and shop keeping. The economy's failure to create enough employment opportunities for the recently educated created an acute scarcity of jobs, and led to intense competition for the available jobs during the 1960s and 1970s. It is argued that the situation led to unemployment and subsequent gross disappointment. Most of the characters particularly shown as immigrants in Mumbai may belong to this type of population.

The aspect of migration holds some historical background. Firstly, because of the political decision of partition, several lakhs of refugees infiltrated in India. Kulkarni and Champanerkar (2013) mention that the trauma of the displaced population was so fierce that Indian Government had to establish a separate Ministry of Rehabilitation for this purpose. Although the phenomenal task of rehabilitation of these disposed people continued for next several years, these people had to live worse and dependent life in rehabilitation camps or otherwise. It is obvious that these people found ways to reach out to the length and width of the country in search of rehabilitation, settlement and means of livelihood.

Secondly, due to repetitive famines, insufficient irrigation, low-yielding seeds and growing population, the newly Independent country faced unprecedented scarcity of food-grains. The government had to import food-grains from America. To overcome this grave situation, the Government in 1960 decided to combat with different problems of agriculture at a time. The result was Green Revolution. This experiment made wonders when high-breed seeds, increased crop frequency, use of chemical fertilizer and enhanced irrigation brought in excellent yields to the extent of nation being self-sufficient. However, this benefit was reaped only by the farmers with huge land and it further dissociated the small farmers with increased dissatisfaction over farm income. The inconsistency of rains resulted in two severe famines in 1965-67

and 1972-73. Accordingly to official information⁵ more than five crores of population was hit by the famines. Subsequently, Maharashtra and other Western States suffered by another severe famine 1972-73. This not only resulted in lack of food-grains but also reduced production of electricity resulting in further depression, closure of factories and increase in unemployment and finally gross dissatisfaction amongst the people. It is argued that most of these people moved to urban centres in search of food, shelter and other basic needs.

Thirdly, the process of development, mostly in rural areas, posed the problem of rehabilitation (Kulkarni, 2009). Particularly, the projects like river dams whisked away large amount of irrigated and housing land and inhabitants were displaced. Although land for land has been promised, the same was not met with in several cases. Besides, the displaced non-farmers such as fishermen and the rural working class, lost their livelihood. Thus, a large number of individuals and families are displaced. Their lifestyle is changed. Many times, they cannot cope up economically, culturally and emotionally in the new place. Besides, their new establishment can create problems for the already established people there who are provoked to drive away the displaced population making them displaced again and again. Ultimately, these displaced people have not option but to move to urban centre in utter depression and find different means for livelihood and shelter. Some of those who did not obtain these basic needs recklessly turned to crime. Kishan in *Parinda* is one such example of migrants who took up crime, initially to impress his opponents and then for livelihood.

Sanskritization and Westernization

Some of the films aptly present the process of Sanskritization and Westernization⁶ elaborated in sociology. In the films, it is a mixture of both these terms. The character of Vijay in *Deewar* turns a smuggler from a dockyard coolie resulting in sudden rise in his illegally earned income. Vijay Varma is now newly rich socialite – a *nouveaux*

⁵ As stated by Mrs Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister in her speech on 19.05.1966 referred by Kulkarni-Champanerkar (2013)

⁶ Prof. M. N. Srinivas (1966) elaborates the process of Westernization as adoption of Western customs, manners and beliefs and that implies mobility outside the framework of caste.

riche. There are changes in his dress, food, habits and lifestyle. He buys spacious house with all amenities which are unimaginable to his mother. He adopts a changed life style of the rich people, dress, high-class car, 5-star hotel-partying, costly liquor and other hi-fi habits. Interestingly, without having corresponding education or sophistication, Vijay has adopted the western culture as his lifestyle. It is probably, for this reason that Vijay celebrates the news of his mother's health recovery with toasting of liquor glasses with his fiancée. Thus, the change in his lifestyle as defined by sanskritisation is to some extent, the result of the socio-economic transformation of Vijay from a working class to white collar professional(?). The character of Poonam (artiste un-credited) in *Kohra* is educated-abroad wife of a feudal and has turned her life style into a western culture that indicates her nude shower bathing, alcoholism etc amounting to westernization. Even Madan in *Baazi*, when he earns handsome money, goes for stylish suit to impress the sophisticated lady doctor. However, his language repeatedly and noticeably portrays his character. Dr. Rajani fires Madan for this mismatch but he adamantly and clearly tells her that had no character to identify with. Like Vijay, Madan also forgets that the doctor's urban costumes are supported by her higher education and subsequent elite status. In *House No. 44* (1955), we see that the protagonist Ashok has earned sophistication in his outfit but not in the speech. In a conversation his girlfriend Nimmo, scolds Ashok for not bringing relevant change in his language and behavior while Ashok blames this to his upbringing with poverty and lack of education that did not permit him as faster change in behavior as in attire. Even the female characters appear dreaming and struggling for better lives. For example, the heroines with bob hair cut reflect the young girls' modern outlook to life (as *Baazi*, *House No. 44* and so on). This also echoes the modernity in the films by Navketan that was creatively driven by the Anand brothers - Chetan, Dev and Vijay - who had contemporary attitude towards filmmaking.

Lastly, the Femme fatale. The Femme fatale is a woman that leads the protagonist to crime. It has been one of the most important characterization of noir films. Hindi noir films are no exception. This character is also rampant in Hindi noir films. The Hindi filmmakers have used this character in a slightly different way. Who are these women? While elaborating prostitution in India, K. L. Sharma estimates three types of prostitutes and one of them as 'private prostitutes, mistresses or keeps of particular

individuals who work as singers, dancers and *naikins*'. The characters of Nina, the night club dancer in *Baazi* and Edna in *Howrah Bridge* (1958, Shakti Samanta) Kamini in *C.I.D.* (1956, Raj Khosla) are clear examples of this type of prostitution. These are the women who enter the profession willingly or unwillingly because of socio-economic or familial factors. They are also well associated with the crime or underworld. The protagonist of the film is often a new entrant in the gang and in the situation; it is this girl, popularly known as vamp in Hindi films, supports or leads him in the odd situation. She does not allow entry of another vamp for the clear reason of her secured position in the gang. A femme fatale modeled on Hollywood noir films is presented as Rimi in *Johnny Gaddar* and as Rekha in *Ittefaq* (1968, Yash Chopra). Both are married, are victims of unhappy marriage and have extra-marital affairs. The only difference is that Rimi leads Vikram to commit crime while Rekha herself is involved in crime!

...

Chapter Three

Creative Aspects of Hindi Films with Noir Elements

The chapter deals with the analysis of creative aspects of Hindi films with noir elements, made in three phases as mentioned below:

- 1) 1950-1970 - Hindi films in B&W period – classic noir
- 2) 1971-1989 - Hindi films in transitional period - transnoir
- 3) 1990-2015 - Hindi films with neo-noir

The reason for the first phase is that it was during this period that Hindi films in black-and-white which reflected hard core noir elements. This was also the first major expressions of noir rudiments in Hindi films. The films made during transitional period, transnoir, were made during 1970s and late 1980s which was affected by a number of factors like the war with Pakistan giving birth to Bangla Desh, famine, massive corruption and indiscipline amongst political parties. The third phase begins with globalization in India and how the effects of it got reflected in the films selected for study. The films from last two phases are called neo-noir as they were made in colour and reflected noir elements in the changed socio-cultural and economic-political atmosphere of the changed times.

While elaborating interpretation of data, Wilkinson and Bhandarkar (1977) mention, “Interpretation is the research-operation which is geared to expose or bring into light the broader meanings of the research findings or conclusions by linking them to (viewing them in the light of) other available knowledge Thus, interpretation helps one understand what the given research-finding really means and what its underlying abstract principle, is of which the research finding is just a concrete manifestation or a

reflection at the level of empirical concreteness. Hence, interpretation is the operation which unravels the abstract in the concrete. It helps us understand the ‘why’ of the findings. Interpretation makes it possible for us to appreciate why the relations between variables expressed in the findings are what they are.” (p.334-5)

Besides, Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998) have illustrated that “central to the analysis of both narrative and genre is an application of the researcher's own reading, that is, a structured approach, not only based on formula and application of models, but largely dependent on the development of skills of description and classification. Thus, such methods appear under the qualitative approaches banner, enshrining as they do certain principles of researcher interpretation, what Kracauer (1953 referred in by these authors) called for in terms of qualitative, hermeneutic or humanistic procedures. Research of this nature involves *an act of interpretation* on the part of the moving image researcher. For Kracauer, quantitative analysis fails, because – in trying to break down meaning into quantifiable units of words, expressions or statements - it destroys or obstructs the object of study, rendering the examination of the text as a meaningful whole impossible. (p.130)

They have further divided the elements or significant parts of the language of cinema into the technical and symbolic:

Technical : camera angles, camera movement, shot duration, lighting depth of field, editing, sound, sound effects, music, special effects, framing and so on.

Symbolic : colour or B&W, costume, objects, stars, performance, setting, location and so on.

It is significant to explore noir elements in various Hindi films. The basic support is standard characteristics of film noir like Oneiric, Strange, Erotic, Ambivalent and Cruel as illustrated by Borde and Choumeton. These characteristics are further elaborated with the help of Webster dictionary (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>) and exemplary references from the films.

Oneiric : This relates to dream or dreamlike condition. A few times the characters and situations in noir films appear as if in wish list. And one suddenly comes down to reality. In the dream sequence of *Kala Bazaar*, Raghuvir listens to police whistles (what else?) in search of criminals. Raghuvir skillfully evade the police hunt. Here

Raghuvir meets Alka who teases him off by tearing of the hundred rupee currency notes. Raghuvir who is so much possessed with earning of money in any way possible, is shocked by Alka's action of destroying of illegal money. Also, although Raghuvir is aware and jealous of love affair between Nandkumar and Alka, he makes all attempts to seduce her. On this background, their union appears as realization of a distant dream.

Strange : This can means different from what is usual, normal or expected, not known, heard or seen before or unfamiliar. A number of noir films reflect strangeness in the exotic locations, complex storyline and/or behavior of characters. In both the suspense films under study, *Kohra* (1964) and *Woh Kaun Thi?* (1964), the huge mansions reflect exotic experiences about the place of habitation and the people living in the bizarre atmosphere. The House No. 44 is an obscure place, a place for crime. It is the den of a gangster called Captain, an unusual place. A crime scene happens at an exotic location of railway shunting yard. A gang loots the goods wagon and the old policeman on duty is killed during his fight with the escaping goons. Certain sequences present the stress of characters which appears strange at times. For instance, Ashok is constantly undergoing stress because of his present time in crime world. When Ashok gets fallen in the eyes of his beloved, Nimmo, he decides to leave the criminals and lead a life with honesty and pride. After trying a couple of hardworking jobs, Ashok is jobless and so penniless again. His poverty irks Nimmo who is not able to lead even austere life, causing anxiety for her. During the last chase sequence, when Ashok is attempting escape from all the criminals including Captain, he climbs a high building and tries to cross the same from the outer supporting structure. Here, Ashok faces vertigo, gets horrified of falling down and passes on the similar tension to the audience. Both feel relieved after Ashok succeeds in saving himself.

Erotic : Having sexual overtone. This is strongly marked or affected by sexual desire. We find sexual motivation of male and female characters in noir films including femme fatale or vamp. Sexual overtones are presented explicitly many times. The film *House No. 44* presents two instances of sexual undercurrents, one unethical and the other ethical. At the first entry of Ashok in the house no. 44, Captain, the leader of the

gang is sexually exploiting the daughter of his old team member. After death of the constable, Sundar (and his mother) gives shelter to the constable's only daughter, Nimmo. At a point, Sundar attempts to seduce her for marrying with him. Ashok, the protagonist has a slightly different approach as he moves around the house of Nimmo when her constable father is on duty. He also aims to seduce her but to be a life partner. In *C.I.D.* as Dharamdas receives phone call from Kamini, we see her enticing picture on his table. After the conversation, he leaves to another room and closes the door behind where we come across a picture of a fastened woman with breast open, symbolizing enslavement of Kamini and her sexual exploitation by Dharamdas. From a point of view, one can see another horrid face of the rich in the society. Dharamdas has adopted this girl from an orphanage for training in his dirty profession and is now using her to fulfill his sexual needs. Another reference is the illegitimate relationship between Rekha and the police officer in *Ittefaq* (1968) clearly reflecting sexual overtones of the characters.

Ambivalent : It relates to simultaneous and contradictory attitudes or feelings, may be attraction or repulsion, towards an object, person or action. Some characters in noir films get this kind of response from the people they know. For instance, the characters like Captain in *Baazi* or Dharamdas in *C.I.D.* Ashok in *House No. 44* is asked to deliver the guitar to a girl in black sari at the garden park. The girl's identity is put on hold as she enters through various parts of park when certain things cover up her face. Further, when Captain doubts Ashok of betrayal, he manages to escape from the den. While Captain's men chase Ashok, he goes through a number of difficult places, labyrinths and dark, odd places risking his life. Fast pans and swift editing make the sequence effective. One is reminiscent of sequence from Fritz Lang's *M* (1931) when Ashok, in a fight with Captain, manages to escape with a running vehicle that separates them for a moment. Subsequently, Captain reaches Nimmo's residence where Ashok is hiding. He surrounds the area. Ashok, in a very subdued light, fights first with Captain's men and then with Captain himself. Sudden violence in the gloomy area makes this long fight sequence more effective. It also highlights the protagonist's long fight with the antagonist. A frontal angle (POV shot) of the Captain's man aiming at Ashok, appears as if targeting the audience, the common man at large. Filmmaker wants the audience to be a part of the grim happening so that he

can realize its depth. Ashok gets injured in the fight, yet he reaches the temple where Sundar's mother is worshipping. He confesses that it was he who informed the police about Sundar's whereabouts and was responsible for his death. The mother, however, mentions that Sundar himself was responsible for his death. Ashok rings the temple bell and gets relieved from the guilt. He prepares to begin a new life with Nimmo. Further, the film reflects excellent understanding of modus operandi of both the crime-world and the police. This offers genuineness to characters and their actions as well. It shows how criminals function with code words and gestures. For example, during his test period, Ashok is sent on a 'mission' to deliver a packet to a person with black jacket. He is asked to wait at a particular place and whistle. Another film that utilizes a young woman for drug-trafficking is *Howrah Bridge* (1958). It seems that the gangsters employed beautiful young women for such illegal activities because these girls easily dissuaded the inspecting authorities by their very charm and escape with the possessions. Edna, in this film, traffics drugs from Rangoon to Kolkata. She also performs dance numbers on the boat and at the hotel. She is on lookout for rich customers and pitches them for fun-and-frolic at the hotel owned by her uncle who is also a part of the crime syndicate.

The film *C. I. D.* (1956) itself is an ambivalent experience. The film is a police investigation drama. Here, the protagonist is not a criminal but a police inspector probing into a murder case. The murderer belongs to a crime syndicate. The police inspector's repetitive interrogations land him in a case of police atrocities and subsequent death of the murderer. Now, it is essential that he proves his innocence. His attempts to trace out the real culprit are ridiculed for a non-existing killer. In the process, we come across a number of characters that are victims of situation.

At a point in this film, Inspector Shekhar is on the run from the police to get the real culprit for proving his innocence. Shekhar runs through the lanes to save himself both from the law and the outlaw. The labyrinths symbol for complex nature of law that cannot protect Shekhar of his innocence. Interestingly, while the legal entity could not trace Shekhar out, an illegal unit of conmen spot him and fires two bullets at him. Injured and puzzled, Shekhar reaches a parking garage where he sees some of fake number plates for cars. The blazing spotlight of approaching car glares Shekhar as he finds Kamini in the in it.

The ambivalent experience is supplemented with greed. For instance, Raghuvir in *Kala Bazaar* (1960) foresees the rising black market rates for an upcoming film with wide publicity. This haunts him even more when he reaches home to look after his ailing mother. Next morning, suddenly he finds an opportunity to snatch away a money bag of a lawyer. Raghuvir invests this huge stolen money to begin his business of black marketing of cinema hall tickets. He plays all his tactics to reach to the top in the profession. The film presents no flashbacks, straight progressive narrative (unlike Hollywood noir). So, the protagonist, instead of living with the burden of crime in the past, chooses to make crime as his present (and also the future) before aftermath he realizes the volume and seriousness of his criminal activities and the consequences. Raghuvir is living with the burden of his criminal present time. However, he is least bothered of the future when he could be punished for his illegal deeds. It looks like that the strength he earns through money offers him this power.

Similar is the case with *Ittefaq* (1968) which is a rare story where the criminal is a woman. The film begins when Dilip Roy, an upcoming painter is charged with murder of his wife Sushma. Her sister Renu who was around at the time of murder, supports the charges on Dilip. Unable to sustain the sudden charges, Dilip behaves fanatic during the trial and is sent to mental asylum for treatment. He takes a chance and runs away during a night. While the radio announcement of Dilip's escape is on, he enters a luxurious house and shuts the resident woman up at gunpoint. He threatens the rich woman, Rekha and keeps her under control. After a number of dramatic events, Dilip realizes that Rekha has killed her husband Jag Mohan and has plans to scheme Dilip in the case. Dilip, till now hiding himself in the house, comes forward to declare the murder to the police officer and doctor who visit the house. The police, after examining all possibilities, settle down on the charges of the murder. While they arrest their own officer involved in the crime, Rekha, in the fear of arrest and subsequent denouncement, commits suicide. Both are found to have illicit relationship that leads to the murder of Jag Mohan. The film *Howrah Bridge* (1958) is a story of a private eye, a rare example in Hindi film with noir elements. This private eye is not a professional one, but a young man Prem Kumar (Ashok Kumar), whose brother, Madan (Chaman Puri) has stolen a Chinese dragon, a family souvenir from the father's custody. Madan, in an attempt to sell off the souvenir in a secret market, is

killed by the buyer's men and his body is thrown on the Howrah Bridge. Bhiku, an innocent man who was having a smoke has witnessed the crime. Prem Kumar suspects that the murderers of his brother might have grabbed the family fortune. Through a horse-cab driver, Shyamu (Om Prakash), he gets a tip where Madan Kumar was lodging in Kolkata. Through a series of struggles, Prem Kumar adventures to find out the culprits. He busts out a crime syndicate.

The murderers of Madan Kumar leave his body on the Howrah Bridge and so the location earns significance in the film. The film explores some areas of the metropolis but restricts to the bridge and the seaport. The hotel exterior and interior are clearly created sets. The chase sequence between Pyarelal and Prem Kumar on Howrah Bridge creates a master piece of anxiety and suspense. This prolonged sequence leads the actors through a number of convoluted zones of the bridge that could risk their life. An earlier chase sequence that leads to the bridge section is under sewage canal, with brilliant lighting which presents the play of light and shadow with the characters on the run and hound.

Cruel : Physical cruelty as also mental suffering including betrayal. Many characters from noir films take on sudden violence and grim, brutal murders. Basically, the noir element in the film prevails in the character of Tony in *Jaal* (1952) who is a heartless smuggler. With his handsome personality and refined language, Tony keeps on fooling Lisa, Maria, the Arabian smugglers and the police who are around him. His betrayal with others leads him to repent at the end who is aptly arrested by police. Guru Dutt has utilized the fisher community on the exotic locations of seashore. The coastal creek of Konkan provided weird atmosphere for the criminal activities off and on seashore. Once, while going away from Tony, Maria gets caught in the fishnet suggesting her getting trapped by Tony.

The film *Ittefaq* (1968) advances with element of betrayal. Firstly, the younger sister kills her elder sister and betrays the brother-in-law by scheming him in the murder. Rekha betrays her husband Jag Mohan by having extra-marital affair with the police officer. Rekha also tries to betray Dilip Roy by framing him in the murder of her husband. Dilip Roy suffers constant tension in the jail as well as in the apartment for no fault of his. The film *Howrah Bridge* (1958) presents a chain of betrayals in the

film. At the beginning, Madan betrays his father by stealing the family souvenir. Madan is by Chang (Madan Puri) who heads the crime syndicate. Chang's men in police disguise betray Bhiku by kidnapping him to their den. At a critical point, Chang decides to take away the syndicated money alone and betray Pyarelal (K. N. Singh), his associate. As opportunity strikes, Pyarelal turns Chang's game plan upside down and kills him. He further betrays Prem Kumar by scheming for this murder. At the end of the film, Prem Kumar suspects that Edna has trapped him in the hands of police but he manages a successful escape. Edna further betrays Pyarelal with a false love lock to let him confess the murderers firstly of Madan Kumar and then of Chang and also attempts to kill Prem Kumar. Once Pyarelal does it, she joins Prem Kumar who is also confused about the real intentions of Edna.

It is not expected that a noir film will have all the above characters together. Some films may feature a few of these characteristics while other films may not have some of these features. However, in any case, the projection of the above characteristics is elaborated with the help of methods analyzing the moving images by Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998, *ibid*), it is attempted to discover the noir elements in the Hindi films selected for study. It is argued that these are realized through various coding and decoding of images which are composed of different kinds of shot sizes, camera angles e.g. Dutch angles and movements as well as lighting patterns e.g. chiaroscuro, editing tools, use of music and sound and also performances by the artistes.

The Hindi films that are identified with noir elements, have utilized all the ingredients of popular cinema. The 'boy meets a girl' theme which is unquestionably the most common feature of Hindi Cinema, do creep in these films but the end is not always happy. These films have maintained the components of popular films like song numbers featuring hero and heroine in picturesque locations as in vogue with the times, and yet retained their distinct characteristics.

To start with film *Baazi* (Guru Dutt, 1950), Guru Dutt's cameo appearance at the beginning of this film suggests his presence as the filmmaker. He looks at a criminal and also towards his destination, a gambling den. In this way, Guru Dutt is both as insider and outsider in the film. He is insider, because Guru Dutt's presence as a

director is seen through the sensitivities and actions of the characters in the film. Remotely, he looks at the narrative and interactions of the characters and observes uncertainty and insecurity of their lives with concern on one hand and helplessness on the other.

In *Baazi*, Guru Dutt attempts to create some codes that are familiar to both him as well as his audience. For example, at the gambling den, Madan always asks a lame girl to kiss his cards or dice before they are opened or thrown. He expects a win in this gesture. Madan also finds a black dog when he re-enters Star Club, a casino. This is a kind of superstition predominant amongst the lower class. Secondly, Neena, the club dancer, after her tempting song is over, throws the fishing net on Madan, suggesting a trap for him. Both these acts happen at crime spots and are easily decoded and understood both by the filmmaker and the viewers. On a slightly higher aesthetic level, Pedro, an agent of Star Club offers Madan a job on the ascending steps of an ordinary gambling place suggesting an upward syndrome for him. This high angle shot also indicates Madan's vulnerability to a temptation. While Dr. Rajani is treating Manju, Madan realizing his mistake of misbehavior with her, sits down on the floor of house, thereby suggesting to have realized the ground realities of life. Here, Dev Anand, through the passive actions, shows the character's fatigued of struggle with life in crime and trying to find some rest.

