

# Urban Alienation, Sensory Overload and Depressive Youth Subjectivity in the Cinematic Cityscapes of *Slumdog Millionaire* And *Wake Up Sid*

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**Abstract:** This dissertation explores the issue of contemporary cinema by portraying Mumbai as affective environment that defines the identity of the youths, emotional life and experiences of alienation in post liberalisation urban India. With reference to *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) and *Wake Up Sid* (2009), the paper believes that the city is not a passive location but an active agent that establishes perception, opportunities, and psychological growth. The study is based on the qualitative approach stipulated by the close examination of the text, and its main aim is the investigation of how the specific techniques of cinematic devices including camerawork, editing, sound design, spatial mapping, and narrative development contribute to the creation of the specific sensory and emotional landscape. The comparative framework indicates two urban experiences that are contrasting based on class. *Slumdog Millionaire* introduces Mumbai as a contingent place characterized by velocity, density, and precarity where the subjectivity of the young people is shaped through trauma, displacement, and survival. Contrarily, *Wake Up Sid* exudes a more quiet more middle class urban environment characterized by ease, regularity, and lack of heart where alienation is an issue of endlessness rather than scarcity. Nevertheless, the notion of depression in both movies is more characteristic of cultural mediation to urbanized life, manifested in withdrawal, apathy, or numb perseverance. The research shows, too, that unequal access to belonging in the metropolis is encoded using the spatial hierarchies, gendered mobility, soundscapes, memory, labour, and community relations. Both movies focus on the significance of change in the plot and mirror neoliberalism concepts where social issues are explained as concerns of personalization, not the change of the structure. Meanwhile, both films create an incomplete image of Mumbai, predicting some of the experiences and leaving other ones aside. Finally, the dissertation argues that the modern cinema in Mumbai includes an affective map of the city in rendering inequalities of the material into the textures of emotion. Placing the categories of youth alienation in the context of sensory and spatial processes of urban existence, the study emphasizes the power of cinema as a source of creating cultural knowledge of mental health, ambitions and belongingness in the fast-evolving megacities.

**Index Terms – Alienation, Youth, Cityscapes, Urban, Sensory Overload**

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian cinema of the 21st century has repeatedly gone back to Mumbai as a privileged location to understand the psychological fallout of high globalization, neoliberal restructuring, and uncertain youth futures. In some movies like *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) and *Wake Up Sid* (2009) the city is not only the space where people live and breathe, but it is a sphere that influences the emotional life, identity formation and the mental landscapes of young heroes. We get the impression of Mumbai existing in a state between ambition and marginalization, proximity and anonymity, potential and burnout. By being contrasting and complementary at the same time, these movies bring out how sensory bombardment, asymmetrical growth, and speeding up of urban patterns create new shapes of alienation and shaky passions within the young. The connection between cinema and the contemporary metropolis has been a thorn of film theory since historical times. Initial arguments on the notion of the city film focused on the metropolis as a realm of display, shock, over-stimulation, in which people are always bombarded by sensory imperatives. According to modern research on urban cinema, it is believed that a film provides a distinctly potent means of portraying urban life since in addition to architecture and geography, moving images can also depict rhythms, atmospheres, and intensities. The camera-moving, editing-tempo, and sound-designing, and mise-en-scene techniques transform abstract processes such as modernization and globalization into actual experiences of congestion, speed, disintegration, and noise. Set in the Indian context, Mumbai has traditionally been used as a filmic abbreviation of modernity and social ascension. The cosmopolitan Bombay of the past promoted diversity and potential and cosmopolitan Bombay of the present approach polarization and exclusion more often. Cinema tends to compare informal settlements with business towers, gated communities, and sterilized business practices, exposing the struggle over the resource and living in the city. *Slumdog*

*Millionaire* contains these tensions by juxtaposing slum overpopulation with the spaces within global capitalism and *Wake Up Sid* depicts a more comfortable urban life with a lack of emotional ambiguity instead of material poverty. The two of them bring out a city that is so divided and at the same time united by the overwhelming forces on youths. Alongside these spatial changes, there is an increasing interest in youth mental health in fast transforming urban communities. Young adults and teens experience increased academic, economic and social demands as they go through stages of transition in their lives.

City life magnifies these forces with congestion, ecological strains and competitive fitness cultures which measure individual value with outward achievement. The tensions are often recorded in popular cinema using characters that are restless, disoriented, or in doubt over their futures. The figures represent a subjectivity caught in between conventional expectations and the neoliberal ideas of self-realization. *Slumdog Millionaire* places these problems in the framework of the main protagonist who is influenced by poverty, violence, and media spectacle. Its kinetic editing, saturation of colours and thickly saturated soundscape establish a world of senses that swings between elation and aggression. In comparison, *Wake Up Sid* shows the life of an upper-middle-class young person who has a comparatively comfortable life which leads to boredom, apathy, and lost ways. The movie uses slower scenes, small scale interiors, and reflective city views to create a kinder of alienation where people have lost hope and found themselves engulfed in emotions instead of anxiety over survival. Nevertheless, both movies are united by one major question, how do the youth live in a metropolis which promises one thing but denies so many something significant to belong to? The dissertation fills this gap in literature since it deals with the interrelationship between urban space, sensory experience, and depressive youth subjectivity.

Although several studies analyse the metamorphosis of Mumbai into a global city, there is less research on how these transformations are emotional among young residents as perceived in the movies. Similarly, youth depression conversation tends to be based on a clinical or a statistical evidence and does not focus on the cultural discourses through which distress is imagined and expressed. A comparative review of these two films indicates how class position gives rise to different yet interrelated types of alienation, and hence indicates that the present day feature film city not only represents social inequality, but also disparate emotional policies. The paper assumes the interdisciplinary paradigm of urban theory, cinematic studies, affect theory, and youth mental health studies. The main idea of this approach is the notion of the cinematic city as product and manufacturer of urban imagination. Onscreen space is created by both framing consumption selectively and focusing on narration as well as sensory input that prefigures some experiences and marginalizes others. The perspectives of urban sociology, especially, the ideas that continuous overstimulation may lead to emotionally numb because of self-defence mechanism, can be used to shed some light on the hyper-stimulated world of *Slumdog Millionaire*.

On the other hand, the more relaxed pace of the *Wake Up Sid* brings to mind more a state of inertial alienation as opposed to shocking alienation. The analysis based on psychogeography and multisensory consider the fact that urban space is perceivable by sound, texture, light, and physical proximity and in a visual sense. Cinema recreates those impressions and plunges a viewer into the atmosphere of the stuffy or soothing strata. A closer textual examination of cinematography, editing, sound, and the performance allows looking at the manner in which youth subjectivity is performed in connection to all these settings in detail. Instead of diagnosing characters, the dissertation understands the subjectivity of depression as a mediated cultural way of living at the time and place of lethargy, uncertainty, or flattened emotion. Through the juxtaposition of *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* in conversation, the dissertation claims that recent Mumbai cinemas bear a trace of movement of the opportunity-driven narratives to the more ambivalent images of youth experience. These films unveil a metropolis that creates dreams and destroys them at the same time creating states of emotions, which are acutely distressing, as well as calmly disillusioning. Knowledge of such representations can bring one to a wider cultural fear of belonging, achievement and mental health in post-liberalization urban India.