Apart from the noir characteristic narrated above, we find that the filmmakers have organized a number of creative elements to achieve visual aesthetics of film noir in respective films.

Cinematography coupled with germane lighting has been a major contribution to film noir. The low-key lighting at the gambling dens suggests illegal activities being carried out in the dark. Another site with low-key lighting is solitary cell for Madan before execution. Here, it suggests darkness in Madan's left over life. Madan in prisoner's attire is playing with dices alone, an indication of all the games he had played in life have turned futile now. The dim light in the press editor's office in *C. I. D.* is precursor to the murder taking place during that hour of the night. A number of scenes in the film are illuminated with low-key lighting. Also, the Dutch angle for female calling over telephone with Shekhar implies mysterious element to the content.

CID Inspector Shekhar is hijacked and carried away in a closed car to an unknown place. There he is received by beautiful girls who escort Shekhar through a number of staircases and closed doors, with intermittent pauses for smiles. When Shekhar finally reaches the destination, he comes across a more beautiful girl, Kamini. A track in shot towards her suggests Shekhar's getting closer to the girl instantly obviously for getting the information she had promised. However, when he asks her what light she could throw on the murder case; the girl diminishes the lights, making it more complex situation for the conversation.

It is very significant to note how the protagonists in the selected films for study were compelled to the path of crime. All these young men were not certainly proud of their dirty profession, neither were they very eager to earn illegal money. But it was the situation and perhaps their destiny that led them to wrong ways in life. The filmmakers have been quite creative and convincing in projecting the transformation of honest, simple youths to notorious criminals. For example, Guru Dutt has employed a number of long takes in the film *Baazi* to explore free use of space for actors to perform, to utilize the location for maximum time possible, thereby getting more and more meaning by staying on the location for longer time and making it effective. For instance, a long track shot introduces Madan with different modern style gambling activities in the Star Club. Its atmosphere – the dance-girls, modern gambling apparatus, affluent class customers, the boss sitting in mystifying set up – everything strange – bewilder Madan who is used to ordinary gambling places. It must be mentioned here that despite this exotic experience, Madan is composed and does not let himself get attracted towards this novel gambling style where fraudulence rules over. Another example is the scene when Madan re-enters Star Club. In this long take, he descends the staircase to the basement suggesting decline of pride and dignity, for accepting illegal profession. A black dog in the frame again indicates a luck factor as superstition. Other characters like Neena, Pedro and other staff of Star Club including the one counting notes who are already in the basement for a kind of welcome for the newcomer in their (under)world. Here, Madan is again stunned when a cleaning worker is beaten up as he tries to grab a missed out currency note. Madan observes the cruel action against a poor man at this dishonest place. This whole mise-en-scene almost compels Madan to leave and he begins the ascending

steps again. But, it is Neena who appeals Madan to play the game with his destiny, if he had requisite self-confidence. Clearly, she is not inciting him for crime but helping the confused Madan not to be afraid of cunning gaze of the people, sacrifice for others (Manju, in this case) and for himself as well as consider crisis as an opportunity to prove himself. Madan tries to hide his face in defense to shun the sin but, after facing a lot of dilemma, finally accepts the job in crime!

In *House No. 44*, Nimmo leaves Sundar's home when she knows about his business and also the kind of work Ashok was doing. Ashok follows her but she won't respond. Ashok begs her to support him to leave the crime world and lead a path of glory. In the real life situation, hardly anybody, who is compelled to crime world, would like to continue with it, and return to honest life. And so, a very creative montage of Ashok displays him trying different labor-oriented works like motor mechanic, mine worker and a road-making worker but all these attempts are failed. Ashok is in desperate need of an opportunity and it comes in different form. As the police decides to notify the suspected killer of the constable (Nimmo's father), a jump cut shows Sundar destroying the public notification bearing his photograph on it. Ashok and Nimmo, after leaving Sundar and Captain, and following a number of attempts to get a job, become penniless. In the situation, Ashok begs Sundar for money but Sundar won't give unless Ashok returns to the gang. Ashok looks for money desperately. The film director has devised an interesting mise-en-scene with jump cuts here. Ashok watches on a wall a public notice about Sundar's whereabouts with cash prize. He neglects it, the notice keep on flickering on the wall; it leaves the wall and follows Ashok walking in despair. He picks up the paper, tears it off and throws down. Ashok watches another similar notice on the wall and gets stunned. A jump cut shows police knocking on the door of Sundar's house. Supposedly, he is killed in the encounter. Ashok listens to this news at the police station. He feels guilty for Sundar's death and leaves the place without taking the award money. The inspector pushes the money in Ashok's pocket without his notice. Outside, the public notice about Sundar keep on haunting Ashok a couple of time. He reaches a temple for a kind of confession and then goes to Sundar's house to console his mother and hands over a few rupees to her.

In *Kala Bazaar*, the angry passengers throw bus conductor Raghuvir's official cash bag on the floor, allowing the coins to scatter. This CU shot of falling of the money

on ground indicates loss of living wages for Raghuvir. The director skillfully shows the repercussion, when Raghuvir informs the loss of job to a consoler. He, in turn, alerts Raghuvir that he (later) could die a dog's death in Mumbai in absence of money. Raghuvir pays off his tea bill with a just a solitary coin when the owner at the cash counter is counting notes in a bunch. The irony rises to peak when a beggar requests Raghuvir for a single paisa but he doesn't have one. The beggar's repeated yearnings followed by a montage of various small professionals with petty job involving small money drives Raghuvir mad and he is settled down when he overhears "two rupees for one-and-a-quarter" i.e. black market rates of Rs 2 for a cinema hall ticket worth Rs.1.25. Ironically, all this happens in front of large publicity poster of the film *Do Aankhen Barah Haath* (1958, V. Shantaram) that advocates truth and honesty of ordinary people even in odd situations!

The filmmaker has applied a POV long take at the beginning of *Ittefaq* (1967) that arouses suspense about the happening. Also the repeated use of high angle shots puts a spin on voyeurism, of secret things happenings at odd hours in the apartment. The film begins to evolve the complex nature of plot with its credit titles on complicated graphics.

Editing a film has always been considered as creative juxtaposition of shots for the desired effect. It is more precise when it comes to the films under study. Maintaining the fast tempo of the criminal activities in the film *Baazi*, Guru Dutt has deployed jump cuts many times firstly to carry forward the narrative with desired pace as also to present contradictory or corresponding sequences. For example, after declining the dishonest job offer at Star Club (a harsh place), Madan reaches straight to his home (a place of comfort). Or, after winning requisite amount in the gambling, Madan directly reaches home with injections for medical treatment of Manju which happens to be his priority. While Madan is schemed in the murder of Neena, he tries to escape the scene but in the next shot, consequently, we see him in the police station. As the judge declares death sentence for Madan in the court, we watch in the next shot, both Rajani and Manju rushing worriedly to meet Madan in the jail.

The films under study also reflect how editing of the film carry the story forward with conviction. First, the montage of various daily-bread-winners offers Raghuvir ample

choice for gainful livelihood before his arriving at black marketing of cinema hall tickets. The heaps of currency notes earned through black market are dissolved and replaced by a god's idol indicating superiority of devotion with pennilessness to illegally earned wealth. One finds an interesting use of editing pattern as Raghuvir follows Alka to her home in a posh locality. In the next shot, we see a closed door as Raghuvir is standing at the façade along with his family. Clearly, Raghuvir imitates high standard lifestyle of the rich, albeit out of illegal wealth and without any educational strength in support. In *Kala Bazaar* (1960), before Inspector Shekhar is hijacked, we watch a jump cut from Kamini's cut-off telephone call to Shekhar's entrance in the car sent by her. The filmmaker has aptly deployed the sense of urgency within the sequences.

Along with the discussed technical and symbolic elements, the script of *Baazi* caricatures the characters as what they are. Particularly the dialogues (by Balraj Sahni) for Madan aptly present him as a lower middle class man on the road. His language repeatedly and noticeably portrays his character. Rather, Madan clearly tells Rajani that he had no character to identify with as also makes Neena understand that he had joined Star Club only for money. Notwithstanding this, Madan cleverly represents taxi drivers' behavioral characteristics of watching the road as driving while also attend to passengers' conversation. This helps him to identify his Star Club boss who presents himself from the dark as glaring lights facing the visitors make them uncomfortable.

The elements of poverty, unemployment and resultant factors were also elaborated by other filmmakers during the period. For example, Raj Kapoor had dealt with these issues in *Awara* (1951) released in the same year. But as Garg (1996, p.158) states, "Raj Kapoor was an apolitical romantic whose reaction to socio-economic inequity and injustice was emotional rather than intellectual." Bimal Roy had dealt with displacement and subsequent unemployment effectively with different perspective in *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953) that Garg (1996, p. 153) illustrates as "rural poverty on one hand and brutalizing effects of city life on the other". The filmmakers like Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand and Raj Khosla tried to explore the facets of these elements and attempted to discover the psyche of the criminals more than restricting to criminal activities alone.

Guru Dutt changed his style of filmmaking with *Mr and Mrs 55* (1955) from crime to social drama. He however, continued to apply noir style lighting for his subsequent films like *Pyaasa* (1957) which was a strong comment on disillusionment even after a decade of the nation's Independence. Chiaroscuro and cut-lights with solid shadows formed predominant characteristics of Guru Dutt's *Kagaz Ke Phool* (1959).

Performance and casting : Along with performances by respective artistes, the casting plays a major role in effective presentation of the characters in a film. The characters in these films are aptly presented by the artistes playing respective roles. Ashok, the roadside young man - Dev Anand, creates mean-looking, smart enough appearance for this character in *House No. 44*. He is less educated, unaware of social manners.

Manoj Kumar aptly presented frustration of Dr. Anand in *Woh Kaun Thi?* He skillfully deals with the confusion about the double identity of the 'same' woman. Manoj Kumar is at his best in the film when he asks his wife Sandhya to leave the home. His maturity is evident as he is composed despite tears for loss of wife and subsequent loneliness. His restraint in depicting the character in frustration but not making it melodramatic is commendable. Confused with the existence of double character of his wife, Dr. Anand starts spending much of his life in solitude and smoking in frustration. His act reflects meaninglessness of life in his case.

An outstanding example of use of strangeness is observed in a number of suspense films made during the period. Two prominent films – *Woh Kaun Thi?* (Raj Khosla, 1964) and *Kohra* (Biren Nag, 1964) are analyzed as examples. These had peculiar characteristics of presentation. When it is an old mansion, the doors must make noise while opening, must open automatically. The chandlers in the drawing hall must oscillate steadily. The accumulated websites must shine out intermittently and whether it is raining or not, there must be lightening and thundering. The sets and related atmosphere of these suspense films offered bizarre appearance. Seemingly a case of supernatural element, the film *Woh Kaun Thi?* turns out to be a conspiracy for grabbing wealth of Dr. Anand. While driving on a rainy night, Dr. Anand meets a woman in white in the road and offers her lift. He observes weird things like as the windscreen wipers stops as she rides in and restarts as she gets down. Also, she directions to Dr. Anand for driving in the dark rainy night. She further requests for a

drop near crematorium. When Dr. Anand gets married, he finds the same woman as his wife. It makes him crazy and his superiors term this psychological phenomenon as 'hypnotic auto suggestion'. A number of track-in shots suggesting getting closer to the characters to know more about their complex nature or condition. The filmmaker used twin-sister characters in the film convincingly. He concludes the film with Hitchcockian way, particularly, *Psycho*, by revealing the facts about the whole conspiracy. The choice of this content of end culminates the artistically developed noir theme into police investigation story. It is argued that these strange happenings contribute to the noir elements in the film.

Hindi films in transitional period – 1971-1989 – transnoir

The decade of 1970 proved different in many ways. The war with Pakistan, famine, corruption, political indiscipline and finally Emergency brought in several upheavals in Indian socio-economic-cultural and political life.

The decade also witnessed the rise of art cinema in the form of Indian New Wave heralded by *Bhuvan Shome* (Mrinal Sen, 1969). Looking at the content and style of these films it is argued that partly because of the new breed of filmmakers like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal and others and partly because of the graduates of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, such as Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Ketan Mehta, Saeed Mirza and others, the art cinema movement found expressions in personal space of individuals within the existing society. Filmmakers like Gulzar, Basu Chatterjee and Hrishikesh Mukherjee combined commerce and art in their films. Hindi cinema also produced some of the most entertaining and popular films like *Bobby* (Raj Kapoor, 1973), *Sholay* (Ramesh Sippy, 1975), *Jai Santoshi Maa* (Vijay Sharma, 1975), *Amar Akbar Anthony* (Manmohan Desai, 1977) and many more.

However, in the Hindi films made during these years, there were still some characters resisting in the troubled waters of fate and anger. In other words, the effect of the period was bound to reflect in the films of this period. The first of the reflection was probably *Zanjeer* (1973) directed by Prakash Mehra. The film heralded a phase of

angry young man that haunted this decade and the next. Following the crucial theme of cause of effect, the feeling of revenge got more intense with this film. Betrayal and cruelty bestow noir elements to this film as Inspector Vijay lives with the constant burden of the past. Vijay, as a schoolboy has witnessed brutal murder of his parents by a gangster who wore a horse-laced wristlet at the time of crime. This insensitive killing haunts Vijay even when he turns a young man. An image of a man in black, riding a horse, spells on him throughout these years. Besides, the film depicts ambivalence with irony. The police find no evidence against a criminal involved in fake drug-case. Released, he goes home only to find that his own daughter has been the victim of a fake medicine. Aggravated, he decides to leave his gang as a result, he and his wife are killed when their young son witnesses the murder on a Diwali night. The filmmaker has used haunting sound tunes to intensify the nightmarish appearances. Also, the audio design of the parent-killing sequence immerses gunshot into the cracker sounds.

The film title *Zanjeer* means a series of incidents..The film carries a series of brutal incidents. Firstly, the killing of Vijay's parents. Secondly, the inhuman crushing of school kids crossing the road by the speeding truck of criminals. Thirdly and finally, the merciless beatings of Vijay by criminals who further leave him on railway track for squashing by oncoming train.

In the film *Deewar* (Yash Chopra, 1975), Vijay Varma, who is a dockyard coolie, takes on smuggling out of socio-economic compulsion. His life with crime separates Vijay from his loving mother and brother who live on certain values of life. Lonely, he gets closer to Anita, a call girl, who satisfies his emotional and physical needs.

The angry young man phenomenon found another expression in *Trishul* (Yash Chopra, 1978). The film is full of betrayals and consequent anger. Interestingly, Vijay, the protagonist is living with the burden of the betrayal committed by somebody in the past. It is in this sense that *Trishul* possesses noir elements of betrayal besides physical and mental violence. Here, the crime is not a murder, cognizant. Raj Kumar Gupta, a business-minded young man has ditched his beloved Shanti for marrying a rich girl, a non-cognizant crime. Raj Kumar has used Shanti, sexually. Vijay, a bright boy is born to this unwed mother who brings him up as a

strong person. Aggrieved, Vijay grows up as an angry young man with tremendous amount of confidence. He finds out his illegal father who is now a real estate baron and sets out to destroy him. Vijay robs RK Gupta of his wealth, family and honor. Vijay further discloses his identity and pities RK Gupta by returning his wealth which turns as the strongest shock. The filmmaker opts for razor-sharp dialogues by Salim-Javed and out bursting performance of the superstar Amitabh Bachchan that reflect noir elements like betrayal, cruelty and ambivalence throughout the film.

Inkaar directed by Raj N. Sippy, is actually a story of a reputed business man Haridas Chaudhary (a shoe manufacturer) who, out of conscience, readies to pay ransom for the rescue of his driver's son (wrongly picked up by the kidnapper, instead of Chaudhary's son) and looks on helplessly to auctioning of his wealth. However, the kidnapper's role, very aptly played by Amjad Khan (as Raj Singh) is efficiently presented in noir style. The introduction of Raj Singh with his mannerism of rubbing left foot at backside of right foot marks the beginning of the style. Also, the shots of fast-burning cigarette in Raj Singh's mouth as he threatens Chaudhary after kidnapping as well as his face behind the caned chair back subscribe to noir style visuals. The reaction shot of Haridas Chaudhary on getting the news of the kidnapping of son are presented with zoom in with sharp cut light and even blackening his face to reflect mixed feelings of shock, surprise and fear. As the story unfolds, we come to know that Raj Singh was once an employee in Chaudhary's factory and was fired for misbehavior with a female colleague - and Raj Singh has threatened Chaudhary of the revenge. Thus Raj Singh takes on crime for the purpose of vengeance. The cruelty and brutality are at their worst in the concluding part of the film. The police hound Raj Singh very harshly after a long chase. The long track shots of police chase create fright because of the continued prolonged brutal actions of the character. Raj Singh's long fight with Inspector Amar and the former's subsequent escape exhausts him to the extent that instead of using hands, Raj Singh put his mouth on surface of flowing water for drinking water. He kills policeman Yadav very ruthlessly in the shallow stream, reflecting extreme violence. The top angle shots of water plant as Amar and Raj Singh slides during fights are also terrifying. Amjad Khan's portrayal of Raj Singh as hefty criminal is most suited to requirement of the

character while the action sequences devised by Veeru Devgan separates them from texture of the rest of the film.

Commenting on globalizations in Mumbai, Dr. Sujata Patel (2004), mentions, “Bombay’s growth as a colonial city with its manufacturing oriented to an export market, financial and corporate headquarters, and after Independence, a national market for its products, together with a development of media and film industry, and a multiethnic entrepreneurial group, made it more apt to accept the new global economies. And yet, the synergy developed by the globalizing process did not engulf the city’s entire economy. Most of Bombay’s population remains employed in production and service processes employing archaic and pre-global technology. This unevenness in the internal structure of the economy manifests itself in the way inequalities in the city are structured. These inequalities relate to the lack of integration and organic connection between old and new economies and are not representative of the features of the fully developed global economy,” (p.332).

In the light of the above comments, the film *Parinda* (Vidhu Vinod Chopra, 1989) can be considered as a pre-cursor to the globalization. It is a story of an educated-at-abroad young man Karan who has to take up crime for revenge. He is trapped completely. Although Karan has witnessed murder of Inspector Prakash, he is not able to help the police or his love Paro or others for justice. This makes him crazy. Even his own brother Kishen who belongs to the gang of killers holds him back from doing so. Helpless before the power of the criminals, Karan joins them with a cause. Even though Karan skillfully kills Prakash’s killers, he feels guilty for being a murderer himself. Along with Karan, a number of characters like Kishen, Anna and others are living with the burden of their criminal past. Karan, after knowing the facts about his elder brother Kishen, ask him the reason behind his criminal activities. And, Kishen replies with a series of misdeeds, the first one being promoted by Karan himself during their childhood. It is difficult for Karan to assimilate that all his upbringing was done with ill-earned money by Kishen. Kishen, on other hand, justifies his crime as sheer duty towards younger brother. So, he is also living with burden of the past and even present. Anna has been engaged in crime since childhood for livelihood. He has killed his wife and son. He has developed himself to shoulder the burden of criminal past and present very easily and without lamenting on it.

Ambivalence creeps in the film intermittently. After the opening establishing extreme long shot of Mumbai city in the evening and another exterior long shot of gangster Anna's house, we see a toy rotating unevenly, suggesting stumbling condition of Anna's personality. Anna's people have brutally killed a member of rival gang. As the police raids Anna's den disguised as an oil factory, Anna's men switch on the oil machine, burying the dead body in the coconut pieces, leading for crushing. Earlier, Anna had asked his people to keep alive the detained member from Musa's gang, we watch a razor-sharp jump cut to brutal killing of this character, suggesting jet-speed rush down of Anna to the spot. A few shots later, Anna's trustee Kishen, dares to rush to the den of Musa, the rival gang leader and thrashes half-a-dozen bouncers before actually meeting Musa. Strangely, one particular song number *sehre mein dulha hoga, ghughat mein dulhan hogi* demands some analysis. This is a *baarat* song that calls for friends' dance in the wedding process. Karan tells Kishen about the former's plan to wed Paro. Both the brothers are excited and they render an impromptu song number and dance to its tune within the constraints of their home. Where else can they celebrate their happiness? On a Mumbai road or in a procession? Impossible! Since they have to protect themselves from police and rival gangs, they can't even express the joy in an open space and so the limitless excitement is expressed within limits of four walls. The house thus turns into temporal space for a road, wedding hall and even maternity home for them. The 360-degree pan shot suggested their desire to reach out to everyone but it is done within the restraints of the house.

Further, criminal psychology also travels on multiple levels in the film. On the one hand, is Anna, a fine blend of madness and terror. His cold-blooded approach towards crime is freezing. He has charcoaled his wife and son but has no regrets for their death. Those blazes, however, have a long-lasting impact on Anna because he has developed a phobia and outburst whenever he comes across fire, even the small flames at the annual rites of his family. This particular phobia amounts to mental violence that plays a major role in the film. At one point, Anna prays before the God and happens to light up a matchstick for incense stick but his wife's suffering cry perturbs Anna and he lets it off. In the last sequence, Kishen throws a number of liquor bottles around Anna and set them on fire. The filmmaker has ensured to show that Anna gets killed of his fire phobia rather than the actual blazes. The film further

clusters a number of scenes showing sudden and extreme violence. Another incident of violence takes place when inspector Prakash meets his childhood friend Karan after a long time. Inspector Prakash now knows about Anna's drugs stock up and may raid it anytime. Anna's three aides fires at unarmed Prakash and kills him as Karan looks on helplessly. During the annual rites of his wife and son, a montage shows how they were burnt by Anna. Iqbal, the former of Anna gets offer from similar work with cash advance from Musa. Knowing this Anna chops Iqbal's leg off as punishment for betrayal. As Prakash faces death quite unexpectedly, all the three killers of him also get killed in similar fashion.

The sound effects and background score add to the strangeness in the visuals. Most of Anna's scenes in his home and even den feature the sound of his wife's cry as she suffers burning. These sounds keep on haunting Anna throughout the film. These get louder whenever Anna comes across fire or blaze. Fluttering of birds (pigeon - parinda). The irony comes as Karan and Paro meet first time during their childhood as she is feeding the birds. It becomes a meeting point for them along with Kishen and Prakash. While they are feeding the pigeons, they are fluttering and when Prakash is killed at the same spot, the pigeons cry out squalling in pain. Erotically, apart from the stolen kisses of the lovers, the film includes a sensuous sequence when Karan and Paro consummate their marriage. The copulating figures are shown with sharp cut-lights with male viewpoint as it emphasizes mostly on the curves of the female nude.

The point of betrayal is very strong in *Parinda*. Initially, we see inspector Mirani exchanging secrets of police and rival gangs against bulging kickbacks. Betrayal turns even darker as a number of characters play double cross. Anna double crosses Kishen when he asks him to convince Karan for not supporting the police in Prakash murder case. Subsequently, Anna asks Abdul to kill both Kishen and Karan if they do not strike a favorable deal. Karan double crosses Anna when he joins his gang. Subsequently, Karan kills two of Prakash's murderers with the help of Musa. Musa double crosses Karan. Musa has witnessed Karan's killing of Francis and Abdul but assures Karan of the secrecy. Subsequently, to avoid Anna's wrath, Musa informs him about Karan's deeds.

Performances of three main actors in this film must be discussed. Nana Patekar displays his skills in portraying the sulky Anna. An uneven blend of psychopath and terror, Nana plays the completely unpredictable Anna with requisite vigor. He slaps himself on head with loud cry-out to reflect his fire-phobia. He makes uneven, resentful movement of his head when he bursts out with anger. This evident in a number of scenes like when he orders Abdul to kill both the brothers and also when he asks Rama the explanation for his seeming betrayal. Nana lets out anger at its peak when he vacates the machinegun at Karan and Paro who have just consummated their wedding night. Anil Kapoor deploys his ability to present Karan before and after joining Anna's gang. Earlier, he is a committed lover of Paro, Kishen's dreamy brother who has plans for marriage, kids, and a house on a bank river, green fields... which are destroyed after Prakash is killed. Anil aptly plays jumpy, impatient Karan on his return from America as also the confused and puzzled Karan after sudden change of the scene. Jackie Shroff presents Kishen as a composed man. He has gone through ups and down in life and so hardly gets excited in joy or in grief. Shroff reflects his maturity when convincing Karan not to support the police in connection with Prakash's murder. He also shows helplessness when Karan says that he did not want his nurturing out of ill-earned money. His voice cracks in while Kishen asks Karan to return his childhood in frustration. His performance has great depth and feelings. Kishen is the only character in the film that escapes alive till the end. He is live but unable to live life as he has lost all his loved ones and there is nobody for whom Kishen is living on. His status reflects meaninglessness of life expressed in existentialism. Philosophy of NOIR- Meaningless fruitlessness)

Based on supernatural elements, *Raat* (Night, Ramgopal Varma, 1992) tells a story of a young girl who is seemingly 'possessed'. This vital superstitious ground provides Varma a basic premise. The filmmaker then takes liberty of creating strange atmosphere and ambivalent actions of the characters that lend them some of the noir elements. It include the mysterious pair of killing hands, the old lady in the neighborhood, the cellar of the house, jungle portion, exorcist then become essential ingredients. As the story reveals, a young woman is killed by her lover who is subsequently killed mysteriously. The place, rather this house, then turns haunted. When Sharma family lands in the house, their younger daughter Mini (Ravathi) gets

possessed and begins to attack a number of people in her association. Mini pushes her boyfriend Deepak in water during their trip; she kills her close friend Rashmi during a wedding night. Mini even attacks her father and later the doctor who is treating her.

It is explored that Varma uses two distinct visual styles for *Raat*. One is POV, obviously of the 'entity' of the supernatural element. For this, Varma uses steady-cam shots and long talks since beginning of the films and maintain the style throughout. The other style is usual way of storytelling in the third person account. The weird dreams of Mini provide much of the strangeness. The first dream sequence shows Mini landed in a lonely village where she comes across some dangerous existence. The second dream happens during watching of movie along with her friends. Mini suddenly realizes that she is alone in the cinema hall after the show, tries to come out of it but fails and finally, very mystifyingly, comes across her own double in the manager's cabin. The film also presents imaginative use of background score. Different musical instruments are deployed to create haunting sounds to support the mysterious look of the visuals.

The filmmaker concludes *Raat* with recovery of Mini by the efforts of exorcist and not by the treatment of the psychiatrist. Another strangeness!

Interestingly, the crime in *Satya* (Ramgopal Varma, 1998) takes place in a broad daylight as against the crime scenes in the classic noir. In this film, each one of the criminals has taken up crime for a variety of reasons... and everybody is punished for his wrong deeds. The filmmaker does not subscribe to the reasons for being criminals. Rather, as he declares in the epilogue, the filmmaker feels sorry for the death of protagonist as equally as he felt sorry for the people the protagonist had killed. He has ensured punishment for every criminal. It is a story of Satya, an orphan landed in Mumbai and jailed for the crime he didn't commit. In jail, he is befriended with Bhiku Mhatre, a gangster who arranges an apartment for Satya. Satya falls in love with a neighborhood girl, Vidya but has not courage to tell her about himself. The filmmaker, with Satya's interaction with Vidya and Bhiku, plays between under and above world. He presents Satya is intelligent but after the experiences with the people who have no respect for life, uses his brilliance for destruction. This complex character alternates the borderline of good and evil with the respective people

reflecting ambivalent actions frequently. The title of the film in red letters indicates bloodshed throughout the film. *Satya* presents a chain of mental and physical violence that keeps the audience constantly under stress. Sudden and terrible violence highlight the crime scenes in the film. Ramgopal Varma twists between physical and mental violence and play both of them with equal intensity. For example, Jagga, a gangster gets angry by the ill-diluted peg, throws the liquor on Satya's face and scolds him for wrong blend of the peg. Also, the police inspector interrogates Vidya and bullies her with the weird facts about Satya, yet unknown to her. The physical violence in the film twin a number of threads : within criminals individually and in the form of gang wars, from police to criminals, from criminals to police, from politicians to criminals. It emphasizes on police department's autonomy of actions against the criminals as a montage shows police atrocities with criminals. The ambivalent actions of these characters utter betrayals both with their friends and enemies alike.

The dialect amongst the characters presents the underworld fiercely. The nexus of crime world with police and politicians Using the terms like *peti* (Rupees one lakh) and *khoka* (Rupees one crore), the film has penetrated into the real world of the gangsters, their fight with police and rival gangs and even their moments of leisure and pleasure. The performances of J. D. Chakravarty, Manoj Bajpai and Sourabh Shukla playing Satya, Bhiku and Kallumama respectively, present these complex characters with so utmost reality that sometimes they tend to glorify the underworld.

Filmmaker Rakesh Omprakash Mehra deployed paranormal element in *Aks* (2001). It is a story of Raghavan, a confirmed criminal involved in international crime syndicate. His modus operandi features masking of the face of the person closer to the victim and leave a joker-laced locket on the spot after the murder. The story tells us that Raghavan has turned criminal since his adolescence. As a prominent noir element, most of crime happens during nights. A number of shots are illuminated with cut-lights, showing part figures or faces of characters for the purpose of ambiguity. Among other noir elements, the film is full of scenes with sudden and harsh violence. Upward volume of brutality is worth-noting from killing of Yeda Yakub to killing of Inspector Pradhan through injuries to the aide. The killing of a wolf in the jungle is perhaps the most possible gruesome carnage. Here, the filmmaker avoids visuals of killing the animal by Raghavan. Rather, avoidance of

these visuals indicates not casual but ruthless killing that may not be appropriate for the visual tastes.

Like a classic Hollywood noir film, *Aks* demonstrates exotic locations for crime scenes. The filmmaker chooses to shoot several of its crimes on unusual locations to enhance their intensity. For example, Manu Verma chases and arrests Raghavan near a large waterfall around the caves. The adventurous jump down of the two adds to the excitement. Similarly, Manu Verma (as Raghavan) runs a mock court case against justice Chowdhary and executes him in the railway shunting yard while Yeda Yakub is killed in a steam bath club. Assassination of Defense Minister by the criminal disguised as the most trusted security chief echo betrayal.

Performance : Manoj Bajpai has presented the powerful Raghavan with the long-hair and potent appearance. His weird laughter adds cruelty to Raghavan's mighty character. Amitabh Bachchan's master performance is presented when Manu Varma gets Raghavan inside him.

Utilizing prosthetics to its best, the film makes it difficult to judge the identity of the character until he commits the crime. This is because of the modus operandi of Raghavan. Such ambivalence is supplemented with Neeta's fascination for Raghavan (she calls him Raghu) as she invites Manu (in the form of Raghu) for crime. The different faces creating Ravana formation in the song sequence 'aaja gufao mein aa' multiplies Raghavan's presence and the evil within.

Ek Haseena Thi (Sriram Raghavan, 2004) is one of the finest examples of Hindi noir films. While most of the Hindi noir films were made unknowingly by their respective makers, Sriram Raghavan was aware of film noir when he made *Ek Haseena Thi*. He has used almost all the characteristics of noir in this film. Firstly, the betrayal. Raghavan has brought into play the charming face of Saif Ali Khan behind his character's personality as a gangster. Within a couple of his meetings with Sarika, we come to know that Karan is not a genuine lover boy. He plans his encounters with Sarika to win her heart. And then, he starts and continues a chain of betrayals. He tricks her into an underworld activity, convinces her to confess the crime to win judge's sympathy which was never to happen. Sarika is sentenced for long term imprisonment. Yet Karan pretends to try his best to get Sarika out of jail. She

however, now is fully aware of Karan's scheme and yet she also pretends as if nothing wrong is happened. The hard life in jail makes Sarika harder – she forgets all her weaknesses and becomes a strong woman. She escapes and kills all those who betrayed her including Karan. One of the fascinating distinctions Sarika experiences is the betrayal from the people she trusts and the trust and help from the people who are committed criminals!

The filmmaker used symbol of dying battery torch to represent diminishing power of Karan and his loss of individuality. He avoids clichés in visuals e.g. the news death of Sarika's father is followed by image of burning flames not showing a pyre but a fire for *roties*, also denoting Sarika's burning anger.

Ek Haseena Thi presented strangeness right from the beginning. The titles of the film appear in red letters on obscure background denoting murky atmosphere of the film. Further, after the association with Karan, Sarika's simple, middle class life takes such turns which are strange for her. Firstly, with his insistence, Sarika sleeps with Karan, outside marriage. Further, she enters completely strange and undesired places like court and prison. The sturdy prison walls and dim light offers her a sense of unbreakable, confined world and the loss of open, enlightened world once she belonged to. Her gained self-empowerment, after the gross betrayal, although logical, is a strange achievement for a girl who was once afraid of a simple rat! Sarika's fight with a bullying inmate shows her unbelievable strength. Her subsequent journeys into the alleys of Mumbai and later in Delhi lead Sarika into altogether strange worlds. And finally, the cave-like place where Sarika locks Karan with chains and leaves him for death by rat-bite, is so exotic place but shows director's choice of the most pathetic death that Karan deserves. The death by rat-bite reflects that even a small creature can cause death to a mighty person. Sarika, comparatively a smaller, simple person gets ready to take revenge after the betrayal by Karan and plans out a tragic killing for him. The filmmaker has enriched the climax by sending Sarika into oblivion after her revenge rather than a blissful endnote.

Despite being a commercial film, it didn't have a single song number which can be called as a popular entertainment ingredient. The film has only one song and that too is on the background. It is played in full when Sarika starts chasing Karan on the

streets of Delhi. The words denote betrayal while the tone of singers reflects a lot of pain. It shrinks the sense of fun, joy or excitement both in singing and picturization. Rather it projects restlessness continuously.

Johnny Gaddar (2007)

Sriram Raghavan's subsequent film *Johnny Gaddar* is a hardcore noir. In *Johnny Gaddar* (Sriram Raghavan, 2007), Vikram is a criminal with all the three kinds of W vices – woman, wealth and wine. He has plans to earn a huge amount through a deal along with three partners. Betrayal by the trusted is the key word in this film while sudden and harsh violence highlight the film's distinct characteristics as a noir film.

It is observed that during the current century, the number of horror films is on rise. Most of these are placed in urban areas, particularly Mumbai. The directionless or multi-dimensional growth of Mumbai has added bizarre characters to the city. It can be argued that the multi-farious additions of different kinds of population and requisite infrastructure has affected the bio-diversity of suburbs of Mumbai or other metropolis including fast-growing Indian cities, making them more complex in nature. It may appear a mystic reference but the complex nature of the city must have influenced personalities of some citizens, making their minds weaker or affected with multiple psychological disorders. It is evident in the films like *Kaun* (2004), *Bhoot* (2004) by Ramgopal Varma where the characters have gone wayward or have lost mental balance due to urban life style. In *Kaun*, the lonely life of the young woman in a large house affected her mind. Apparently seen as an innocent and frightened, the woman turns serial killer of humans and pet animals alike. In the film *Bhoot*, there was no reason why a sensible housewife of a MNC employee should get 'possessed' by a young woman who committed suicide in that house to save herself from rape. Clearly, the life style with MNC employment, duplex flat in a newly developed suburb, luxury car, abundant money are the result of opportunities created by globalization. A reference in the film mentions that the couple was staying in a flat nearby an airport which often disturbed them with aircraft sounds. The frequent take-off and landing refer more private air operation due to more passenger and cargo traffic promoted by globalization. On the top of it, the rise in the number of horror films for the consumption of these by a socio-economic-cultural class indicates their

growing fascination towards horror films as an alternate choice for weird entertainment! It is further argued that the nucleus family style in skyscrapers is no less than a lonely life style. Large houses with minimum people staying inside can create emptiness for the family members. The emptiness in the house can further provide complex temporal space which similar to mysterious forest area or no man's land. It is also argued that this complex atmosphere can create morbid psychological space for a few. And, the characters inflected in the films discussed can be the representation of these few men and women.

Taking ahead the observations on globalization, we can find a brief but apt representation of the mall culture in *Ragini MMS* (Pawan Kriplani, 2011). Needless to mention, it shows the abundance and choices for Uday (Rajkumar Rao) and Ragini (Kainaz Motiwala), the main characters when they are shopping in a mall. In this film, the title itself represents a dubious activity which is considered as a cyber crime. The protagonist, since beginning of the film, shoots Ragini with the devious intention to shoot their sizzling sexual act a short while later. Uday has hired a farmhouse for the purpose. As per his plan, the place gets haunted. During their bed sequence and onwards, the house is with two lighting set ups. Firstly, the normal, mostly high angle shots with bright lights and the secondly eye angles with low-key lighting that sets the POV of the entity. These along with handheld camera shots as Ragini escapes from the haunted place add to bizarre and ambivalent actions of the characters and the total atmosphere. The handycam is now so cheaply available that most people can afford it. And there are a few who can use it for wrong purpose. The shooting with handycam offers voyeuristic purpose of looking at somebody when he or she is not aware that one is watching him or her secretly. This is further extended to show that some entity is watching the couple in sex. Basing the theme on paranormal activity, the film captures a number of weird supernatural activities which lend ambiguous experiences.

A reference can be cited to *Being Cyrus* (Homi Adajania, 2005), an English-language film mainly because it features artistes from mainstream Hindi cinema. The film can be described as an account of an estranged Parsi family in contemporary era. Following some of the 'rules' of noir, like voice over narration about the past with harsh childhood memories, and 'the breast contact instead of eye contact with her' as he mentions), the film attempted to catch the dark side of life of the characters. Katy

turns a femme fatale as she leads Cyrus to kill her father-in-law. Scheme of killing the father portray betrayal while the lecherous police inspector showing undue proximity with this family's daughter-in-law Tina append sexual undercurrents.

Another film that needs analysis on similar lines is *Talaash* (Reema Kagti, 2013). Another rare case of police investigation where a prostitute, seemingly a ghost, helps the inspector in the case. It is argued that if an audience believes the weird yawning of the dog before the speeding car suddenly turns and jumps in the sea, he is deemed to believe the miracles in the film. The concluding film for scrutiny is *Badlapur* (Sriram Raghavan, 2015). From the beginning of the film, the filmmaker has brought in elements of harsh violence and sex. The killing of the housewife and her son during the car chase after the bank robbery, violence in the jail, rape of the prostitute, seemingly sex by Raghu, the protagonist, with the wife of the criminal brings in some of the novel sequences in Hindi films.

The nature of femme fatale in Hindi films

An exploration reveals fascinating aspects of this character, with noir elements, albeit in a different persona. Unlike their Hollywood counterparts, the Hindi filmmakers have used the femme fatale as a vamp. Describing the vamp as a visible intrusion of the West into the cinematic space of Indian films, signifying an unrestrained sexuality and licence, given to vices “unknown” to Indian women, Ranjani Mazumdar says while the heroine of a Hindi film was the site of virtue and “Indianness”, the vamp suggested excess, out-of-control desire and vices induced by “Western” licence. The vamp is always seen as an outsider, a home-breaker, who displays wanton sexuality on the screen. In filmic terms, as Mazumdar puts it, the display of sexuality was usually restricted to nightclubs, bars and casinos, often followed by sexual relations with criminals. These characters, the vamps, were often played by Helen (*Jewel Thief, Don*), Shashikala (*Phool Aur Patthar*, and Bindu (*Zanjeer, Kati Patang*) in Hindi films.

The characters of Nina (played by Geeta Bali), the night club dancer in *Baazi* (1951), Edna (played by Madhubala) in *Howrah Bridge* (1958) and Kamini (played by Waheeda Rehman) in *C.I.D.* (1956) are examples of private prostitutes. These women enter into prostitution willingly or unwillingly because of their socio-

economic conditions, and later get associated with the world of crime. Popularly known as vamp, she supports or leads the protagonist of the film, who is often new to the underworld or its operations, to odd situations. Interestingly, to keep her position secured in the gang, she does not allow entry of other vamps.

There are a few instances of femme fatale reminiscent of Hollywood noir films in Hindi films, two such examples are Rekha (played by Nanda) in *Ittefaq* (1968) and Mini (played by Rimi) in *Johnny Gaddar* (2007). In a state of emotional meltdown, both Rekha and Mini are victims of unhappy marriage, experiencing constant stress due to extra-marital affairs. In the end, while Mini lead Vikram to commit a crime in *Johnny Gaddar*, Rekha herself did the crime in *Ittefaq*. Sticking to the formula of Bollywood film, sinners receive collateral consequences for their acts, Rekha was incarcerated for killing her husband and Mini's punishment comes in the form of non-fulfillment of her dreams as her husband is killed accidentally.

Living a lonely life while her husband, Jagmohan, is away most of the times on business trips Rekha, in *Ittefaq*, starts an illicit affair with a police officer; preferring to kill her husband than to break up with her lover. Rekha poses as naive housewife when Dilip Roy, an escaped prisoner, enters her apartment and holds her at gunpoint. The filmmaker shocks the audience with the crime committed by Rekha, who appears innocent throughout the film. Nanda, known for playing simple characters, effectively portrayed the role. The repeated use of high angle shots puts a spin on voyeurism, of secret things happening at odd hours in the apartment.

In *Johnny Gaddar*, Mini has an extra-marital affair with Vikram, a partner of her husband, Shardul. Mini's only dream is to get rid of her marriage and start a new life with Vikram. Mini, who prompts Vikram to earn more money to fulfill their plans of settling down in Canada, is not even aware of the crimes he has committed to earn that money. Filmmaker Sriram Raghavan had frequently used red lipstick and red outfits to reflect Mini's indirect association with blood and her dangerous desire.

As shown in Hindi films, the entity of femme fatale is against the norms of the society. Although extra-marital affair is not a legal offence, it is considered unethical, and averse to traditional social behaviour, which is bound to bring a sense of guilt at some point of her life.

While exploring a few more examples of femme fatale in Hindi films, we see that most of them are not as brutal as their Hollywood noir counterparts. Initially, after leading the protagonist to crime, they change their role altogether, simply because they are victims of the same situation; used by con men for an ugly purpose. In *Baazi* (1951), club dancer Neena, who did not join the profession by choice, has found her comfort zone in it. Although, she prompts Madan to try his luck at gambling, her intention is not to lead him to the path of sin but to help the self-respecting man during his difficult time. In *C.I.D.* (1956), Kamini is not only a part of crime syndicate but also a puppet of her boss. In *Deewaar* (1975), Anita is introduced as a call girl in search of a customer. However, she falls in love with Vijay, a smuggler, and provides him emotional support as he suffers from psychological stress.

In *Baazi*, gambler Madan, drowning in self-esteem and compelled by his affection for his sister refuses to take help from Dr Rajani, goes back to Star Club casino. Here, Neena, the club dancer appeals him to take a gamble with his destiny. Evidently, she is not inciting Madan to crime, but, in a way, helps him to get a grip with the confusing situation, to boldly confront the shrewdness of the people, make sacrifices for his sister Manju) and also for himself, and use the present crisis as an opportunity to prove himself.

In *C.I.D.*, the Dutch angle for a woman talking on phone with CID inspector Shekhar implies a mysterious element to the content. A jump cut from Kamini's cut-off telephone call shows Shekhar's entry into a car sent by her. The CID inspector is kidnapped and taken to an unknown destination. In an interesting mise-en-scene, comprising a number of staircases and closed doors with supporting background score, Shekhar is received by beautiful girls, who escort him, with intermittent pauses for smiles. What pauses and smiles indicate? Is it a hint of danger (beast) followed by splendour? Probably, yes. When Shekhar finally reaches the destination, he comes across beautiful Kamini. A track-in shot towards her suggests Shekhar is getting closer to the girl instantly. However, when he asks her if she could shed some light on the mystery of the murder case; Kamini reduces the light in the room, making the situation complicated -- the first meeting of Shekhar with Kamini is illuminated with low-key lighting. It is here that Kamini talks metaphorically of a dumb parrot, alluding to an accused murderer in Shekhar's custody, and tries to make a deal for his

release. Kamini leads Shekhar to an offence, which he refuses to commit. In the later part of the film, Kamini realises the zeal of duty-bound inspector Shekhar, while she experiences the cruel intentions of her boss. She then decides to help Shekhar, risking her own life. The filmmaker has appropriately named this femme fatale as Kamini, meaning full of sexuality. In her debut film, Waheeda Rehman played the daring and sensuous role of Kamini to its unequivocal hilt.

Neeta (played by Raveena Tandon) in Rakesh Omprakash Mehra's film *Aks* (2001) is a comparatively more complex character. As vamp, she is in a sexual relation with Raghavan, a criminal. She is put to test when she has to accept Raghavan in the form of Manu Varma, the investigator. Raveena plays Neeta with tremendous maturity, particularly while displaying her love and confusion. Among other scenes, the song sequence of "Aaja gufao mein aa" is a clear example of femme fatale's invitation for crime. While Neeta holds a special attraction for Raghavan, she invites Manu for crime. The song is picturised on the set of a large cave, with a sculpture of a face similar to Raghavan. The cave here suggests morbid planet of ambiguity, it also resonates the inner cell (underworld) of criminals that may protect them from the world outside. The constant change in choreography (by Raju Sundaram) compositions suggest restlessness; the male and female dancers in exotic costumes and make-up indicate fantasy and weirdness. A metaphor for Raghavan's evil face reaches a peak when a composition leads to a formation of Ravana with many faces, implying multiples of Raghavan and the evil within.