### 1.1 Scope of the Study:

The study of this dissertation has a narrow purpose, intentionally based on textual, spatial, temporal, and thematic levels. Textually, the analysis will focus on *Slumdog Millionaire*, a British film with its setting in India and a mainstream Hindi language film, *Wake Up Sid*. They each are approached as independent film texts, and not as halves of larger traditions of adaptation or star politics. The other films that originate in Mumbai are used to provide the context of comparison, but they are the films that are not included in the main corpus. The city of Mumbai is both a real city and a film space around which the study is based. It focuses on the visual and sonic representation of the particular places such as slum settlements, railway stations, construction sites, game-show studios, apartments, cafes, offices, and seafronts. The countryside and non-Indian cities are out of the immediate target unless that is brought up in the films as a destination or objective. The time frame of the studies is the post-liberalization era of the late 2000s a period when the rate of economic growth is high, accompanied by the higher inequality rate and youth insecurity. As an alternative to a lengthy history of Bombay cinema, the work pre-emptly this conjunction in order to accentuate the role of changing economic and cultural circumstances in influencing the mood of cinema and the possibilities of cinematic narrative. Thematic, the analysis has focused on three issues that are intersecting namely urban alienation, sensory overload and the depressive youth subjectivity. As much as it is a certainty that issues like religion, gender or crime will be brought to the fore, it only occurs in as far as they relate to these core subjects. Depression is not treated as a clinical diagnosis rather as a set of affects such as indifference, despair, withdrawal, stalled life paths, which can be explained by cinematic form. The movies then become cultural documents to bigger fashions of youth mental health and not a medical case study.

## 1.2 Research Objectives:

In this specified area, the dissertation aims at achieving a few interdependent goals. The former is to analyse how the two movies use the visual and sonic techniques to create Mumbai as an affective place. It includes determining trends in camerawork, editing, sounding, color, and spatial arrangement that makes the city seem chaotic, oppressive, inviting or reflective. The second aim is to examine the narrativity of depressive youth subjectivity. Instead of concentrating on dialogue or plot, the analysis pays attention to body language, pacing, performance, and even temporal arrangement to learn that the ambiguity of feelings of purposelessness, anxiety, or numbness are ingrained in character lines. The third purpose is to inquire into the intersection of poverty/privilege representations in urban cartographies of the films. It is analysed based on the difference in space accessibility, visibility, and centrality of narrative in the different classes and implementation of these distinctions on emotional experiences. The fourth goal is to put the films into a greater context concerning Mumbai in journalism, pop-culture and academic literature. This contextualization brings to focus the way cinematic images circulate in more extensive cultural texts of the city as a place of dreams, inequality and spectacle. Lastly, the paper attempts to make conceptual contributions to debates about urban affect by defining a set of words to describe depressive urban subjectivity in the film specifically when viewed through the Global South megacities.

## 1.3 Research Questions:

In order to fulfil these, the dissertation is directed by a sequence of thematic qualitative research questions that are clustered in three thematic compartments.

Cinematic Urban-scapes and Senses Rulers.

What visual and sonic effects are the movies enlisting to create the Mumbai as an environment of overload or modulation?

How do some urban places serve as an affective space which amplify or diminish sensations of alienation?

What roles are played by tempo, rhythm, and arrangement of film time in the perception of youth characters, whether as speed or stagnation or redundancy in their lives?

Depressive Young Subjectivity.

In what way are apathetic moods of fear and disillusionment foreshadowed using character behaviour, dialogue and performance?

How individualized are these moods as compared to structural circumstances of city life?

So, how does class and gender influence the access to coping strategies or change whether in the plots or not?

Poverty, Privilege and Politics of Representation.

What does *Slumdog Millionaire* tell the world viewers about poverty and violence and what do these insights teach about alienation among the poor younger generation?

Where do visual representations of relation between rich and poor occur, and are they recreations or attacks of structure inequalities?

The central theme to all clusters is: what are these movie representations telling us about the wider cultural anxieties of belonging, mental health and the future of the youth in post-liberalization urban India?

When these sections are put together, they form the conceptual backdrop of the dissertation. The research aims to reveal the issue of urban space, sensory perception, and subjectivity of youth in modern Indian cinema by analysing how *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* envision Mumbai as a setting and state.