There are several characters like Anita, Neeta and Mini in Hindi films that do not lead the protagonist to crime directly but it is through their sexuality that they maintain a relationship with the protagonist, who continues with their spirit of crime. Hence, these characters materialize the ultimate femme fatale.

As in Hollywood noir, these films do not have all the noir characteristics. Some may have a few, more or less, hardly any film has all the noir elements. Similar is case with Hindi films with noir elements. All the films selected for study do not have all the noir characteristics. A number of crime films in Hindi have revenge stories justifying end of evil or *satyamev jayate* kind of end. Some of films under study also do have revenge stories but then it is the study of a film with noir elements. Hardly

any film noir has a revenge story. It is either the doomed protagonist, or a detective or police investigation with emphasis on psychoanalysis of the criminal.

Songs

Some of the song sequences in the selected films do offer dreamlike experience. This is one of the most fascinating aspects already traced out is found in the treatment of song numbers that present noir qualities.

It is through the song, that Kamini alerts him of Dharamdas who is on search for Shekhar. She also indicates a hidden escape route to him through the song *kahin pe nigahе kahin pe nishana*. A reference to hair in the song number directly denotes a key to open a secret way out behind the picture of woman with thick hair. The semiotics in the visuals carry mysterious as a noir element.

Through a devotional song in Kala Bazaar, the filmmaker presents ironies of the characters. It is usual that a bhajan song has flute tune for accompaniment but why harsh violin notes in the song? These certainly supports the hard times Raghuvir is going through. With juxtaposition of shots of group led by Raghuvir's mother and sister fully submitting themselves at the feet of the almighty whereas the criminal Raghuvir is trying to protest his ill-earned wealth. Pure devotion of mother and sister is placed along with Raghuvir's greed for money and belongings. Raghuvir enters and exit his home like a thief (!) without letting the mother and sister know his appearance in the home.

Also in the song number *gum hai baaki to gum nahi* in *House No.44*, a number of tracks in suggest how the criminals present there have targeted the lady with necklace. During a song sequence, the group of gangsters focuses on the lady with necklace. They wink at each other precisely before the action. The dancing girl tricks the lady in such a way that she grabs the necklace and hides it in a guitar. The kind of game play in the song number builds curiosity and ends up with a betrayal.

In *Zanjeer*, the song number *diljalон ka dil jala ke* the filmmaker has posed elements of both a femme fatale along with sexual overtones. As per the orders of his superiors, Inspector Vijay Khanna has visited a party hosted by gangster Teja, to get more

details about him. Here, Mona, the vamp allures Vijay through a titillating song number choreographed in cabre style. It is important to note here that the accompanying musical instruments used are in the style of a 'bioscope', a village peep show screening still pictures of important people and places for children. Here, the character of Vijay becomes a centre of attraction as that of a bioscope show. He appears alone in the party and his existence is almost childlike amongst the seasoned criminals. Although Vijay's searching looks collide with Teja's suspicious gaze, the former is unable to get any clue as Mona succeeds in diverting his attention every time Vijay tries to trace something.

Dream Song sequence from *Awara: Tere bina raat ye chandani, tu aa ja* : The foggy atmosphere suggests unclear vision of the protagonist. The zigzag road with lamps on both sides leads to infinity. The arch with uneven length and height indicates strangeness. The convoluted arch again suggests complexity. The dancers' pace is fast to indicate restlessness of mind. A group of dancers ascends on the curved tower while another group descends from the slope (unusual slope). The protagonist, who is not present in the scene, beholds at his beloved with a moon in the sky, indicating his romantic mood. However, there is a curved infinite tower besides her. A few dark clouds indicate that the sky is not very clear. The beloved is on top and the steps below suggest that she had made a progress in her career (she is a lawyer). Now the dancers in a calm pace, tries to step up towards her. However, she is madly in love with the protagonist; to the extent that she steps down to reach out to him. She is inviting him earnestly *tu aa ja...* The circle of this whole process is completed within a stanza. The next stanza *ye nahi zindagi* portrays the protagonist himself. He is in the deep valley of crime. He is surrounded by horrible statues in the form of criminals, extending their clutches towards him. The protagonist is trying to defy them repeatedly in an aggrieved tone. He is attempting release and relief from the dark world and yearns for heaven of pleasure. The monstrous figures along with male dancers with similar appearance terrorize him further. The demons and the fire catch hold of the protagonist completely. Gradually the fog of crime recedes and there appears the Ellora triune statue indicating peace and a temple indicating devotion. The beloved is happy to see the return of her lover although from the crime fog, and is leading him to an exotic world. She also leads him up on the curved tower, indicating

upward syndrome, which is surprising him. She almost takes him out of the fog and get him to the feet of God as a devotee and is set to the path of infinite happiness. But alas! His gangster boss, in half-nude indicating shamelessness, is ready with strong knife. As he approaches nearer, the protagonist is pushed down in the valley of crime. As he keeps on calling his beloved, the towers of peace, beauty and devotion begin to collapse – breaking the dream.

The song is picturized on the set of a large cave that looks bizarre. Among others, it boasts with a sculpture of a face, similar to Raghavan. The gufa (caves) here suggests morbid planet of ambiguity. The caves also resonates the inner cell (underworld) for criminals that may protect them from the world outside. The choreography (by Raju Sundaram) compositions keep on changing constantly suggesting restlessness. The male and female dancers in the song number appear in exotic costumes and heavy make-up indicating fantasy and weirdness. A metaphor for Raghavan's evil face reaches at peak when a composition leads to formation of Ravana with many faces implying multiples of Raghavan and the evil within.

In the film, *Woh Kaun Thi?* the song number *naina barse rimzim*, features four occurrences with different appeal every time. It is just an introduction of the lyric's opening lines when Dr. Anand drops the woman-in-white at the crematorium. The second occasion shows the similar girl as Dr. Anand's wife Sandhya who is singing while painting. The third occurrence however, demands analysis as it presents strangeness that goes with the mysterious theme of the film. The empty swing, the empty ferryboat sailing and yet taking turns voluntarily as the song goes on, offer bizarre look. The last episode is in the icy mountains. The woman-in-white is presented with ghost-like appearance with heavy make-up and white saree.

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Conclusion and suggestions

Limitations of the study:

Due to non-availability of the classification of Hindi films i.e. film directory, the researcher had to depend on the film titles suggested by the experts in the field of cinema.

Secondly, most of the films in classic noir style are in B&W, mainly made in the decades of 1950s and 1960s. The makers of these films were the masters in many ways. Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand and Raj Khosla, who had reflected noir elements so effectively, could not be interviewed as they are no more. A tracking in their earlier published interviews do not hint either at their having known film noir or applying noir elements consciously in the films they made.

Conclusions:

The first objective of the study was to explore whether Hindi films possess the similar qualities as those of Hollywood film noir. It is observed that the Hindi films under the study feature the elements and oneiric, strange, ambivalent, erotic and cruel as discussed in detail while analyzing their creative aspects. Besides, these films also specify certain characteristics which are completely different from Hollywood noir. Firstly, these films do not indicate ambivalence at the end of the story or film. These films are concluded with clear finale. As Shyam Benegal points out in the interview that characteristic of our storytelling never left the end in doubt. "Our stories usually end where justice prevails; the ambivalence is removed at the end as good element

will overtake the bad”. The climax scenes of films like *Deewar* and *Ek Hasina Thi* are clear examples of this. Another characteristic observed in these films shows the protagonist, once tempted for crime for certain reasons, offered chance for redemption. In *Kala Bazaar*, the character of Raghuvir is although subsequently he is punished for his deeds but is also shown recovered. Similar are the cases with the protagonists in One more characteristic found in these films is that, Like their counterparts in Hollywood noir, some of the protagonists do get punishment for their wrong deeds committed intentionally or out of compulsion. For instance, Vijay in *Deewar*, Raghavan in *Aks*, Satya in *Satya*, Karan in *Ek Hasina Thi* and Vikram in *Johnney Gaddar* are punished with death at the end.

The second objective of the study was to inquire if Hindi filmmakers were aware of making a film with noir elements. In view of this, it is argued that like their Hollywood counterparts, the directors of the films under study were not aware that they were making a specific kind of film. They were influenced by the Hollywood Cinema but when it comes to deploying noir elements, it is observed that the Hindi filmmakers deployed the patterns in cinematography and lighting in the Indian contexts. Even the new generation filmmaker like Rakyesh Omprakash Mehra, as stated in his interview for the study, was not aware of the term film noir when he made his debutant film *Aks* in 2004. “When we were shooting, I always felt that low key kind of lighting shade and very dramatic approach would be the most appropriate thing as it was enhancing certain sense of paranormal activity in the story,” he confirms. Further the contemporary filmmaker Sriram Raghavan, who was aware of Hollywood film noir, confirmed that he had not treated his films like *Ek Hasina Thi*, *Johnney Gaddar* and *Badlapur* as noir films. It has been discussed although, that these films did reflect a bunch of noir elements. Ms Pooja Surti has expressed in her interview that she never looked at any Hindi film with specific consideration that it was a noir film. These statements offer scope for argument that film noir has not been recognized at large in the Hindi filmdom.

The third objective was to comprehend how the sociological conditions have made impact on development of stories and characters appeared in these films and depicting noir qualities. It is argued that the elements of crime, poverty, unemployment have found apt reflection in the films made during the two decades after India’s

Independence. These have been discussed in detail in the chapter on sociological aspects. Most of the film personalities interviewed for finding out the answers endorsed this viewpoint.

Based on the study, the assumption that select Hindi films have noir elements stands proved.

During the analysis of the films under study, it was observed that the criminals can be classified in three categories. In the first, a character commits single crime out of temptation and tries to cover it up or escape with a lot of drama. For example, Rekha in *Ittefaq* gets involved in illicit affair out of a bored marriage.

In the second category, a character commits first crime out of compulsion and continues with the crime when he succeeds in the first attempt. The films *Baazi*, *Kala Bazaar*, *Johnny Gaddar* can be cited as such examples.

In the third category, a character takes on crime to take revenge for the injustice done with him or her. This may involve a single or multiple criminal activities till the revenge is completed (or remains incomplete in some cases). For instance, the films like *Inkaar*, *Parinda* and *Ek Haseena Thi*.

An additional facet of Hindi films with noir elements has been that the filmmakers have succeeded in projecting noir even through song numbers. The song numbers from *Kala Bazaar*, *House No. 44*, *Woh Kaun Thi? Aks* and so on, as discussed in creative aspects are the major examples.

Visual style of noir films have brought in many novelties in filmmaking. Mirror images in song number *Woh Kaun Thi?* (1964) reflect the filmmaker's sense of vivid imagination and the excellent skills of the cinematographer. Also, the kind of experiments C. K. Muraleedharan has made in shooting of *Ek Haseena Thi* and *Johnny Gaddar*, have certainly added to the rich and thematic visuals of these films.

While discussing the major sources of American film noir, Borde and Chaumeton pointed out the hard-boiled crime novel as one of the three sources that were artistic [the European cinema, and certain Hollywood genres of the 1930s – especially horror films at Universal, gangster movies at Warner, and classic detective pictures at Fox,

were the other two sources] (p. 15). However, it is surprising that hardly any Hindi film with noir elements is based on any literary work published earlier. That reflects that all the scripts of these films are original. It is argued to have these as distinct characteristic of Hindi film with noir elements. The idea of such films with specific theme and characters presented with defined visual style was conceived by the respective filmmakers.

As K. Hariharan, in the interview for this study states, “the Hindi filmmakers, in a way, continued with the legacy of film noir and it would be wrong to say that they were copying it.” This statement is very important as the researcher has attempted to trace the noir elements in Hindi films.

Suggestions:

Over the years, the Hindi noir films have fascinated both the filmmakers and the audiences. As concluded, neither filmmakers make nor audiences watch these films as noir work. Despite this, the cinematic look of these films offer them a kind of distinction from the staple of action films or family dramas. To encourage more number of production and corresponding viewership, it is strongly recommended to hold festival of Hindi noir films in different parts of the country. Since the International Film Festival of India clusters a number of retrospectives, tributes and several other sections focusing on specific aspect of cinema, a special section on Indian and international film noir may be introduced. This can generate interest among the common viewers who will be able to distinguish or identify this so far neglected genre of Hindi Cinema. Workshops and seminars elaborating and comparing the various aspects of both Hollywood and Hindi noir film by experts in the field is another important recommendation. The Govt. of India, under the umbrella of Directorate of Film Festivals can initiate such action. It is also recommended to institute an award for a quality noir film separately from mainstream Hindi and regional cinema as well. An exclusive website devoted to Hindi film noir can be launched where database for Hindi noir film can be processed. The website can also publish and share research-based articles and debates on Hindi and regional noir films. Besides, the latest information on upcoming films with noir elements and other relevant matters can also be disseminated through regular newsletters on this website.

Since awareness and curiosity about noir cinema is on rise, it is strongly recommended to constitute an Awards for Hindi/Indian Noir films. This award may be named after Frank Nino or may be in the memory of Hindi filmmakers like Guru Dutt, Raj Khosla or Vijay Anand who have created some of the best films with noir elements.

To impart understanding of film noir, certain specific modules on noir cinema in all its contexts may be included in academic syllabus in all film schools including Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata and so on. This can also encourage the students to attempt a short film noir as their academic exercise. Similarly, a couple of sessions on film noir may be included in the film appreciation courses organized by these institutions.

Film studies programs should include on noir as specialization at University level so that academic studies in the subject can be encouraged.

Besides, workshops on film noir at various media institutes should be introduced for understanding of the subject at beginners' level.

A film directory project with all the proper classification of films must be taken on urgent basis so that it will be useful for better quality of future research.

Scope for further research

Apart from Hindi films, a number of regional films attempted noir elements, at least partially. For example, the song number "sakhya re ghayaal mi harini" in the Marathi film *Saamana* (1975, Dr. Jabbar Patel) sharply presents noir elements like betrayal, cruelty, violence etc. I believe that a number of noir films have been made in Tamil, Telugu and other Indian regional languages also. In view of this, film critics and researchers can be encouraged to take up further research in Hindi as well as in regional noir films preferably in vernacular languages so as to reach out to the commonest of the viewership. Further, the shades of noir in Indian contexts such as love noir (*Darr*, Yash Chopra), political noir (*Drohkaal*, Govind Nihalani) can be explored in depth to reach out to a possible conclusion.

Since the Hindi films with noir elements are basically crime films, an independent study on criminology, behavioral patterns of criminals in these films can be explored in detail. Also, these crimes can be studied in depth with references to Indian Penal Code as these films, along with criminals, also feature the police machinery, court procedures and prison atmosphere.

As James Naremore (2004) points out that “Almost 20 percent of the titles currently on the National Film Preservation List at the Library of Congress are associated with noir, as are most of the early volumes in the British Film Institute Film Classics” series of monographs on famous movies. National film registry should be created with classification of films as noir. It is strongly recommended that this process can be initiated for Hindi films with noir elements. The researcher looks forward to be a valuable contributor for such projects in the near future.

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Chapter Six**Appendices****Text of Personality Interviews**

- Shyam Benegal, veteran filmmaker and recipient of Dadasaheb Phalke Award
- Rakesh Omprakash Mehra, eminent filmmaker
- Sriram Raghavan, eminent filmmaker
- C. K. Muraleedharan, eminent cinematographer
- P. K. Nair, Film Curator and founding Director of National Film Archive of India, Pune
- Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Film Historian
- K. Hariharan, Filmmaker and film teacher
- Pooja Surti, Scriptwriter and Editor

Shyam Benegal

Benegal Sahab, what is your idea of a Hollywood Noir Film? Please elaborate with examples.

The Hollywood Noir film started really with crime fiction, stories that dealt with crime including ones that had detective stories. So it was a whole series of films that started after the World War II. Like 1940s 50s and so and there was certain style of shooting those films. The black and white photography, high contrast work all those things lent it, gave it a certain kind of character. You had the whole Noir film it was named Noir, those days they didnt call it Noir it came essentially after words by critics particularly in France who called it the Noir films. However the fact is if you look at some of the wonderful directors of that time like John Huston, these are very interesting films and there were other filmmakers also, there was a whole range of films that developed at that time which essentially dealt with crime and also for the first time you had characters that had multiple shades. They were not just heroes and villains, there were people who were ambivalent characteristics who were some good and some bad characteristics. This is a very interesting phenomenon as far as Hollywood cinema is concernd. Its real contribution was that, apart from that fact that it had a certain kind of story telling and the style of photography itself.

What according to you are the distinct characteristics of Hindi Noir films than Hollywood Noir films?

You must rememebr that as technology came from the West and therefore the lot of inspirations in the manner in which they were telling stories also came to us from the West. The only distinction is that we had our own story telling ways, patterns. We employed that in telling our stories, our films and we created our own gener in which of course the song was a very important feature. We had a story with lot of songs in it whether it was a tragedy or a comedy it didnt make any difference, but you have to had certain kind of ingrediants that made for cinematic entertainment which were taken from other theatrical forms. Having said that but there were lot of inspiration that came particularly through the areas of technology that came to us. Another thing is that the second world war black and white photography and the style of crime fiction that use to come in the cinema came into our films as well so you had directors like Guru Dutt who made films like *Baazi* and others had certain kind of hint and characterstics and V K Murthy's photography also had certain kind of that style. So there was a whole movment of that kind even in Indian cinema particularly in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Do you think that the overdose of entertainment is the main cause for not labeling them as Noir films?

As I said, the filmmakers who made these films didn't call it a film Noir. It was termed like that by critics much later. They saw it as a particular kind of development in the cinema. It is post the event(retrospect) It was not while the event was going on so you have slotted it. You have given it a certain kind of definition that definition came after what had happend actually, and much of those defining things because of the French New Wave. The French New wave looked at it and decided to do pastisism of it. They even did their own kind of Noir, in French cinema there were

very well known directors of French cinema in late 60s who created those kinds of films and that is how the term Noir became very popular.

Do you think Noir films can present a social aspect of a character more effectively than a normal family drama?

I wouldn't say that because it depends on the kind of story you are telling this was a reference to a particular kind of films particular kind of story telling please essentially had to do with crime and detective fiction now when you deal with that kind of story you have good and you have bad and then you have ambivalent characters in between the fact that you study these ambivalent characters came with that characteristic called Noir. They were not all good, nor were they all bad they were in between people who could turn this way or that way depending on how the story was being told. So those characteristics came into cinema that changed that meaning there were certain kind of ambivalence in the morality. Otherwise our tendency is to tell stories that have no ambivalence in morality either you are good or bad but here there was in between character existing that came into the story telling.

Film Noir can handle social problem more effectively for example in *Baazi* or *Kala Bazaar*.

Let me look at another aspect. Indian cinema has essential inspiration and its techniques and its basic approach to story telling has come from our own traditions. In our tradition we always have a moral kind of end. It must point to human morality and therefore our stories usually end where justice prevails, goodwill overtake the bad. Because we have those kind of characteristics of our story telling never left the end in doubt. The right came on top of bad but in some Noir films it didn't always happen. There is ambivalence in the end but that was not how in Indian cinema when you say there is element of Noir in Indian cinema, they are not Noir in that sense because the ambivalence is removed at the end. Good has to prevail.

Do you think that disillusionment of youth in post independence offered some situations for Noir films?

India became independent the post WW-II most of our young film makers of that time were definitely watching Hollywood films. They were taking inspirations from them. So you had filmmakers like Guru Dutt who was making very different kinds of films than ours of that time. There were other film makers also for example Meboob Khan, made films that were very different from his earlier generations so you always had that kind of elements. Naturally because we are living in a world which has so many cross influences and therefore we were influenced a great deal by the kinds of films that were made in Hollywood at that time. Although we had our own story telling techniques.

Has the stamping of a film as Noir after release affected its the commercial success?

Not at all, there is no connection. Its a descriptive term to describe certain kind of films, there are different times of film made. They have certain kind of individuality, they have individual character, they also follow certain kind of filmmaking. After all certain conventions are followed. When you see a certain kind of convention followed then you work out a terminology for it. You use Noir for certain kind of cinema like you would use for example mythological for a certain kind of cinema,

same thing with domestic social so it is a categorisation but it does not necessarily mean that a person who was making that film was seeking for making it like that unless you call it to make it pastchise you are planing to do it like that like the so called French Noir that was inspired by the Hollywood Noir and they were the people who called it film Noir.

Despite this Hindi films are not getting that honor which the Hollywood films have enjoyed?

I don't think that is really true. If you looked at films in 50s that Guru Dutt that made or Ashok Kumar was figured, these films have certain kind of reputation also, they did have great deal of success. However there were phases the phases depended on the environment in which you are making the film the kind of audiences you have, the prevalent culture all these kinds matter during making of the films being made and therefore when situations changed for example In 70s the world was a differnet place than it was in 50s and 60s and the kinds of films being made were also different.

Benegal Saab, would you like to add in relation to ongoing discussion?

Basically when you looked at cinema one of the things you must remeber about cinema is that it depends on two factors 1) of course is the technology. The technology that offers you the ability to make films of a certain kind. Theater has a certain kind of limitations – the audience and the theatrical space. It has other ways of telling stories. Cinema can tell stories in a particular way that appears to be much more realistic, naturalistic, close to life. Whether it is closed to life or not is another matter but it gives you an impression of being closer to life. When you make films the way you are going to tell the story is limited by the technology you are using, but the kind of the stories you can tell can also become much more open than you would otherwise because you are not limited by the space that theatrical space has. The world is open to you. It depends on where you take the camera and shoot so the spatial concept of our cinema is very different from spatial concept of theater. These are some of the advantages and disadvantages of cinema therefore when you lable for example Noir film, new neo realistic film or historical epic you are giving a certain discription of the kind of film you are making and the kind of stories you are telling. Therefore, when it comes to cinema it has own limitations but it has a more open form compared to what you do in a theater. Cinema depends on two factors depends on us the kind of people we are and how we are changing cinema will show those changes and also it depends on the technology itself. Accordingly film will be made and stories will be told. It is going in the direction of our collective choice but it doesnt depend on individuals, it does depend on individual in terms of indivudual inspiration but the way the film will survive depends on the collective following of that cinema if we do not follow collectively we dont consider cinema to be important then cinema will die.

Rakesh Omprakash Mehra

What is your idea of film Noir?

Film Noir has been highly debatable and as such. I am no film Historian, I'm film practitioner of movies, so I haven't followed that perseverance like a student of

cinema should have. For me it's definitely lends itself to a stylish kind of lighting and very low key lighting which emerged in B&W era around 1940s and 1950s in Hollywood. To enhance story-telling in crime thrillers, melodramas, crime-melodramas which has its roots again in German Expressionism which was again debated by Hollywood, they thought they invented it. I think its a great tool when it was with the kind of film available to tell story, be a tool to enhance story-telling especially for crime thrillers and crime-melodramas.

Big Sleep, DOA or The Maltese Falcon, Night in the City, the list (titles) of films are not that important but how this particular style of shooting a film must have crept in subconscious and psyche of the filmmakers from thereon until today. And it is wonderful as to see how it has made an impression on us and today in the age of digital cinema, of colour, if I would say there is so much of latitude in tweaking even the colour today because now you end up on a DI table dubbing a cc. So Noir must have taken a different meaning today, must have evolved in a very different way as such. What I really like about it is the way you can enhance the drama, though it mostly used for crime thrillers and so but still think that you can enhance drama by this low-key effect and the Black Film as the French called it. The French critic Frank Nino, when he established Noir for Hollywood films, the Hollywood did reject him and didn't accept his explanation. But somewhere that was also struck.

What are the Noir films that fascinated you?

More than a single film, its the era which came after the Depression and more often than not, you will find that kind of photography, I think, definitely borrowed from Europe, that kind of expression became like commercially extremely acceptable and followed after that point of time.

What are the surrounding sociological conditions that prompted you to put the characters in particular story and situations in *Aks*?

There were no sociological compulsions on me while I was making *Aks*. But, the story itself called for certain darkness. If you see the plot, the good man kills the badman and the bad man's soul then decides to make the deadman's body his home. So now, the badman is in perfect disguise in the goodman's body. It is an age-old Indian philosophy that good and evil are two sides of the same coin. (Basically, *acchai aur burai dono hamare andar hi hain*) I wanted to explore this philosophy and I took the rout of the paranormal thriller and because the subject was slightly, let us say, not so pulp popular but my endeavour has always been to build the bridge and try and tell the stories to maximum people by trying to not necessarily compromising with the commercial constrains as such but I found it very helpful when, in your words, I adopted Noir but for me Noir was not a Genre. For me it was a style or a stylish way of looking at things – more light and shade, more dramatic, more B&W, even with the colours – there are hues of grey tones. But as I am not a film historian to say that *Aks* is a representative of Noir. Neither do I make films that lets me fit like that. I just practice them and I never analyse them at least for myself.

Considering the background of the characters like Raghavan and other criminals do you think that Film Noir can handle any social problem effectively than other films?

No, I can't talk for my cinema and say that my work presented it more effectively than somebody else's work. I think that will be self-depreciating if at all anything else. Again I would say that it is your job to analyse, my job was to do. So, as a doer, this kind of stylish approach, a kind of low key approach though if you see that the camera angles were not very skew, there were more straightforward, they were more blocked and it was a very classical approach to shoot the film. Because the drama was so much out there within frame that we didn't need to tweak the frame as such but yes the certain sense of mystery, certain sense of darkness in the underbelly, the certain sense of the paranormal was absolutely enhanced by adopting the style of shooting it or lighting it or taking the shots. I think I didn't say that let's do a Noir film and then it was a subject which a kind of was lending us, it were the performances. In *Aks* if you see that if the scene does not call for it, unnecessarily we did not try and make it Noir Noir. I wasn't even aware of the word Noir. When we were doing this film, I always felt that low key kind of lighting shade and very dramatic kind of thing approach would be the most appropriate thing.

The acting style of the performers was highly stylistic...

Yes, I often wonder if someone's soul goes into my body, that soul speaks or makes me do things and I'm not in my own control, so what kind of body language will I adopt as such? So, I saw a lot of videos of people who were possessed (and so-called possessed) and they always used to behave very differently when they were normal. So we gave a certain stylistic approach to Raghavan which is Manoj Bajpai's character. When Raghavan goes into Manu's body which is Amitabh Bachchan's character, then he becomes Raghavan, not in face but in body language and attitude and of course in deeds and the choices he makes.

While making *Aks*, I was very much aware all through subconsciously that this was a paranormal, this is not a straight story you are telling. So we created a suspension of disbelief, as they call it, and to enhance that definitely, the story and what was going on in my head needed to extract those kind of performances and shoot them accordingly. Even though when we were picturising certain songs, they were fell the same kind of feeling as such the same family which was stylized towards darkness.

Do you think such categorization help..

I don't think so, not in our country at least. So I can see that our involvement is evolved in a different way, that's for sure. Our streams of cinema, our contributories of cinema have come from somewhere else and not from Europe. So somewhere, our art has been extremely original and not derogated. So, it is there for over hundred years and before that from folk theatre, Parsi theatre, village Jatras and so on.

Were you aware of film Noir when you were making *Aks*?

Absolutely not. I was not aware that I was incorporating Noir in *Aks*. In fact I didn't even know the word the film Noir. I haven't been to any film school, I haven't read any book on cinema, I am not a very cinema literate kind of person. I never assisted

anybody. I saw and touched the camera when I hired it for my shooting. But what I felt was that there should be a certain amount of darkness because the story is like that. The underbelly of the film was such that it should always maintain that kind of tension because the story line was such. Soul has entered a good man's body and it has found a perfect disguise in a good man's body and then it was making the good man do evil things. It has an age old philosophy of our land good and bad are the two sides of the same coin, they both reside inside us. In fact I tried that again in *Delhi 6* the same philosophy tried to say in different way so we try to tell the same stories differently through rest of our lives. I hadn't come across the term Noir. I went for a stylised approach playing with darkness that became like low key play with the grey shades. Even when we were outdoor so that became the selection of locations when we shot at Budapest. It was cloudy grey misty as it is in European winters colours start going out of whatever you see. It is like diving into ocean and at every ten meters you start using red, blue and green and as you go to 40 meters suddenly all is grey and black and white. The colours are there but you stop seeing them. That is very fascinating and that makes very ominous it makes little creepy makes you feel little scared or suspenseful as to what is going on and it keeps you hooked, drama going, thrilled. I think the thrilling always comes from your own dark side, not from your brighter side so *Aks* was trying to touch that thrill, that darkness in you. My approach was such that this kind of stylised way of shooting and lighting your characters. In fact the performances were such that they were driven, heightened they were stylised so everything had to make one single sense. In the whole film I think that's what got the audience and that's why the film got noticed. That somewhere one manages to touch that dark chord inside you visually, not by spoken words, not by trying to tell or explain something or analyse something. Any movie has this crazy thing it tiptoes into your subconscious through a back door and you don't even know. Then it sits there and quietly resides and hides there and all the time its awake. Then one day suddenly it wakes you up and you realise and start getting different feelings. It is the beauty of movies they stay alive until you are alive.

Do you think the commercial constraints of film making have affected the content of the film made as Noir film?

I don't think there are constraints in commercial film making. It is liberating, it gives you more resources to tell your stories as such. As far as I am concerned it is a misconception when you say commercial film making is equal to constraints not really. Every film is a commercial film because money is being spent on it unless it is done or some aid or so, certain charity then it is another issue. Having said that every film has to chase passion, follow art and that in itself has to be so brilliant that it becomes commercially viable behind this façade of art we should not hide ourselves. If we think it relevant it will make sense. It might not make sense that Friday, Saturday I agree with that it might not make sense in making immediate recovery but over the period it will get picked up like so many other films. When we see at so many films made in the past we were not sure whether they would be hit or flops at that point of time. So I don't think commercial constraint is working against Noir. In fact Noir would enhance the comfortability of a film according to me. Because it will tell the story so much better and that's what you need but unnecessarily say that I am now going to make film Noir, its not a genre its a tool a way of doing things.

Do you think Noir films are considered as B movies because they deal with crime and not considered as classic films?

Guide was a classic but not *Baazi*, (in *Kaagaz ke Phool* they adopted Noir in a certain way there are certain dramatic portions which are shot in extremely stylised and low key lighting black and white and Expressionist kind of a thing so we have used that in melodrama and may be not in crime but these films have gone ahead to become classics. I will not agree, once you have a tool but it has been extensively used in telling crime thrillers in Hollywood because it lends itself naturally, but then that is beauty of the art of film making that you can even juxtapose. So, if you see postures in *Kagaz Ke Phool* or *Pyaasa*, you can see in the work of VK Murthy and Guru Dutt, you will see Noir creeping in to enhance the drama or if you see films like *Baazi* or *Kala Bazaar*, you will see this in it, so we remember them. They might not have become classics but may be that crime thrillers do not come to us as naturally as in Hollywood after the Depression so its a phase a period a cycle that keeps rotating and revolving. It is extremely difficult to analyse it as a practitioner of cinema that tool has been beautifully used, may be not as a complete movie but even in songs and some dramatic portions...I know you are referring to the studio sequences in *Kaagaz ke Phool* ... even in the song *ye takhto mahelon ki duniya*, if you see Waheeda Rahmans face and the drama it is like that

In the Noir films the actors are nearly the tools in the hands of director. Is it a point of attraction for a talented filmmaker like you?

Not really. I think everything derives from the script and what are you trying to say and then how you interpret it is a different story so how an actor interprets is that how an actor prepares and how a director directs it is nothing like that an actor is a tool. Even a director is a tool for telling the story in a larger picture for the audience who are enjoying the story. For them everything serves as a tool for bringing it forward on the screen even the projector that through light on the screen is a tool for them so I won't agree that the actors are tools in a Noir film for a director to move on the things. Film making is a collaborative art and that is the beauty of film making, it is not homogeneous. It is not like making cars you make ten cars and replicate them in one lac cars the factory keeps repeating it unless you change the model colour and all that. Every film is different and the beauty of it is that it has a story and screenplay conceived by human being which becomes raw material and the director becomes the author of that story and he rewrites everything in his own vision. The Actor interprets it differently and that's why no two actors are the same otherwise they will start acting similarly that is the uniqueness of human being. The music director has a different approach to it and then the cameraman has an eye for it and finally it ends up on editors table which is a unique art form. Editing is the only art form which is born out of cinema and the editor can give a film a different rhythm altogether and finally these things are created by so many human beings and their energies are coming together and the director keeping the purpose common. It is finally seen by human beings. It is consumed by them ticket by ticket. That's why it is so unique no body is a tool here for anybody. I would beg to differ on that. I don't think that a director is larger than the purpose of cinema itself and he is a very important, uniquely placed player there but not the only player. It is coming together of so many like minded people together for me there is no debate that people have been going to

watch cinema because they either actor or director they like which are two main components drives them, in India the music also. Personally for me I have written my films, like to write them and the ones I like to rewrite them when I am shooting them. So the shooting draft has to come out of me. It leads to a lot of conflict with the original writing but last six months or a year I have to make it my own. Unless the director makes the material of his own he won't be able to make justice to it because it has to come out of you, you cannot borrow somebody's writing you will have to interpret it totally differently. The director always writes his own film, if not on pen and paper but eventually with an actors and camera.

How do you explain *Aks* with Noir elements?

I think today since you are discussing Noir, exploring Noir more that discussing and learning, for me its a very important style which at times get confused with genre. I still don't consider Noir as a genre. So for me when I was making *Aks* it was a very important style to approach the subject and the subject required Noir. In retrospect which I learnt but when I was making it I haven't heard the word film Noir but the feeling came to me naturally.

When you say *Aks* is a Noir and later I also found it out the Noir part of it the blackness of it came to me very very naturally because of the subject. I didn't see it in any other way. When I closed my eyes and the visual were dancing around me and that lent us to how we shot, and how we choose the locations, how we approached writing our scenes, how even we approached wardrobe if you see the colour subdued blacks. Manu Varma is always wearing leather other one is wearing darker shiny shirts, the bar where Raveena Tandon is dancing always low key, low lit, the lights always from underneath they are not frontal because it was helping the drama in story telling so everything felt like that to me including the performances. So I directed the performances towards, if at all Noir performances.

I am now re-editing the film *Aks* after eleven years as a more Noir than the brightness and the other portions are going out not because they look different, feel different as if they are not part of this film. I have learnt my cinema in the streets. I have learnt in Jagat cinema near Jama Mashjid in New Delhi where I grew up and also films screened at Russian centre. It is good that I didn't go to any film school, I was saved. The purpose of a film should be to figure out originality in you and never ever tell what is wrong or right so if you can cultivate students and future film makers, actors, directors and writers who will express themselves without fear of categorising or analysing.

Sriram Raghavan

Were you aware of the genre called Film Noir before you made the films firstly *Ek Hasina Thi* and subsequently *Johnny Gaddar*?

Definitely. I knew about Noir as a term and as a genre of films because one, I have been part of the film institute, we were watching films of different genres and I was sure about film Noir. Although when I started making *Ek Haseena Thi* this I never

consciously planned it that way although you can mention about the characteristics of Noir in this film.

What are the films you distinctly remember as Film Noir from Hollywood and Bollywood?

I remember many films. One of them is *Double Indemnity* which I consider as mount Everest of Noir films. Also I remember the films *The Maltese Falcon* *Big Sleep*"; *Out of Past*'. Also lot of Hitchcock films like '*Notorious*' have Noir qualities. And also whole body of French crime films like by Jean Pierre *Melvel* and so on which were influenced by Hollywood films with their own way like even French crime film can have so much poetry. Among Hindi films Guru Dutt and Vijay Anand. If you films like *Jaal*, *Baazi*, *C.I.D.*, *Kaala Bazaar* all influenced by film Noir. Then there is lesser known film *Chor Chor* by Vijay Anand which has a theme of fatalism and about the people who are doomed.

What is your idea of Hollywood film Noir?

When I go to see these films and watching that first time I am not thinking that these are Noir films. But from the title, poster I know and as the movie starts I come to know that it is cynical, fatalistic world which are academic terms but I know that it is a certain person's story I see him getting into some kind of danger we know that something is going wrong for him. Still you are by his side and although he or she is doing wrong things you sympathize with him. And then there are girls- femme fatale. In Noir films you don't trust the girl although you fall in love with her.

Were you also aware that you are going to make a Noir film in Hindi when you made *Ek Haseena Thi* ?

I was not aware of that. I just got that thanks to Ramu and of course Pooja script was there what I like about it was that it was not just a love story. It starts with a love story and then becomes a story of betrayal and revenge, tension etc. Subconsciously all those thematic ingredients of Noir film but we didn't plan it as a Noir film. We didn't design the script to suit the Noir box.

Were there any commercial restraints while making this film?

RGV at that time was interested in making very experimental films for mainstream audience. Luckily he didn't play in adding ingredients to make a film commercially viable. He was quite adventures in that sense and we all were in that zone with him. None of us felt that we should make such things in the film. I thought It was as much for commercial mainstream audience can be. Even if it doesn't have situations for song or comedy grip of the film is what we are going to see in it. After the release one of he distributor asked me about the reason for song in the jail but it went with the theme and I didn't want to rob the film from its spirit.

Please elaborate the open end of the film where Sarika goes into oblivion and there is no jubilation after the revenge?

Let me put it this way. Sarika after revenge has a lot of money and could forget the miseries of life she faced and start a new life but we thought it would be a token happy end. I strongly felt that once the character goes to that part of revenge it also changes her. The person she was gets disappeared in the process and she

metamorphoses for something else. When she returns the money, we felt that she does what she thought was right. Here I am serving the sentence here I wanted to do what and I am back, there is money also. So we thought of a spiritual end and our cinematographer Murleedharan gave it a final shape when she disappears in the end and the shot worked very fabulously.

In the film *Ek Haseena Thi* we don't get happy when the betraying character like the lawyer or Saif Ali Khan face death. How do you devise this kind of ending?

A part of me can also criticise the same thing. That you didn't give that audience the feeling of revenge. Even in film like *Zanjeer* when Amitabh Bachan leads Ajit to death, I did not feel happy for revenge but felt that somewhere the mission in his life is over. I feel that the revenge has to be satisfying, but not necessarily in the traditional way.

In *Johnny Gaddar* there is lot of red even before he starts double crossing his partners. Are you hinting at his future plans or how?

Actually the red is contribution of my cinematographer Murlidharan. Incidentally he had not watched many Hindi films of 1970s. When he watched *Don*, he was completely floored by the art direction, costume designing and the whole zing and tone of the movie particularly 'Arey Diwanon' song number where a lot of red is used. The whole set is red Amitabh had red costumes. He found it very audacious and that appeal to him. He was taken in by the lurid and pulpiness of *Don* that he wanted to get that in this film. He did it very realistic way and contributed lot in the production design of this film.

While making *Ek Hasina Thi* and *Johnny Gaddar* what were you inspirations from Hollywood film Noir?

It was not one to one but a collective kind of things however I can say that *The Asphalt Jungle* has been my favourite film Noir. It was story about the people whom who normally would not be liked, they are criminals including the main villain who is going to betray his own group. But when you are watching a movie there is sympathy even with this man, you feel bad when he is about to kill himself. He is responsible for death of many people but when he is going to kill himself we feel bad about him. I think film Noir have created this kind of rich things. I don't know *Johnny Gaddar* reaches to that level.

In *Ek Haseena Thi* there is no Femme Fatale which is very important ingredient of film Noir?

I think in this film Saarika becomes femme fatale in the second half of the film. In the first half she is an innocent girl but in the second half she takes this man to ruin him completely. So she is the Femme Fatale. Otherwise I will have to put cosmetics on the girl and show her smoking etc.

In both these films you have used very handsome faces and behind it there is gangster. So do you think you have added an element in Hindi films?

I don't know whether I have added and an element the whole idea of casting Saif Ali Khan was that on one hand he is so like able and charming but for some people it can be a mask for him. Similar is the thing with Neel Mukesh I devised it as some people can be vulnerable and are vicious behind their face.

While making both these films where you interested in doing crime stories or film Noir?

No, as I said, I never thought of Noir as a bracket in these films. After the release people said its a Neo-Noir. Thematically both these stories are dark they are not very happy or regular kind of movies. So while making these films so we used all the required push and pull of the story.

Do you think Noir films are consider as B movies, because these relates to only crime stories, it has hardly any family stories or is it more challenging than other stories?

I think even every film that become blockbuster is also very difficult for the film maker to make it. It was equally difficult for me to make these two films. Both kinds of movies are challenging. I agree with you that when you make a film Noir it is slotted as one of those (B movies in Hollywood) films. I don't know whether critics call this films as good film. For example would they consider *Guide* and *Teesri Manzil* in the same category. *Guide* is much more thematic and rich while *Teesri Manzil* is just a fun murder mystery.

Noir films are not consider as classic like *Mother India*, *Mughal E Azam* and so on ?

I think it is in the eyes of film critics. I think audience never minds it. They would say *Jewel Thief* was as good as *Guide*. May be *Jewel Thief* did more business than *Guide* because it was much more enjoyable *Teesri Manzeel* even more. It is consider more by critics and academicians. It always there in the history of detective and crime novels. In literature also Leo Tolstoy and James Cain will not be spoken about in the same breath.

In this Genre, the director handles each and every frame and the actors are merely puppets. Is it a point of attractions for a talented director like you?

I think the crime films or Noir films gives me a lot of fun in the cinematic technical way. I can do a lot of things with lighting and in moving the camera and so on but all these things depend upon little theme that is forwarding you to that particular vision. In crime films use of sound and use of certain kind of cutting can be much more impact-full as compared to say a drama film where the story and the actor take it forward. In Noir film also actors are important because it is through there faces you watch the things. Robert Mitchum in '*Out of Past*' the face has so much to tell you. In *Johnny Gaddar* Dharmendra comes with so much iconic background. So the actors are as important but we have a lot of fun in the way we tell the story.

You have used lot of references from films like *Parwana*, *Johnny Mera Naam*, *Yakeen*, *Anand*, *Bandini* and so on; Were these your personal choices or you wanted these reference to support your story?

It is funny indeed. When I was writing the story, none of these references were there. But as I was discussing the story with Pooja, we develop a scene where Neel Mukesh and Rimi are in bed and the remote operates while the film *Parwana* is running on the TV. It looks like an accident but I have taken the element of alibi from that. I do have a favourite taste for *Jonny Mera Naam* and I offered he name to the character of Neel when he adopts a fake name for the hotel register. While Neel enters the reception counter of the hotel we watch *Jonny Mere Naam* on the TV and he takes the same name almost instinctively. Thus references from so many films crept into the film- for example. Dharmaji's song from *Bandini* It was partly for the love of all those great movies.

What are the sociological conditions that prompted you to devise this story and characters (for example in *Ek Haseena Thi Saif* is a gangster but there is no reference as to what made him the gangster. In *Johnny Gaddar* it is clear that Neel Mukesh is attracted towards earning easy money)?

In *Ek Haseena Thi* it was a story from the Saarika's point of view it is her story. So it doesn't matter what was the other guy doing. We tried to show some of his activities but for me whether he is involved in illegal activities like drugs or arms was not necessary. So it was through his conversation (and meetings) with other guys, I left the audiences to their imagination

Do you think that such categorisation as film Noir has any effect on the commercial run of the film or is it just stamped after the film is released?

I think these stamps are not necessary for the filmmakers. Writers may think that let us do it in Noir style or so. If the hero or heroin gets killed we do not protect them let the characters decide and they may be doomed. For film directors it depends on what kind of film he is erecting. In *Ek Haseena Thi* it help me to think of Noir films and let us try this. For example in *On The Water Front* there is a scene where Marlon Brando is running and there is somebody behind him. Because of the shadow of the chasing person on the wall he looks like a giant. These are the frames which you will never forget. So those kind of influences do happen. I don't think when the film is being released one can say that a neo-Noir is getting released. It is not going to get more audience either in India or abroad. In India nobody will know these terms. At the most they know it is a dark movie. They may like something about it but they may not know the film appreciation term of film Noir.

Do you think film Noir can present social aspects of such characters more effectively?

I think it is very good thing to try and look. Sometimes film Noir should not be just a plot with puzzle and similar things. It should be about certain time and how certain characters react to those things. It is very tough to intricate good plots but it is great if one can actually take up set the story in which is happening around us. In the sense take a social situation whether it is a problem or so and try to set the story in that space. It is definitely good thing to do that.

Tell us about the only song in *Ek Haseena Thi* which I find has no enjoyment in the lyrics or rendering the song but express the agonies of the character?

The film did not require any song as there was no space for it but since it was my first film and the thought whether there will be Audio CD of my film. However, it was thought of using a song number for the own taz of Sarikas following of Saif, instead of a background score for the same. We thought of giving it a little zing. Since there was a disco kind of music for the scene prior to it, we thought of using this song for the sequence. Abbas Tyrewala wrote beautiful words that had ache in that. For many it is as if Sarika is singing her song expressing whatever agonies she is going through unfortunately audio CD of the song was never released.

C. K. Muraleedharan

What are the films and particularly their cinematography that fascinated you as Noir films both from Hollywood and Bollywood ?