## II. Literature Review

Sociologists, cultural theorists and literary critics have always understood the city to be more than a geographical location. Modern city is perceived as a social and emotional psychological space that defines the way of thinking, feeling, and associating with other people. The initial sociological ideas emphasize on the psychological effects of urbanism especially how residents constantly affected by stimuli have their emotions reshaped. This knowledge has continued to be prominent in subsequent cultural and filmic research on the city. The city is commonly regarded as a lived place, which is created in social relations, economic systems, and daily practices. In the analysis of the film, this concept enables film critics to see the ways in which urban spaces have a dynamic impact on emotional lives of characters, instead of merely being the passive setting. The importance of the city in terms of its role as a subject organization of the subjectivity is therefore established in literature on urban representation as the city as a realm which forms a narration around young people who are either uncertain about their position in the world or going through a transition stage. One of the most popular impacts of the urban life in modern cities is urban alienation. According to scholars large cities undermining personal relationships are those that facilitate speed, competition and distance between people. Cities are symbol of opportunity and movement and yet at times they bring a sense of loneliness and alienation. Alienation, which is very often a visual and spatial strategy in cinema. crowded places are lonesome and characters find it difficult to make meaningful relationships in spite of the social contact all the time. City studies indicate further that the Indian urbanisation fuels this state by allowing aspirations to interact with instability. Young people, especially, feel that the city is emotionally taxing influenced by the need to impress and not knowing how to proceed with life. This is a critical paradigm which we need in interpreting the way films represent urban alienation as not a dramatic break, but as a silent and continuing process which is a part of life. The sensory nature of the contemporary city life is studied by a greater number of scholars.

The modern city is characterized by the continuous noise, visual overcrowding, endless mobility, and the endless stream of the informational flow. According to cultural theorists, this sets very strenuous demands on perception, discontinuous attention, and

minimizes chances to rest or reflect, creating mental exhaustion and emotional stress in the long run. The scholars of the film industry note that movie is especially adapted to express the embodiments of such pressures due to the ability of sound and images to reproduce the feeling of urban life. Quick cutting, shooting, close-ups, and overcrowding of frame and overlaying of the sound designs make one fall in the surroundings that are overwhelming and unstable. Most of the time, distress is displayed not through dialogue or through the explicit explanation of the story but simply sensory form. The degree of what is perceived and heard becomes a manner of individualizing psychological states. The hyper-sensuality has often been equated with confusion, agitation and fatigue in movies involving young characters. The city is thus not just another setting but an environment that gives shape to inner life through the constant stimulation. The subjectivity of youth has also been placed in the center of interdisciplinary studies, especially those that are interested in mental health and emotional susceptibility. According to academics, the youth are particularly sensitive to the urban pressures because they are in the process of identity formation, independence, and social demands at the same time. The depiction of urban depression in the young ones is rarely linked to the dramatic expressions of hopelessness. Rather, they usually manifest themselves in the form of emotional numbness, disorientation, loss of social life or an all-encompassing feeling of stagnation. Cinema emphasizes in the study of literature the aspect of interpreting the existence of such states in the form of atmosphere instead of action. Repetitions, fainéurism, low-key performance and empty space or isolating space are made instrumental in depicting interior discord. These styles do not give us the sensational treatments of mental illness but seem to approximate the dull obscure essence of lived emotional anguish. In this context, the city can be viewed as an active agent of psychological formation as opposed to an inert background.

The urban youth cinema is an important place where the process of forming mental conditions through the interaction of the social pressure and the environments can be studied. Material hermits of urban life such as congestion, inequalities, velocity, and anonymity are interacting with personal anticipations to cause intricate emotional effects which the movies aim to make visible. Critical commentaries of *Slumdog Millionaire* emphasize much on its representation of Mumbai as a place of intensity and exorbitance. The accelerated rhythm of the movie, the congested sound orchestration, and the rich sound layers are aspects that scholars often refer to as factors that create the feeling of perpetual sensory bombardment. It is a volatile city that seems not very forgiving, and there is not that much protection against danger and turmoil. It is speculated in many ways, though, that this aesthetic reflects the psychological states of displaced inner-city life. The relative emotional reserve of Jamal can be frequently interpreted as the mechanism of coping that developed out of being constantly subjected to violence and the uncertain situations.