There are so many films in the category but one which I saw during the recent past is *Road to Perdition* (2002) which I believe has been beautifully shot by Conrad Hall. There are two reasons; if you look at other films of Conrad Hall for example. His *Road to Perdition* (2002) is entirely different film for the treatment it has and at the age of 70 to do that kind of work was extremely challenging for the DOP like him. Secondly the way the film progresses through the story line was amazingly done some of the films from this film stand out as unique amongst the Noir films. Whether it is shootout or interrogation you will find a lot of commonness in these films. So when you do a film it becomes difficult for you to find a different way of doing it, but this film stood out as different. That's why I remember this film very strongly. It is difficult in Hindi films to say that particularly because there are not many experiments have been done in that sense. So it is difficult to categories the films in a particular way. There is no contribution from other departments including cinematography in that category but talking of Noir elements in Hindi films if you go back to old *Don* has probably a lot many things during my research for *Johnny Gaddar* I revisited these and many of Vijay Anand films. I had not noticed these things when I watched these films earlier. How red and black have been used in song picturisation, the set was completely red and black even the ceiling was red all the characters very dark costumes so much coordination was done within that song picturisation those elements were brought in those films. These are the two films which I very remember clearly in terms of stylising into Noir genre.

What was your preparation for shooting *Ek Haseena Thi* and *Johnny Gaddar* as a Cinematographer other than shooting the films which were not Noir films?

These films are have a very important place in my career. Because they were done with lot of love and ambience more than anything else probably, the commercial considerations were not there. In other films we tend to beautify each and every frame but it was not required for these two films. Both Sriram and me worked a lot for both these films in how to use camera as a story telling tool so I worked a lot in shot breakdown I do it for other commercial films too I was involved in these films

right from the scripting stage, listen to the script many times when it was being written and finalise so I had my comments on form characterisation to scene breakdown. I play very important part in shot breakdown which I believe was a story telling in a way. It was not like shooting a scene in long shot with a couple of Close ups here and there and finished the scene. That is not the way I see as film making. So every scene has got a focus in it every scene's treatment has to be different depending upon what you are going to say through this scene so the chase sequence will be different and intense shot, edge of the seat kind of scenario is shot differently from any other thing say a love scene. A love scene in a Noir film and a commercial film will be shot complete differently in terms of characteristics, colouring and movement. For me a script determines a lot of how I should shoot a film that comes from how I breakdown a scene with different shots. That becomes the treatment part of it which works a lot. So during discussion on *Ek Haseena Thi* Sriram could talk about any scene from any film with strong memory. So when we were discussing a scene he would come with five similar example. From different films. Then we had to think of doing the sixth way of doing it. Then we use to talk about the kind of elements in it. So in *Ek Haseena Thi* I came up with lot of things predominantly with black and white structure till her breaking the prison but without hampering the realistic look of the film. Then it jumps into a series of colours. The first scene is of disco, and we put a lot of colours in it. This is part of a discussion which we have for making of the film so it is not particularly that you have decided how you are treat the film to elaborate. This kind of method more for *Johnny Gaddar* we had more concretized discussion about what should be done. When it came to *Agent Vinod* it had reached a point where Sriram and me both of us wouldn't know what the frame I am going to shoot I was continuously using the zoom lens and I would change the frame every now and then within the shoot and within the scene when the camera is rolling and the actor is acting and recompose it to something else so I kept doing that throughout the film. This was to give a kind of to give the scene the edge of the seat there was unsettlement quality to the whole film. I used monopod instead of tripod for almost 70% of the film was shot like that so that my frame is never steady. So there were lot of these things which I incorporated into different styling of the film. This is something which you have imbibed within you before you get on to the film. When you are talking about preparation I cannot pinpoint as to we did this and that. It is a series of talks which you have numerous thing over the period of preparing. We kept putting things into the frame once a cinematographer and director comes into a fine tuning what we are trying to make then it becomes much easier to go ahead. It is an evolution completely and that is a journey which I enjoy a lot.

How do you add to the thrill to the shot conceived by the director? Can you elaborate with some examples?

It is not that a director decides a shot and a DOP shoots as it is a combined process. We had a lot of discussions on the set on how a particular scene should be shot. A particular scene may have a one shot or 20 shots that decision is taken as what we want to show through that particular scene. Love story would be treated in a different way and so the thriller depending on the content of the scene what is it that I want to focus on it the treatment also changes a lot. I will tell you about two examples from *Ek Haseena Thi*. There is fight sequence between Sarika and the female gang lord in the prison we had two camera set up. One of them was Arri IIC camera, and I

managed to put the CCD unit in the view finder and that CCD unit was connected to a small handcam (we didn't have the video assist much at that time) I tied the video camera on the top of Arri IIC and opened the flap of the view finder of video camera so I could see what the view finder of the camera is seeing. There it is a very strange image not cinema scope, a compressed kind of image. I could see only the centre of the image the rest would go completely blank and the centre would be bleached out. So I couldn't make out where Sarika is standing. I did this whole gymnastic to just hold the camera like this. I couldn't do that with Arri III or Arri435. So I made this mechanism so that I can see the image where it is. Even the director was not knowing what I was shooting in the absence of video assist. So while Sarika was acting or reacting with bucket etc, I could shoot her accordingly and that added a lot of dynamism to the frame. Every shot is shot like that even the single and two shots and track back. So there is lot of movement that I brought into that action sequence. That makes the energy of the action scene is maintained. In *Johnny Gaddar* there is a train sequence where Daya is carrying Rs.50 Lakh in his bag and Neil's character comes and attacks him when we decided to shoot that sequence we were not clear about how to shoot it. But then as we progressed in discussion I kept telling them to make a set for that. Then we realised that we didn't have money to create a set and we decided to shoot in actual train. We took the train from Mumbai to Surat and back thus we had two nights in hand to shoot the scene so during the tech reece I thought about what I wanted to achieve through this sequence. I have travelled in train a lot two nights, three nights and when we finished the journey and reach home what stays with you is the movement of the train and at subconscious level there is sound track of the train. Even in sleep you feel that you are moving. I wanted to capture this movement into the frame. For me if you place a camera on a tripod inside the compartment there is no movement perceived. So I decided to separate the camera from the compartment my problem was how to separate that finally I came up with an idea of a triangular mechanism which is made on slotted angles. I made a plate where I could load the camera and hung that camera on bungees with elastic chords so I could adjust the balance of the camera from any angle I could adjust the pressure of the movement. 70 to 80% of this film has been shot in static but you cant figure out that because movement is the constant thing in that. Then I made this mechanism for all the main sequences. Then I applied another mechanism to use plate that has a lot of springs and I could load the camera on the lobbies with springs on it so that it could move like that when you look at the scene you realise the importance of the movement which is brought into that along with lighting which is changing in the middle of the scene which becomes blue this added a lot of dimensions to the sequence. These sequences had no dialogue and required treatment based on the shot breakdown and with the movement, lighting- a mise-en-scene in a way. These things work on the base of trust between me and the director to put an idea like that. Even the beginning of that sequence has a lot of fast cuts, montage when I had placed the camera in the train engine I am asked my assistant to shoot whenever he sees light and asked him to shoot at 4 or 6 frames instead of 24 so that I have enough light outside. While editing Pooja Surati came with idea of making a montage out of it

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Would you prefer to shoot Noir film with normal angle and still...

This is very difficult question when you are dealing with Noir films everything is normal for me because that is what is require for a normal scene usually you can still do it with OS and PAN shots then what would play is probably lighting or probably movement of something else. it doesn't have to be odd angles or odd lensing. It all depends on how I like it to be poetic, a thriller with lot of impact so I wish to take out all those gymnastics which I have been using till now. I try to do every film with different focal point with different way of functioning. If you look at my films you will see that all of them have been shot differently. There are certain tricks which I have done for doing a particular thing which I think will work for a film.

Sir, in *Johnny Gaddar* what is the purpose of using full red light in the coffee table sequence?

When Sriram narrated the script to me for first time I didn't like the script I said that its not working. Then after a couple of years Sriram came to me and said now the script is different which I found was interesting initially we thought of placing the film in 1970s but could not do because we didn't have that kind of budget say for using cars of the period, couldn't use mobiles and required period sets but we like to have the 70s look in the film. So we decided to borrow a lot of elements from 70s and use them extensively in the film. So it occurred to me that this film should have a lot of red in it so there was a lot of red incorporated in the film since beginning. So this was concentrated red in it so the coffee table sequence with a lot of red lead it to a very special look, you will see that red splashed all over the film whether it is Neel's house with small props even the restaurant scene. Actually in the restaurant only one section was red and the other segment was blue. So I was facing it to the blue segment because I wanted to use that table like that, so I put a flat wall with red cloth on it in the background that made the backdrop in to complete red and rest of the portion that was facing to the ceiling mostly so I pumped red light in to the ceiling. So this was constantly used in the films for example. Neel goes to dump the body of this guy on the site there is no light so I pumped the light from his behind which is like spilling over to him which appears an exaggerated kind of lighting method but it works in that at some point. Thus I used a lot of red and black in the film it was borrowed from from 70s like *Don* to certain extent. On subconscious level you are looking at older films now the colours are drained the blue area is drained and you see mostly red and black so it has to work on you to take the period to take a period little back though it is contemporary story.

Another sequence I wish you to emphasise the chase sequence in the mall where you have used a lot of fast pan shots.....

Ek Haseena Thi had two such sequences shot like that. First when Sarika meets Karan in the mall. That was shot with pans over 3 floors single shot(with cut at later stage) spanning 3 floors following the characters throughout and getting into the lift and then coming to another floor and getting through the staircase. It took us all night for planning to get that choreography right with seeing and not seeing, disappearing so every movement looks interesting, every movement is intrigued suspense in it. So this sequence was very difficultly shot because the movement was difficult because there were so many people in it the lighting and lighting of the space because the characters cueing in the right moment and at the end coming with these two characters going to end with mid shot. That was the plan to create it because what I

believe the moment you cut a shot, you are taking the audience from reality you are disrupting their thinking process in terms of reality which is film is made of cut actually you are taking them off for a moment. The audience don't even know that you have made a cut but still it distance them in terms of time and space. So the maximum you can go with reality it helps in a way to get into that scene. There is one more sequence in this film where Sarika escape from the jail. It begins with a top angle even before towards the beginning it is a small slit and you see two eyes of an old woman. The woman moves back and you realise that there is a crowd standing behind her the camera pulls back and you see that you are in a gate, you are seeing through the gate. As it goes up the ambulance comes in followed by the crowd small lathi charge then you spot Sarika and her friends getting into the crowd which is rushing outside you go with that and get out that was cut with a shot of steady cam coming frontal with them at one point you turn around, I asked Urmila to run and get out of the set while we are shooting, go in to the road outside that is functioning. I asked the steady operator to disconnect the chord and go what ever you get is interesting. So after a point we didn't even have video assist to see what was happening in the camera so he was running after them till they rushed to the road the operator could go till Urmila was running. This is how is connecting with reality in the real space and time is what gives the audience much more thrill than probably editing the scene and giving thrill in a different way. So we constructed certain scene like that and shot. The another shot was not very well pre designed so well we landed their and started working on it. We had planned to shoot that with a fire engine for coming back to red but. I wanted Sarikas getting out of prison splashed with lot of colour. We wanted to come in the fire engine instead of ambulance but we couldn't manage it. In the next sequence she goes in to the lane where a marriage procession with lot of band men adding colour to the shot

Sir is it easy to shoot particularly the genre of film Noir with modern techniques and equipment or do you think we have lost the charm of black and white?

Not really. As a Cinematographer technology never overpower me not that I shy away from technology because I believe what you are writing is more important than the quality paper if you are confident about what you are writing if you know what you are writing then the medium becomes an advantage for you so whether it is any technology, now digital is coming I don't feel sad about celluloid film going away neither I feel sad about using digital technology. I know that there will be something interesting in that medium also which can be incorporated so when you are talking about this particular genre and if technology is going to help I do agree. But not necessarily this technology. But technology of yesteryears can be used very easily. The example I told you about using ARRI II C. Its not that I didn't have modern technology with me but that is what fitted within that to shoot a sequence like that its all about your vision and finally what you want to interpret so any technology which is 100 years old all that can be used. It doesn't have to be new or old technology. Today probably it is more easy. I will tell you about one sequence in *Ek Haseena Thi*, Sarika checks in to the hotel where Karan is staying and she gets in to the room opposite Karans. Now the shot is like that you are tracking with Karan. He is coming back from the gym and gets into the room the camera pans to the opposite room and goes in through the peep hole gets inside and you see Sarika moving out today it is very easy to do a shot like that but when we were shooting it was not easy to do that

shot. So this was an idea that came up during the discussion. I told Sriram that I wanted to shoot this sequence in 3 parts and then I can combine it together it required a little bit of post production work in between to stabilise the centre portion of the eye which I want to be able to stabilise. So we shot it in 3 shot one is the steady cam which was following back and panning and getting into that and going closer to the door. I put the camera outside and do a zoom somewhat similar to the door frame where we had ended the earlier shot and zoom in the eye through the peep-hole. I open the door put Sarika behind it took a baby light and rounded a black paper to spot her eye. Then I zoom in to her eyes and the eye portion was lit up and the rest of was dark. I gave her a count and asked her to move back at five. So on the count five she moves back and I pull out very fast. When you combine a shot it looks like that the camera has gone in her room through the peep hole and she moves back so it is a combination of movement and light to get it worked differently. There is no technology in it its a concept which finally works. Some concepts may not work also.

Actually, I was referring to black and white photography when they started shooting in colour it was neo Noir from *China Town* onwards. So my point was whether we have lost that charm of black and white when we started shooting neo Noir in colour?

I think we have not lost it. Because the films you mentioned from the beginning to say *Kill Bill*. Now *China Towns* and films like that had used colour in a very different way. It doesn't have to be exactly the cinematographic way we explain the colour probably. It could be in costume very unrealistic kind of backdrop we bring up certain things or the way Tarentino uses colour in *Kill Bill* kind of films the red is splashed all over it is more than blood the colour, you cant have a bucket full of blood happening in the film so these are the elements of light and colour which is used to create that thing. Now the method must have changed or the way you depict must have changed. Over the time the way the art progressed it will changed it may not we what we did 50 years ago that we will be doing now but probably the technique was the same the way you want to engage the audience will be the same the way you want to tell story, edge of the seat has to be the same.

Would you like to explain why India is not making that kind of films?

Especially in Hindi films these attempts are rare or people shy away from such attempts most of the filmmakers or film making fraternity they don't think that this kind of work behind the film is necessary because the commercial aspect of a film has taken so much that artistic aspect of film is sidelined completely. Now the belief of the filmmakers or the people are about showing the actor in a better costume, it had nothing to do with the story or script. That is the general way the commercial which I think getting worse and worse than getting better if I think about the earlier films say Vijay Anand or even the Tamil cinema Kamla Hasan films (for example. *Sivappu Rojakkal*) they worked very hard on this they experimental a lot on this medium I think today we are shying away with that today it is more about calender photography, flattish work. This started after emergence of colour in 50s and 60s. Earlier you had to mould the face and you have to create separation from the background so there was an attempt to create a character in front of the lens. When colour came in all this became natural for example. against the backdrop of green wall you have a skin colour of the actor would naturally separate you need not light it

up separately. If you see a lot of films genre era which look very flabby and which didn't have anything to say, story telling through cinematography when they were shot which is happening today also because when the technology or digital technology comes in it becomes easier for you to shoot. I don't believe that exposure is Cinematography. It is much more far beyond that lighting up is not for exposure lighting is to tell a story which works a lot in films like this. You need to have a continuation from your DOP from the cinematography aspect of telling the story like for example. love story. Even in love story you can do all that for example. in Hollywood they have done it very well, but we shy away even today after 100 years of cinema we still don't take these branches of film making seriously at all. That's why we do not have a hardcore Noir in India, its not about money and people are scared, they don't think it at all necessary to have this in the film they consider money as importance. It is about having guts to do things differently, today a film maker meets success with a particular kind of film, throughout life he will make films like that he will repeat doing that. Indian filmmakers have never gone into different genre once the have succeeded in one particular genre that is not the case with Hollywood filmmakers. If you look at Ang Lee every film is different for him and the experiment with the different genre and consciously do that. Here everybody is stuck with what he has done in the past. We are scared to do experiments like Steven Spielberg. Fear determines our film making more that anything else.

P. K. Nair

Sir, what is your idea of Hollywood Noir film can you please elaborate with examples?

Noir means night, that is a French word. In fact a lot of Hollywood films are studied detailed by the French critics and they were one who studied extensively Hollywood film because Hollywood was the master for cinema in the beginning. So they studied all aspects of American cinema including comedians like Jerry Lewis. Francaise Truffaut wrote the book wrote on Hitchcock. The name Noir was devised by the French because it is a night they found in some of the American films in post 1930s some of the things repeating in film after film and continued in stylised way in the 40s and later the 50s also. I find the 40s as the most glorious period of the Noir brand or Noir genre as recall it. The special elements in that film. If you go to the background of the Noir films later it is because of American sociological reasons there was a Great Depression after the 1st World War and the Nazi party was rising in Germany and Americans were going through the period of crisis even drinking was banned in America. So a lot of underworld activities started at that period. When some crisis is happening in society some people used to take advantage of that during the depression period. You had a lot of unsocial elements propping up in the underworld of America. The first film they noticed that was Howard Hawk's *Scarface* (1934) that is a film I would call it a beginning of the Noir as a genre in the Hollywood cinema. The lighting and other things were there already there in German period, but the Noir consist not only of lighting, it has unusual mood lighting because Noir happens in night because it is a time for a lot of unsocial activities so it had to be naturally so lighting of those of films is very important aspect of the Noir. The

streets are also paved with pebbles and bricks and splash water on the streets so that it can reflect the light, and that creates a crazy atmosphere. Crime is also very important aspect of film Noir. If you look at the story some aspect of crime has to be there, either somebody stealing idol or pick pocket and the crime would of course not pay. Either the person involved in the crime dies in the gun battle or it is rounded up by the police. There are variations in the crime. Another important aspect is femme fatale, the (vamp in Indian sense). There will be a heroin, sometimes with characteristics of femme fatale, who is voluptuous women otherwise she will be the mall of the underworld, she is working for the underworld and finally she dies or sacrifices for the hero. So femme fatal is very interesting aspect of film Noir. A lot of American starting from Marlene Dietrich of German origin acted in this kind of film, these will be dressed daringly and will talk authoritatively and manly way. There will be a good woman and bad woman is femme fatale and she will have the don or somebody is who is there his girlfriend. So these are the major elements in film Noir. A Noir can be a Western, can be a crime story, psychological thriller. So within that Noir genre there are subdivisions. If you look at film like *Scarface* you will see a lot of marginalised characters springing in America during the depression period Jersey James and others who did not follow the rule of the law and they were having their own ways of living. Of course they had certain principles, they are not completely lawless in that sense. Ultimate example is *The Godfather*. It also had wonderful elements of Noir even though it is an Italian film. But American Noir genre has extended its elements which are used in the Noir films of other countries like British Noir film. You have a lot many French films inspired by film genre. In India we have our own special kind of genre films the most important film I remember is *Sorry wrong Number*(1948) with Barbara Stanwyck and Burt Lancaster, *Double Indemnity*, *Big Sleep*(Howard Hawks,194-). *Big sleep* is one of the classical genre films. Also *Mildred Pierce* with Joan Crawford played a character that appeared in a number of Noir films. In *Mildred pierce* you have a character Sydney Greenstreet (don) is a famous actor who specialise in Noir films of 40s. And also in Western side you have Western as a main element and within that also you have Noir genre. For example the film *High Noon* (1952) is a classical example of Western Noir. Because the hero is alone in that film and the fellow who is put in the jail is broken the jail and is out and he is going to take revenge on who killed his father. Gary Cooper played the main role, and Fred Zinneman of the German origin directed the film. Then you have films like *Fury* (Fritz Lang) again a German director, and *To Have And Have Not*(1944) with Loren Bacall who died recently and Humphrey Bogart. Humphrey Bogart is an actor who has influenced and acted in a number of Noir films. James Cagney was famous actor for his performance in *Scarface*. *Double Indemnity* is about psychological thriller who come to a city and he tells in a flashback his story. Barbara Stanwyck was the heroine. Some of these stars kept on repeating in the Noir films. Later Orson Welles also got influenced by Noir who made *A Lady from Shanghai* is a wonderful film of the genre in 50s. Also *Touch of Evil* which is a marvellous film, it is a high watermark of the genre. This genre continues through 1960s and even 1970s. *China Town* by Roman Polanski is a classic film. Walter Huston also made a Noir film. The film like *Sunset Boulevard* is famous film it has a Noir element in it. It opens with a dead body in the swimming pool and then goes into the flashback. The mansion is owned by an old actress who is in her last days of her career. The Noir best period was 1940s when you have a

number of films like *The women in the Window*. The characteristics were lighting of the films and feminine character and the crime, crime like murder, or stealing. In Alfred Hitchcock *Strangers on the Train*, two strangers meet on a train, one of them wants to kill her girlfriend. While the other one agrees to kill her provided the earlier kills the later's father, a kind of squashing of murders. The entertainment elements are dominant in Indian films and even though these are not there nobody will call them as Noir films. Noir is address to American cinema.

Coming to India with Hindi Noir films what are the distinct characteristics apart from the Hollywood Noir?

The Noir is basically an American genre. Just like the French followed the elements of American films the Indian film makers also followed it without mentioning it as a Noir. I don't think any Indian critic has used the word film Noir. But if you analyse some of the films starting from Bombay Talkies, '*Kismet* (1943) as earlier film in which Noir elements were introduced in the Indian film. It has got stage characters so it has stage shows and the central character is a pickpocket played by Ashok Kumar. You have a negative hero for the first time in Indian film. In fact hero in an Indian context has to be embodiment of all that is good, he cannot have an affair with another girl unless she is heroine. This kind of some written principles followed by diligently by a filmmakers. An interesting element in this film that he gets involved with a dancer and uses the money which he earns from selling the stolen objects for her as she was crippled in her early days. He uses this money for her treatment to get her back to normal life. Although he wants stealing things he had good intention. In the beginning of the film the dancer's father asked Ashok Kumar money to buy drinks. Because he has lost his job because of too much drinking and he has to sell his theatre to somebody. He gives him Rs10 and says if you don't drink, I will give you another 10Rs. Considering the period when the film was made we had an anti drinking campaign by Mahatma Gandhi and others in a way this film promoted the drinking. The real genre came in the film *Baazi*. *Baazi* had classic elements of Noir-the underworld. Most of the actions happened in the club or gambling dens. Gambling dens had atmosphere of the film and that is one of the central places in the film then you have a mall femme fatale, Geeta Bali a girl who sings song in the club Dev Anand was hero, he is a gambler and makes money from it. So the gambling is also the part of the Noir genre. The girl is always the character who comes to change him. Although she sings in the club and she is quite revealingly dressed she changes him to normal ways of life. In the film *C.I.D.* directed by Raj Khosla is very much in the line of Noir film because it had the femme fatale played by Waheeda Rahaman which was her first role and the underworld don (Bir Sakuja) a wonderful actor who walks with ailing foot. Dev Anand has to search for killer wanted by the police. There is lot of elements of police interrogate a criminal by putting lights so all this mood lighting and plus the songs mostly by the heroine, Shakila. But Waheeda Rahaman had a typical femme fatale song. Then the film *No do Gyara* Viajy Anands first film were some murder takes place in a big house and somebody goes to find out.. The Noir films in American counterfeit, typical locations played as a character in the film. Las Vegas is a gambling den in America and that becomes one of the element in the film. This way *Howara Bridge* happens in Kolkata it has the club house, a doll played by Madhubala and the investigating police and crime all these elements which are there in the Noir genre. Before that Shakti Samant made a film

called *Inspector* which is about how an inspector goes around and finds the criminals in the society. It was a wonderful film but not a great success. In *Howara Bridge* had songs femme fatale and all these elements which were there in American genre were copied and without mentioning the name Noir. *Howara Bridge* is one of the pucca films with Noir elements. Then *Solavan Saal* again by Raj Khosla, 12'o clock the titles were different were usual film during the later period one filmmaker specialised in that genre was Ram Gopal Varma who has Hyderabad based. He made films in Telugu and finally he made *Satya* and *Company* in this genre. I find a sub genre where a character is constantly in a moving mode, on train, bike or any other vehicle. The character is always on the run, on the movement this kind of theme was tried by Ram Gopal Varma in *Daud* that is really interesting to think. Then there is another film maker Sriram Raghavan. I remember he as a student was liking to watch only Hitchcock films and study how he manage to bring in various elements. He got inspired by some of the elements by Hitchcock and made interesting films like *Ek Haseena Thi*. It is a wonderful film although the relationship between Karan and Sarika could have been curtail a bit and gone to the main theme and she is got in this underworld engineered by Karan. In the beginning you find Karan as a good character but he turns out to be bad. He tries to save her from criminals, only to impress her and she gets shocked when later he turns bad. There is no meeting point for the hero and heroine, there is no happy ending in Noir films (like Win of good over bad) so there is influence without calling it as a Noir genre looking at filmmakers like Gyan Mukherjee, Guru Dutt, Vijay Anand, Raj Khosla presented negative elements of society like smuggling and other criminal activities. We don't call it Noir but definitely influenced by the Noir genre of the Hollywood.

Why these Hindi films are not recognised as Noir films?

Except Hollywood the films known as Noir films in other countries have followed the elements of Noir but not as a Hollywood genre. For example, *The Third Man* a British film with Orson Welles, with Alida Valli which was shot in Venice.

Do you think that overdose of entertainment in Hindi films has affected those films from labelling as Noir films?

As I mentioned the Noir genre is associated with American films. Nobody uses Noir for French although there are number of films who have got Noir elements in those films, even a film like *Tiger Bay* where a little girl sees a murder committed and the murderer finds that the little girl has witnessed the murder, so the whole film is about the murder and the little girl with Noir elements. But they never used the term Noir. Noir is never used for British or films from any other country. When it comes to India nobody uses the word Noir but we can see that Noir elements are very much evident in some films. In India films like *Mehel aur Woh Kaun Thi* can be classify as Horror films and can't be classify as Noir film, but they never used the term Noir. The entertainment elements are stronger in Indian films because ultimately even in so called Noir films like *CID* the songs are very popular, box office elements in the film, in *Satya* also the group songs are very much part of Box office success. The songs are there in every Hindi film whether it is a crime film. Raj N Sippy has made in the version *Inkaar* based on Akira Kurosavas *High and Low*. When you Indianize the film they make it in such way that, even though the suspense was the main part

of it they included the Helen's song and dance number in it. They were influenced by the American films.

Is this the reason that study of Hindi films particularly those selected as Noir films is restricted to film schools or the high profile research?

American Noir is a genre by itself and is studied in a lot of American schools. As I remember in India I don't know. May be in film schools and film appreciation they will have one section on film Noir. Noir films are particular genre of American cinema which you can talk about right in German period. 2002 Dr. Jabbar Patel held a section of Noir films in PIFF...One can bring all the important noir films together, can curate a programme of Noir films and study for much more details. The Noir films were made after depression in America. Like wise after Partition there were lot of family dramas in Indian scene. A joint family with four, five children and one of them rebelling for separation from the family because his wife is influencing and the joint family is broken. And then from rural areas the family comes to city due to urbanisation. These are all reflection of our partition. Instead of showing partition as a political scene. Very few films have been made on the theme of partition because hardly any filmmaker has attempted that complex theme. I think the first film showing the partition sensitively was *Garm Hawa* made almost two decades after the partition. Now days the filmmakers relate more to regional identity for better reaching to the audience for example, is *Singham*.

Most of the Hindi filmmakers were not aware of the word film noir yet many of their films reflect noir elements. What do you think is the reason for this?

We have never copied genes. For example, Western is and American genre. However, just showing horse-riding in Indian films does not mean it is a Western because we don't have that kind of set up. Doing a Western style in India without having that kind of history where red Indians were the original habitats and later the colonised emigree tried to rule them, is meaningless. The cowboys in a Western film is very much a part of American history and that was a necessity there. In India we have only family drama which everybody understands. In crime thrillers they use Noir elements but cannot be called as Noir film. Also horror films are common in India but they also do not use the term Noir. Because they don't want to repeat something which is associated with American films but they take elements from those films and put it in their own way or for example, a spy story and put it in one word say a family drama. If you look at most of the films made during certain period. Even in *Johnny Mera Naam* it has got a lot of social elements but they will try to make it a variety entertainment. They won't specifically fit into one genre. That is why it is difficult to give that.

Most of the Noir films are B grade movies as these relates to crime stories. Do you think that it is more challenging in story telling than in normal story telling?

Your statement that all Noir films are B grade films is not correct. Some of the Noir films have even got academy awards. In Noir films there are various categories but you cannot disrespect a film because it is not classified as classic film. If you call it B film then there must be A class films. So what are those A films. Some of the Noir

films can also be A grade films. However in Indian context it is true, but not in the American context. For example films of Orson Welles are supposed to be wonderful films. I think *Touch of Evil* will be listed in best of 50 American films.

What are the sociological conditions particularly in Indian films that might have prompted filmmakers to devise their stories and put the characters during post independence era?

During the late 1950s the frustration started because they were expecting a lot from the independent National Govt. They were all happy to have their own governance. But slowly problems like unemployment, lack of housing, problems in big cities which Raj Kapoor handled in *Shri 420*. Also juvenile delinquency which was part of *Awaara* theme. These were made immediately after Independence. During the later period we had the dacoit problem, *Mujhe Jeene Do*, *Jees Desh Main Ganga Behati hain*. Problems started cropping up one by one later. Later, corruption in police force and the society- *Zanjeer* 1973 by Prakash Mehra, which is really a breakthrough film. If you have to correct a wrong thing in the society you had to take help the police. Then there is a period you took the law in your hands because you cannot depend upon police as they are also corrupt. That kind of situation prevailed in the society because of disillusionment of the people with the Government, made them to change the style of the film. Otherwise you couldn't see a South Indian film where Amitabh Bachchan walking into a board room of Ministers and shoot them all with AK- 47. there is gradual deterioration in values. In *Awaara* police is not shown as corrupt. When they see a boy and girl on the beach they think that they are husband and wife, they can't be otherwise. So policeman accepting bribe is never shown. But then you have a film like *Ardh Satya*(Govind Nihalani 1982). or in *Deewar* the film maker has shown a rich smuggler brother more important than a police officer staying in government quarters. They have tackled the problems according what happened in the society. The individuals like Haji Mastan and Dawood Ibrahim influence the writers to write the script. That was a part of Indian filmmaking as they always looked for what is happening in the society. Even now it continues, for example a women activist in *Gulabi Gang* as she is a revolutionary she organises women and take them for the fight. What happens in society is finally reflected in films. But when you do it in a feature film they have to do it with lot of elements so that it will be accepted by the large audience. The basic idea comes from society.

Do you think the films like *Kala Bazaar* or *Baazi* with Noir elements can present social problems more effectively than normal family drama?

When you used the word effectively I must say that when you are handling a local theme or contemporary theme which is pertinent to the society, how many people remember the theme or think about the theme after they have seen the film? A very few. They will remember the songs dances and other elements but, ultimately I think that impact of the film will not come immediately after the film is seen, it comes slowly. Suppose we see 10films of same genre, say of political corruption people will have some effect on their mind. Although entertainment is the main motive of making a film but if you make a number of films on similar theme will have ultimately some impact. It will keep on sinking in your brain. Our audiences are much more intelligent now it is not the same audience of 50and 60 they have become much more disseminating. Now they cannot believe any politician, anybody who say

something in a public address nobody will believe him unless he perform and do it. If a film is becoming popular we are to be concerned about that what is the element in the film which rural and urban audiences I fascinated at, they keep on saying it again and again, they definitely like entertainment. It has to be grow in an entertaining way. But after the entertainment is over then what you see? You go beyond it, and find out the inner chord.

Aashish Rajadhyaksha

What is your idea of Hollywood Noir film? please elaborate with example?

Its very important genre. It is very curious genre in the sense it is considered by one we of thinking about American genre. It is distinct to the U S, the period which is mostly after the 2nd world war and the impact of the war on the people of America. Curiously it has other history both come in and go out so it has got a very strange status it has been a debate whether Noir is very American or International genre or not. Literally the term means black and it is attach to the particular look of a film which is very dark it consists of all the evil passions, it has to do with corruption, crime, ruthlessness and so on. A literally the origins of Noir are extremely important because those were radical writers who trying to capture the American, or rather Californian life in the period after the war. Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler were the big names in that genre. One of the examples of films is *The Maltese Falcon* with Humphrey Bogart the whole series of things are attached to that idiom. The second is the *Big Heat* by Fritz Lang. It brings another history to it with importance of German Expressionism on Noir. Also there are questions whether Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious* is Noir or not the most crucial thing about Noir is, it is a genre that is developed value in hindsight. At that time Noir was often seem to me the poverty row B grade productions. So very often low grade studios like Monogram Pictures, they were not A list studios that made Noir film. Jean-luc Godard dedicates his *Breathless* to that particular studio. The artists in these films were lesser known who made it big name during the later period.

What do you think of these distinct Noir characteristics in Hindi films?

That is the whole problem in the sense that is Noir in American genre or not an American genre is the question its not idiom for example. Science fiction, or action movies were there is nothing unique American. These have been borrowed from else where. The whole important thing about American cinema is that almost all the film making in united States were in Hollywood in that period was made by outsiders. These were people who migrated to the US from Europe, Asia and elsewhere. So it was a bit of melting pot, a kind of trafficking in global genre. So Noir is unique in that respect because Noir is claimed to be very American is an interesting claim that it makes because of literary origins, political context within the second world war. So is any film that is not a American Noir film or not is a question to ask. You can take a stand on it as certain kinds of British films *Briton Rock* has elements of Noir. More recently Wong Kar Wai in Hong Kong would come up with the elements that seem to be Noir origins to them in that sense you can say that some Indian films did have

Noir elements. There are two aspects to it- one is direct imitation of Noir in other words studios like Navketan (Dev Anand) was very strongly influenced by Hollywood and attempted to make Hollywood type films. So they made a kind of Noir idiom in Chetan Anand's *Taxi Driver* in American sense of Noir films. But could also think of Noir in a different way which a kind of Bombay, little bit Madras and Calcutta- a city film attached to city life and idea of crime and passion and the lower side of life. For example *Shri 420* has elements of Noir films although it isn't one.

What are the reasons for not having a recognition as genre film Noir in Hindi?

As I was saying film Noir is an American genre and imported to India. In America it was practically after the second world war so the height of film Noir was in late 40s and 50s so it was not that old not old genre in the US. Even some of them earlier films which had to do with city life are not quite Noir. So theoretically even the film before the 40s with some of these characteristic will not be defined as Noir film. Having said that if you want to shift the definition and include what I said earlier which is the idea of city film has to do with crime and the underside of life in the city, then those kinds of films are made in India in Bombay for a long time. In fact this is a lift from the late silent cinema film like *Mojhili Mumbai* by Homi Master in Gujarati title which was apparently crime in the city but also about like gangsters, screen fatties, some of Wadia Productions of that time would have some of these elements. My own thing is that Noir in this sense goes local and takes local roots in terms of context located in Bombay. The classic Noir is Chetan Anand film and some of Guru Dutt film like *Baazi* which are actually crime films in full sense. They are not attempting to that genre but short of that there will be large number of films that would have liminal space where the Noir meets the crime and modernity stories of everyday life. So I wouldn't say that there were no Noir films but you have to extend your definition include those films.

Do you think that overdose of entertainment has affected these films for not having label as film Noir?

That is hard to say. There is nothing more entertaining than Hollywood Noir. In other words it is an entertaining genre. And indeed the best Noir even in Indian films has the same purpose. So the Noir is actually a low grade genre its supposedly low class. Because melodrama is a high class genre which equally entertaining. So I don't think Noir is made with ambitions other than entertainment it is not meant for something else. You see what happened with Godard or Wong-Kar-Wai or other filmmakers who were interested in Noir would end up giving some more serious dimension to it (Truffaut was attempting to give it additional quality) but normally it will be seen as an entertainment genre so there was not to much entertainment in film Noir.

So there were no commercial constraint as such (like that of production code during the period when Noir films were made in Hollywood)

These are two separate things the production code administration in United States was attached very much to censorship which was trying to keep particular sort of working class movie putting essentially communist intent out so there was lot of internal censorship going out for the films that had hidden plots some Noir films did

actually suffer because Noir does have that element of mystery which allowed it to be misread potential of some kind unintended reeling which the Hays of his would be concerned about. *Double Indemnity* for example, may have had problems because it could attack on American Society and value system. In India as per the Cinematography report of 1929 certain kind of ideas of violence were one of the anxieties in cinema which was undigested views or misuse of American influence using in the films about crime shown to the audience that would not understand the difference between good and bad may lead to evil consequences. Other problem is that the Gandhian position we had one cinema is very much to do with Gandhiji's attack on things like smoking and drinking and race courses as places where evil intent is rife. So these kinds of films were seen as evil by some reformists.

Do you think that the Noir films are restricted to study in film school or researchers ?

I must give you an example of Alfred Hitchcock (also John Ford) was very surprised when French filmmakers were taking him very seriously that some of them are making any art house movie but making something else. There is a certain point and I think French cinema is very crucial here when low level genre start taking on additional interest and film makers looking at film history and low producing and understanding try and make something with bigger budget. So *Sholey* was C grade genre, you know it was taken from Feroze Khan's *Khotte Sikke*. Actually low grade films like *Ghost Stories* but to take something like that and make a big budget film out of it was something very exciting to filmmakers at a certain point of time and these would be in film schools so the film makers like Sriram Raghavan who were trained in film school would make it with a kind of sophistication and understanding. Someone make a horror film, or sci-fi with a different set of historical concern those would be trend not in film making but in film history.

Sir as I observe the Hindi filmmakers like Guru Dutt, Raj Khosla and Vijay Anand were not aware of Noir Film. However their films feature Noir elements. What do you think is the reason?

I don't believe that they were not aware. I find it inconceivable that Guru Dutt had not seen John Huston. I think it's more peculiar in the sense that Guru Dutt himself has made an astonishing statement that the problem with Indian cinema was that it has too many songs. The film makers had certain peculiar options that they have to make a film original or for the upper class. So the films that they were making and seeing had a lot of gap. So I can't believe that Navketan specially was not fully aware of American Cinema. It is true that other kinds of filmmakers. I will give you a very different example. In Raj Kapoor's *Shri 420* that character of Sona Chand Dharmaraj has his phone conversation about black market. It is interesting that KA Abbas's *Dharti ke Lal* which is really very very realistic film with Shambho Mitra and Balraj Sahani had a sequence with K N Singh the Hindi film villain with similar conversation about black money and black market. Of course Abbas was not making a Noir film. When he was making *Dharti ke Lal* the realistic film about the famine in Bengal. But you have those elements which clearly have origins from American cinema. This bad man sitting in a suit, talking in telephone and particular kind of lighting which clearly has a Noir origin. I think there is a certain idiom of Noir fade into the post war Hindi cinema and lot of filmmakers would use it. But Navketan

went further. They were not only using Noir idioms but they were actually making Noir films. So a lot of early Dev Anand productions were modelled on American cinema. I find inconceivable that they did not know about it.

Ok, but the Noir films in Hollywood were hardly recognised as Noir by then....

In fairness with them you must recognised that Noir as genre as against the crime which is much larger genre. Its distinction is still very contentious one. For example. is *The Godfather* Noir or not? It is clearly a crime film in fact it has aspects of film Noir in it. So there is certain kind of give and take in terms of what is Noir and what is not. I think these people would have been familiar with American crime movie which included but was not limited to Noir films as things they were definitely attempting to use. You are right that there was no use of that term. And India to this date it is not clear to me as to whether we ever will speak a Noir, you work may no more in this regard, whether you can say this is a Noir film maker. But the crime movie in the wider sense which typically include elements of Noir is very much in the blood stream of some of these filmmakers.

Certain suspense films like *Mahel*, *Kohara* also use Noir elements. Can we call these films as Noir?

Mahel is an interesting film (I have recently seen some Bengali horror movies like *Hanabadi*, *Chikhanksha*. What I find fascinating with these films is that some of these film start out as a kind of Noir film actually become horror films). *Mahel* certainly goes into horror genre as does *Kohara*, *Woh Kon Thi*. There are elements which I have to do it with unknown which takes us beyond any kind of Noir structure. They are in the more nature of ghost film and idea of *Madhumati* that idiom which is to do with past histories, memories Purani haweli type places in which ghost from earlier history resides and things happened which has to do with an earlier epoch and so on, are not really Noir films in the sense of the term because Noir is very much in the history less, memoryless here and now kind of situation, something to do with a person living by his wits, outwitting the others like Sam Spade (Humphrey Bogart) the detective that's Noir. I wouldn't ordinarily look in the ghost films whether it is *Mahel* or *Kohara* as Noir. That will be my take on this.

Do you think that this genre film Noir itself place the film in second row that is B grade movie in film making as it relates to crime stories only or is it more challenging than a normal story telling?

It is more challenging than a normal story telling. That true but most of such films are pretty challenging in the first place. It is interesting that we had a low grade genre but these were not necessarily crime films, and that sounds interesting for example certain kind of saint, the popular kind of mythological those were cheaper films. If you remember even in Prabhat studios the saint films were often seen as the B grade . So *Saint Tukaram* was seen as quickie which V. Shantaram refuse to make. In America it is true that Noir is a B grade film. But India the conscious Noir, and here again when we say conscious Noir I think we can think about only one production company and that is Navketan but Prabhat had Guru Dutt who acted in their *Hum Ek Hai* which is the first Dev Anad film. There would be certain kind of synergy and that the early Guru Dutt fascinatingly that is Noir and I don't think it is B

grade. I don't think it is evident that those Navketan films were B grade in any sense of the term. It is true that they were sometime working with unknown actors, low budget as compared to the Mehboob or Raj Kapoors films and these were cheaper films but not in the mythological category.

Do you think that the disillusionment of youth (reference point *Pyasa*) after Independence provide situations for film Noir?

Yes it has. The first thing which we must recognise that in Indian and even in Hollywood cinema specially Indian cinema no film has a consistent genre from beginning to end. Films would depend on whatever genre they choose at different points. So there is elements of Noir in *Pyasa* for example the entire relationship of Mala Sinha character to Guru Dutt the possibility of some kind of sexual betrayal of the family her relationship with husband, the elements of secret of women. One of the standard lines of Noir is dangerous men and sexy women. But it has also to do with women who often carry tremendous moral burden to deal with. There are women who are fated to cause damage destruction, death because of there beauty or something like that. I think Mala Sinha has that elements like *Double Indemnity*. There is something about that which i think potentially Noirish. I think Raj Kapoor will use it, K A Abbas has also used it. I think there will be elements of we of it which becomes part of idiom of Hindi film Noir.

What are the sociological conditions that propelled filmmakers to devise stories and put the characters?

I think this disillusionment is important. The difference between Indian and American films this time is that the hero is disillusioned because he expected better. He expected that the Independent Indian state will look after him and then he is disillusioned. So Raj Kapoor at the end of *Shri 420* goes away. The idea of hero and heroine walking away or this idea of *jalado, fuk dalo* that idea of disillusionment is not in original Noir because those American protagonists had no expectations from their states. The idea was you are on your own, nobody is there to help you, you will not help anybody everybody has to live by his wit, everybody has to bloody well manage because no one is there to support you. So that form of living by your wits, in a condition of violence and expecting whatever you get and not complaining if you don't get what you hoped is not that disillusionment. I think Dev Anand is really not that kind of heart broken(except Guide), normally as a Noir hero he occupy some of those characteristics. And I think disillusionment and Noir are two different things.

I was referring to the period of great depression and World War II corresponding to era of post independence disillusionment.

The point is that America didn't have that kind of freedom struggle nor it had assumption that the State would was going to look after you.

Do you think the film Noir can deal with social problem more effectively for example like lack of education dealt with in *Kala Bazaar*?

Sure, one very fascinating thing is the kind of money that comes into the film industry, and the kind of money in say real estates or the things Gandhiji abhor like gambling. I think it is the curious way that Noir capture these things. A sense of its

own ability to get that kind of reality in unadulterated form. I think its true that Noir can pull it off at times in some startling ways. Unlike Hollywood or to some extent Hong Kong we do not have really great Noir films. I am not saying that *Kala Bazaar* is not, it is but to me *Taxi Driver* is the definitive Noir film, *Bazzi* is also equally crucial. I have no idea to judge films like *Kala Baazar* or *Bazzi* in terms of greatness of Indian cinema and are greater than *Shri 420* or *Pather Panchali*. But it certainly has a role and it has a place of its own that definitely captures Indian reality no other genre can.

The films in other genre like action film like *Sholey* or *Mother India* with family values can create much hype before its release. Do you think such categorization about Noir film can help its commercial success or is it just a stamped by critics as Noir films?

I think it depends on how you wants to benifit by characterising it as such. As I mentioned we had a genre problem in India cinema. One of the difficulties has been that films move in different genre as they choose for example. the film *Sholey*, at one time it is Western, another time it has elements of jail brake kind of crime movie, yet another time it is melodrama of a father and his daughter in law. So it is not clear to me what are the benefits of it in calling a film a Noir film to the industry or to someone who are thinking around those lines. You can take example of Ram Gopal Varma who is delibrately and conciously making specific genre film so he can say that one is a ghost film and the other is crime film and Noir film. So he will attempt to make a genre film in the kind of Noir as classical film that will evoke a classical history. Film like *Company* may have elements like that but *Company* I dont think as a Noir film, it is a crime movie in a broad sense of the term but it may make same sense for someone to make that claim.