The alienation in the movie is an occurrence that is immediate and external and grounded in displacement, poverty, and vulnerability of the system. The discussion of spectacle and representation remains a debated issue, however, there seems to be consensus that this film presents the city as an active force influencing the consciousness of the youths. The pressure that the environment mounts is one which requires endurance and not reflection and results into a subjectivity that is geared toward survival. Affective growth takes place in response to external dangers as opposed to self-reflective growth. By comparison, critical reviews of *Wake Up Sid* note that the film is descriptively withdrawn and self-reflective in its depiction of Mumbai. According to scholars, the film prefigures ordinary urban environments like middle-class apartments, cafes, and work places which look safe but again isolating with regard to their emotional characteristics. The city is displayed as well-organized and aesthetically peaceful, which is indicative of the passive nature of the main character. The lack of purpose in the circumstances of comfort leads to the alienation of Sid, not the deprivation. Research discourse relates this depiction to larger issues on disillusionment among highbred young people in urban areas that have the opportunities and cannot garner any

significant goal in life. The slow flow of the movie, lack of conflict, and frequent scenes of silence have been subject to many interpretations including the infusion of depressed moods. Instead of the sense of utter chaos, the city sends a sense of emotional barrenness and boredom. Lack of urgency is even as psychologically important as danger in other works. This damp atmosphere implies that alienation may be formed not only out of struggling but also of an overcoming number of options and confusion over how to cope with them. Comparative scholarship highlights the fact that social position determined the experiences of alienation and depression. Looking at *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* side by side, one will identify emotional worlds of reality destined to be at odds. In one of the stories, there is a city that looms with its intensity and danger, whereas in the other, the scenery is comfortable as it creates immobility and the sense of purposelessness. Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, both movies suggest that Mumbai plays a decisive role in the shaping of youth identity. They show how cities influence the emotional and self-understandings and psychological wellbeing with the help of specific film styles and class attitudes in modern India.

### III. Methodology

The proposed dissertation takes the approach of the qualitative, interpretive and text centred paradigm that is primarily based on the works of the film studies, however selectively incorporates the works of urban studies and research in youth. It reads *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* as cultural texts which actively construct urban experience and youth subjectivity as opposed to mirroring reality. It will be based on a longstanding close look at the cinematic form, narrative organization, and the depiction of space in order to comprehend how the films play out attitudes concerning Mumbai and lives of the youth therein. This chapter presents the research design, justification of qualitative textual analysis, methods of film selection and viewing, analysis tools to be employed in examining representations of cityscapes, affect, and the reflection of shortcomings and ethics in researching representations of poverty and distress among youths.

Through this assumption, the study continues with an understanding that films are multi-layered artefacts that can only be understood under the context of the reading as opposed to measurement with numbers. When the nuance, ambiguity, and contradiction are to be focused on in the description of the urban space and emotional life, qualitative analysis provides such an opportunity. The efforts to measure aspects of violence, sadness, or alienation would reduce the depth of the film expression. It is not aimed that we should gauge the frequency of distress but look at how it is created, indicated, and rendered meaningful in specific scenes. The orientation is consistent with qualitative methods of media and youth studies in general, where interpretation is more privileged than statistical generalisation.

The research design is inductive and iterative as opposed to having the fixed hypothesis. The claims raised during the first visions of the films implied such tentative concepts like crowding and emptiness, noise and silence, movement and immobility, aspiration and exhaustion. The themes were developed as a result of an interaction with theoretical literature on cinematic urbanism, sensual experience, and mental health in youth. On the one hand, there was the relocation between isolated sequences and wider conceptual frames that enabled insights to be made in the films in the same way as it was influenced by the knowledge base. This back and forth movement is a conversation and dialogic manner in which the theory informs the interpretation rather than going ahead to dictate interpretation. The project is relative, as well. Rather than considering the two films separately, it presents *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* as speaking to one another to trace the parallels and dissimilarities in the two films in terms of how Mumbai and youth are portrayed. This comparison will not mean to rank the films, but to showcase how the situation of different industries and different perspectives on classes create different cinematographic strategies. One of the films is a product of transnational production space and is an antecedent of marginalised youth and the other is a mainstream Hindi movie, a protagonist of affluent status. Their joint reading contributes to revealing the assumptions that may not be seen when reading only one of the texts, including the naturalization of bourgeois domestic spaces or the everyday portrayal of violence in slum neighborhoods.