K Hariharan

Why film Noir was not taught at FTII?

Because FTII is basically a vocational training centre in teaching the students basic tools of writing, shooting, recording and editing film the FTII was not set up in order to aesthetically or socially politically to groom the students. The purpose the purpose was to set up a bookish and training centre. It also happened like there was a wonderful teacher like Satish Bahadur who could give us some insights into Satyajit Ray and Ingmar Bergman but that was not the purpose of FTII to introduce to you to film trends and genres. It was taught you purely to know its historical facts just like history students learnt history not to become a historian. Therefore to teach film Noir you needed a teacher who could know film Noir in its total contexts. And frankly Prof Satish Bahadur was not an authority on film Noir. He was very good on neo-realism. So I cannot expect all professors to be scholarly in all subjects of the world so I do not want to mention but I only wanted the ftii "socio economical cultural platform. It was basically to train them vocationally trained them in writing, direction etc. In my understanding the film Noir there are three components in film Noir, one is the fundamental stylistic principles of film Noir, it dates back to Expressionism – Murnow, Faust Lang, and so on. So there is stylistic aspect which why I say it is very important to get that stylistic aspects technology is required, in

terms of sets lighting camera angles, lensing. So what happens when I look at film Noir purely more stylistic. I do not have to understand the philosophy of film Noir. Just like I am great fan of Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* which was completely opposite to the philosophy of Adolf Hitler. He was a complete fascist and anti communist. But he liked the *Potemkin* for the stylistic.... he told all German filmmakers to do a film as powerful as this. He made it a text book but purely for the way of editing, angles short composition and the dynamics. So the philosophy of film Noir is something else it is deeply rooted in the anguish of the world war II. Secondly the WW II gives birth to the huge underground of criminals and mafia. the WW II also saw huge influx of people coming from Europe as refugee in an alien country like America and because of these huge refugee influx of Europeans there was a certain turmoil, and the turmoil had conflict, one of them was the growth of underground criminals. America as that time was wanted to show itself and to the world that it is there basic... of could morals values. And when they saw films talking about radical crime and gangster. There was Hay's Code was employed which stated that you should not do this and that, censorship started coming in. Now when censorship laws started coming in and entire film making community was feeling choked, they had to express themselves in a different way that is film Noir. The film Noir was all about how to sympathize with the gangsters. How to sympathize man who was outside of the law. But his heart was good. He was not a regular criminal so film Noir gave birth to a variety of filmmakers from Alfred Hitchcock to somebody like William Wyler, Billy Wilder, John Huston and John Ford. So you have to study what are those stylistic devices, what are the American problems of the Hay's Code and what resulted in the story that came in. At that time Indian filmmakers were watching expressionism, film noir but they saw to it as mostly a stylistic device. Filmmakers like Guru Dutt and Dev Anand also entered in to the sociolo-aesthetics dimensions also saw how to apply this phylosophy of young generation of filmmakers in Hollywood how to emulate in India like the way that Bimal Roy watched *Bycicle Thieves* and inspired to make *Do Bigha Zameen* or Satyajit Ray got inspired to make *Pather Panchali* after watching *The River* by Jean Renoir. So in a way Indian filmmakers continued with the legacy and I hate to say that they were copying. When the II World War and certain amount of victory is prevalent the film Noir automatically phased out. In India the three estates- legislature, judiciary and executive failed in the post- colonial period. Then it is the anger against these three estates that cinema decided to articulate. So a policeman, judge or a politician will always be crooked, corrupt and anti people. Although there may be good individuals in these estates there representation was archetyped opionins. The censor board at that time was eager to ban these films as they were also the part of it. However, since these films had happy endings they thought that these films would not affect the society. We never made a film Noir with dark ending. Hollywood Noir never had this element. Our Noir was more of melodramatic that ensures win of good people and defeat of the bad. The films like *Teesri Manzeel* had Noir elements. In the gangster tradion of film Noir we need to understand that they are not bad people. That becomes hallmark. Another hallmark of film Noir is positioning of femme fatale, the dangerous woman who come to seduce hero to do the crime for example *Double Indemnity*. It has some bibblical reference when Eve temptes Adam to eat that apple. It is not about the bad woman but the temptetion of the man to the crime. In psyco the woman is tempted to take away the money given to her for bank deposit and that

kills her. She is punished by the psychic man a kind of mystic reference. In Lumiere brothers show accept the arrival of the train all the actions were staged for the camera and the best was demolition of wall that had cinematic reversal of the action.

Willing suspension of disbelief – There are two theories for this. One is Hugo he comes from the world of Photoplay. He says that cinema on the screen is not really happening. Stories is happening in your mind. The photo play which he calls as just all psychology, how it aims at mind. The second is comic book tradition that prevailed before cinema. Illustrated stories had already come and that reading the Illustrated story was not new to the audience. Now they see to it as moving illustration. So psychology that allows to restore memory of the image in my mind. There is another theorist called Rudolph Unhie he believes that audience will always see it as a 2D film on the screen when there was no colour or sound in the film and that we were all forcing ourselves to understand what is happening on the screen. So he was not for cinema as a narrative but for a documentation. So there are two points scientific and psychological and your experience of cinema is somewhere between the two. The third aspect is that audiences are used to see dreams and the dreams are non linear. When we are watching movie we are not completely foxed because we have seen dreams like this where time and space are completely in a magical mixture, so dreams are allowed. So watching of the film in the darkened space also help us to see narrative as a dream as if it is true. So we watched the film in the same way as we see dreams the only difference is of open and closed eyes. I don't know what would happen if cinema was shown always on a day light.

Pooja Surati

Pooja ji how do you look towards your graduation from writer to editor of these films?

I don't think it is a graduation as such but it is a process. Writing has been a great fun *Ek Haseena Thi* was my first film. RGV was happy with my draft script and he brought Sriram Raghavan on board. Then we wrote the script together. It was a great learning experience for me. Since I have learnt putting the shots together, I was also assisting Sriram on his films, it was not difficult for me to go for editing which was a very similar process. For me it was really a tough story telling one was on the paper and the other on film. I feel quite a lot editing happens on writing table. Since I was a first time writer and had little experience in writing some parts of my script were novelistic than cinematic. I found both the process very similar. Although I think writing is more difficult because you are creating something out of thin air whereas editing is more of problem solving.

How did you plan the editing patterns for *Johnny Gaddar*?

There was no thought editing pattern as such, but I must tell you that Sriram speaks fast and he tells the story also very fast. So the pace was in mind that comes from the character and the story. Even we held workshops for Neel Mukesh to make him speak faster. So there was an idea of pace constantly in mind, while writing, shooting and editing of the film. In *Johnny Gaddar* during the interval scene which is a 20 minute scene between Dharmendra and Neel Mukesh. We deliberately slowed that down there was no specific pattern for the pace of the film. It is pretty very much on what the scene dictate really how it has been short, what the director is trying to say.

Please elaborate the harsh transition from the man's back in a romantic scene to a very harsh shot during police interrogation in *Johnny Gaddar*?

It is a dark film, hiest film. It is a crime infested film, in those kinds of movies, sex and violence go much hand in hand actually Sriram had a complete different transition in mind. As the man is making love to this women and suddenly a belt comes in and hits him across the back. And you cut to next scene and see a man in interrogation. However, it might have looked a fake in the absent of prosthetics. However Sriram and Murleedharan came up with this cigarette shot, it was actually written as a transition.

Do you suggest the cutting points as a writer in the script or is it economical if you also think of editing while writing?

I think editing while writing is very important. I don't think that everyone necessarily knows it. For me there should be people you trust to whom you can give your material without doubt. The seamless transition of since happens during your rewriting. It definitely helps.

Can you give an example?

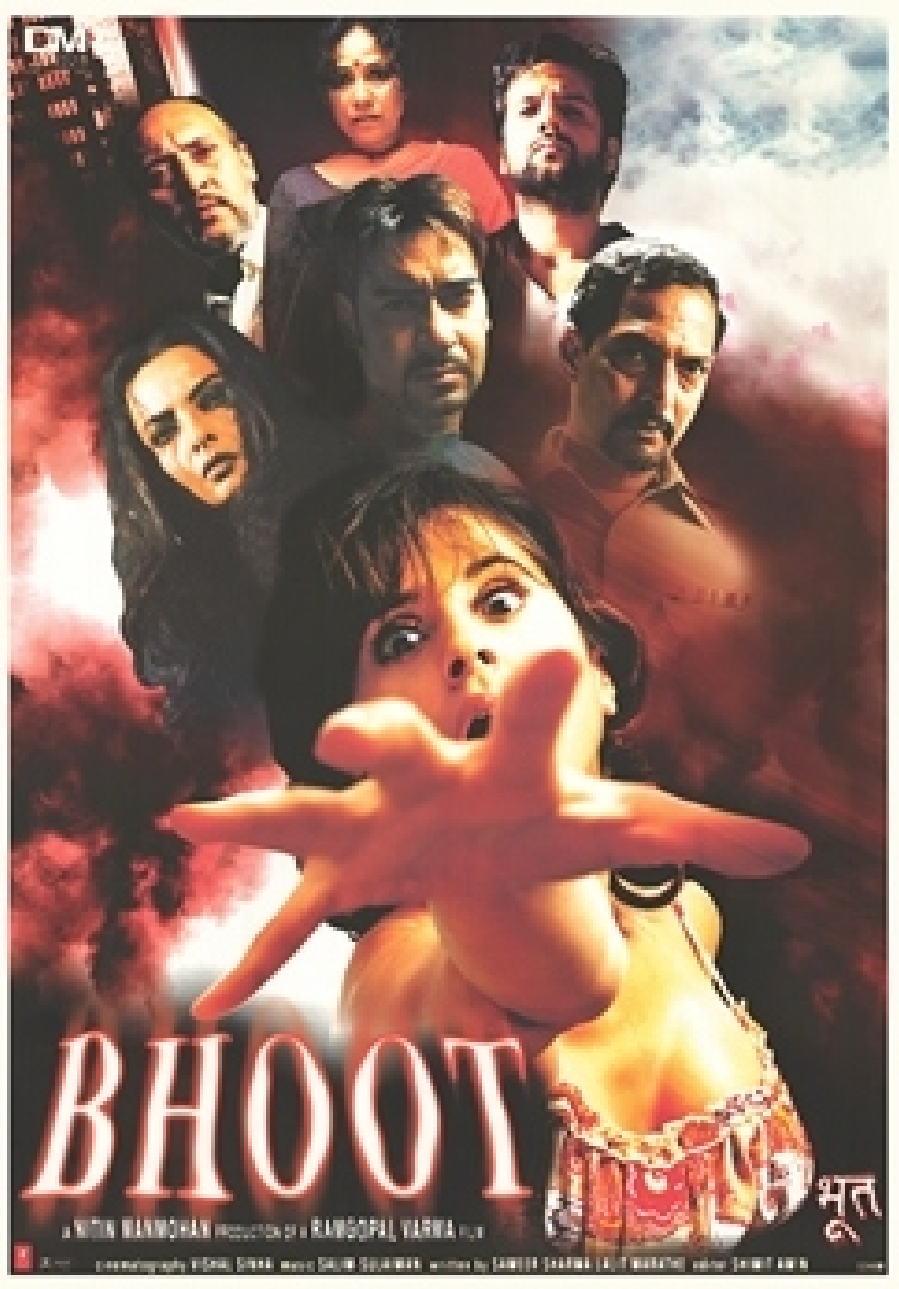
In *Ek Haseena Thi* I had written slightly longer scenes to establish the character of Sarika. Most of these scene were in the film for example, conversations with her parents. However Sriram added and element of her neighbour who frequently visits her probably with bad motives. This give the film a completely a different flavour. Also it underlines that this women is living alone she is vulnerable – all these thematic developments came during rewriting.

What are your favourite Hindi Noir films with brilliant editing?

I never looked at a Hindi film as a Noir film but I love Vijay Anand's movies- all his films had wonderful story telling and so wonderful editing. I think it is a mix of good writing, camera work, acting, and finally good cutting as well. So I love *Johnny Mera Naam*, *Jewel Thief*, *Teesri Manzil* I havealso like Raj Khosla's *C.I.D.*, *Woh Kaun Thi?* They were great fun to watch. I didn't look at as an academician or with background of a film institution as I am a just movie goer. These were the stories that were told with so much attitude and well told and that's finally stays with you.

Although *Ek Hassena Thi* was a crime related film but it was also more of a girl who falls with a wrong guy. So the Noirish elements almost came in because of discussion with so many people as earlier we never thought of making it a Noir film. In *Johnny Gaddar* there were more efforts in devising the colours the costumes, the people they are small time criminals. In *Ek Haseena Thi* it was much more the girls story which was a transformation from an innocent girl... As the story developed it got darker and darker and the kind of things she was doing started getting darker in *Ek Haseena Thi* the people Sarika trust betray her while the outright criminals help her...that was really and interesting character the women ganglord played by Pratima Kazmi. There is a lovely line (suggested by Jaideep Sahani) in the film that 'sher her aadmi ke andar hota hain, ungli karne wala chahiye' this character appear very real I am sure it showed that kind of strengths cynicism which is there in life but not for Sarika.

Posters and stills
from the Hindi films
with noir elements



BHOOT

a NITIN NAYYOHAN production of a RANGOPAL VARMA film

cast: cinematography: VIDAL DIXIT, music: DALVI SOUNDBOX, written by: JAGDEEP JARWA (AUT BIRATHE), edited: JAYANT ANAND

भूत
SANGHVI

राज खोसला
के निर्देशन में



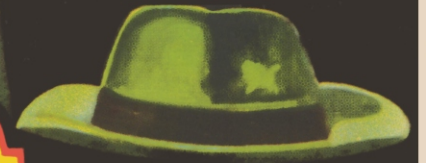
देवआनन्द·वहीदारहमान
शकीला·कुमकुम·महमूद
और जानीवाकर

C.I.D.

गुरु दत्त फिल्मस

सी.आई.डी.

निर्माता: गुरुदत्त संगीत: ओ.पी.नैय्यर

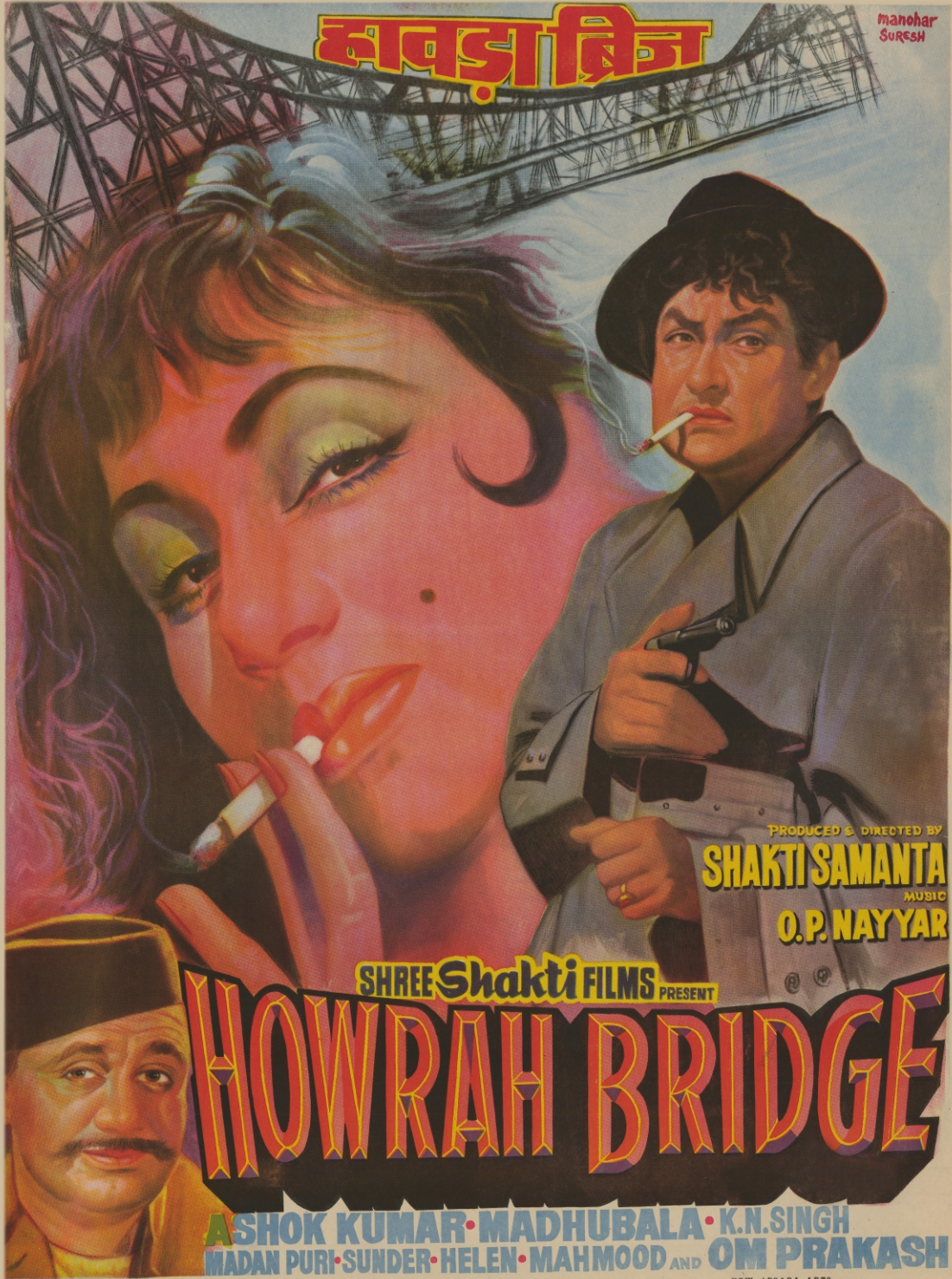




Kala Bazaar - Dev Anand

हावड़ा ब्रिज

manohar
SURESH



PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY

SHAKTI SAMANTA

MUSIC

O.P. NAYYAR

SHREE Shakti FILMS PRESENT

HOWRAH BRIDGE

ASHOK KUMAR • MADHUBALA • K.N.SINGH
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झूम, झूम ढलती रात...
ओ बेकशर दिल....

ये नैन उरे उरे....

राह बनी खुद मंजिल....



Geetanjali PICTURES

कोहरा दिनेस आर्ट

KOHRAA

PRODUCED & MUSIC BY
HEMANT KUMAR
DIRECTED BY
BIREN NAUG

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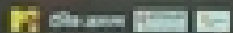
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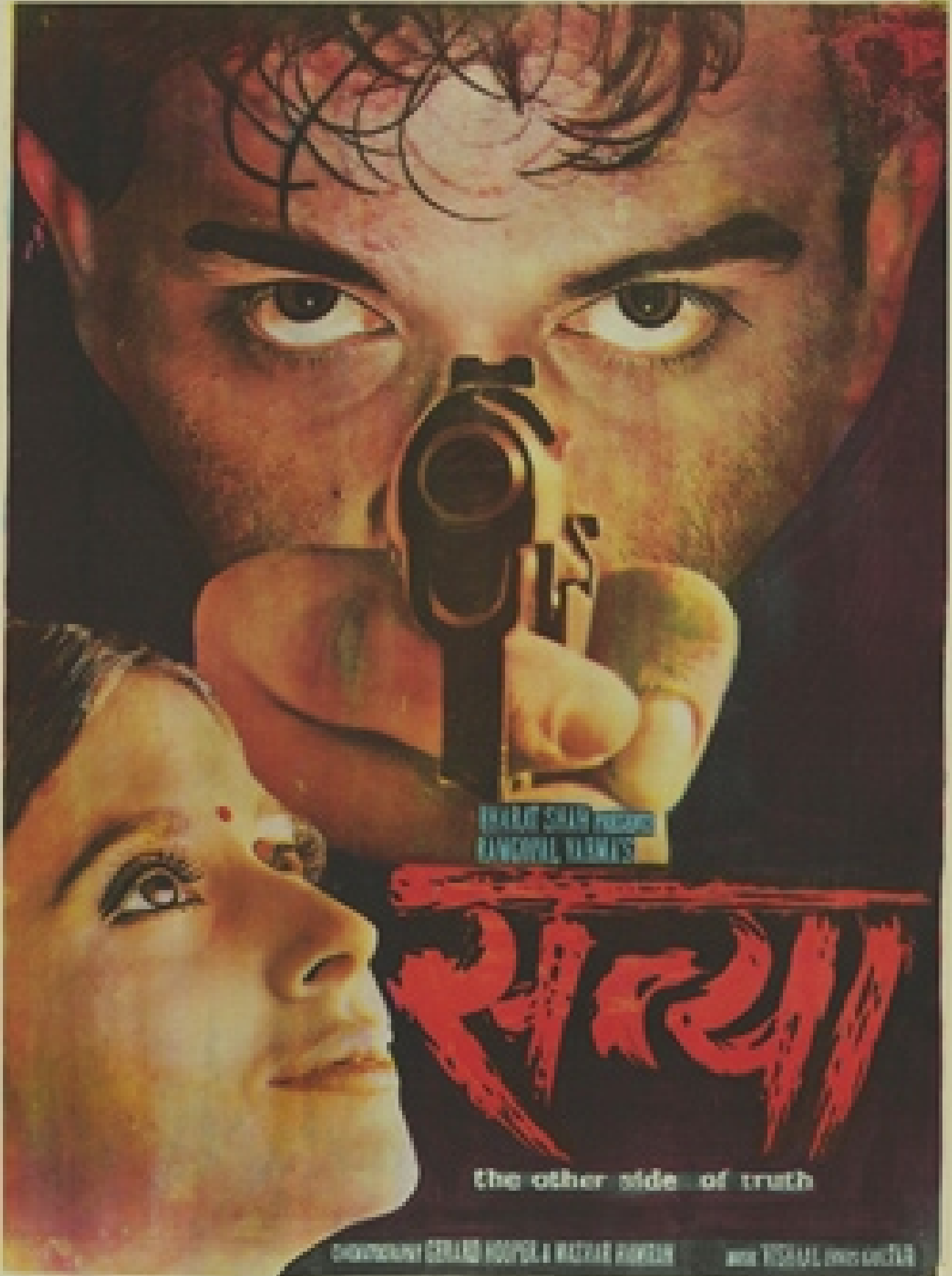
SONO

RAMGOPAL VARMA SEN
SARKAR

SAHARA ONE

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THREAT SALES PRESENTS
RANGHOL FILMS

रात

the other side of truth

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MANOJ KUMAR · SADHANA IN



N.N.SIPPY'S

WOH KAUN THI?

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PRAKASH MEHRA'S

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NOW IN CINEMASCOPE

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जंजीर

MUSIC **KALYANJI ANANDJI**

LYRICS **GULSHAN BAWRA & PRAKASH MEHRA**