The main corpus is made of the two feature films. *Slumdog millionaire* was chosen due to its universal appeal, its scandalous representation of the slums in Mumbai and its hyper sensuality, all which render it an important text in the study of poverty, spectacle, and survival. *Wake Up Sid* is a complimentary instance of the privileged youths bargaining adulthood in the same city. Juxtaposition of them makes it possible to analyze the way various social positions are performed within a common urban geography. The research data will be in the form of repeated and well recorded observations of the movies and where feasible augmented by the scripts, descriptions of scenes, interviews, reviews and critical commentaries. Such other sources are provided to supply the background but they do not replace close viewing as the main source of evidence. As a reference is sometimes consulted to validate narrative information, interpretation is nonetheless based on what can be seen and heard on the screen.

There was a series of continuous watchings of both movies to understand the general narrative framework, focus, and depiction of the city. Such screenings assisted in determining groups of scenes that were specifically pertinent to the research questions, such as the slum scenes, chase scenes, game show scenes, domestic scenes, and the scenes of introspection. Later watches became more specific and included stopping and re-watching certain scenes to see framing, sound, motion and performance. The following notes were made in an organized manner during these viewings. In each scene chosen, the protocol was the time, description of action, shot scale/ composition, camera movement, lighting/ colour, sound design, dialogue, and behaviour of characters. Specific focus was drawn to the aspects which could be indicators of emotions, i.e., a withdrawn position, agitated movement or facial expression that could point to fatigue or tension. These were categorised into thematic notes that were grouped together in their respective categories like crowding, open space, noise, stillness, workplaces, domestic interior and transitional places like stations or waterfronts. The classification allowed comparing them within and across the films. Just as the 180/190 approach for taking notes or listening, the close textual analysis method works effectively for reading a large amount of text. An Analytic Approach: Close Textual Analysis You can apply the same method as the 180/190 approach to taking notes or listening: the one that works well with a large volume of text is the close textual analysis approach.

The fundamental element of the methodology is close textual analysis, which is a major procedure in film studies that is focused on the production of the meaning of elements of form. This method does not follow the moviemaking image as an open window into reality but as a representation that is created through the use of technical decisions. The composition of the shot, its rhythm of editing, sound indications, style of performance, represent the means of thematic and emotional impact. The close analysis specifically lends itself to depression mood and sensory overload as these two phenomena usually are governed by tone and atmosphere, as opposed to verbal dialogue. The analysis is at a number of levels. On a micro level as individual shots, composition, and length are considered as we would question how the shots place the viewer relative to the city and the characters in the shot. Quick shots that move fast in slum alleys crowded with people can make one feel urgent and unsteady, whereas still shots in eerie interiors can make one feel introspective or unemotional. Meso level sequences are examined as cohesive units with regards to their construction of tension, transit between spaces or contrast among social environments. On a macro-level, the films are viewed as complete stories and followed through common motifs, like trains, skylines, crowds, or water and how these motifs define ways of aspiration and alienation.

In this process, the existing concepts of film studies present a vocabulary in analysis, such as *mise en scene*, diegetic sound, point of view, montage and narrative structure. Meanwhile, it will not subject the specific conventions of Hindi and transnational cinema to the blind application of Western standards but instead be attentive. Since this dissertation is psychologically focused on

the cinematic city, there is special consideration of the spatial representation. The urban places are considered not merely as the environments, but as the actors that influence narration and the feeling. The methodology accordingly includes strategies of reading space that include the location sites where the scenes are set, the location framing patterns and the structuring of movement across the city. This analysis is developed on concepts including cognitive mapping and the urban gaze. Cognitive mapping deals with the ways in which characters and viewers place themselves in complicated urban space, whereas the urban gaze deals with the camera angle giving more privilege to certain vantage points, social groups. The interpretation is based on the ideology of the fact that space is constructed socially to imply that films actively build meanings that are associated with various spaces.

To assist in the analysis of space, annotations and drawings achieve the tracing of repetitive locations and their narrative roles. Railway stations can serve as leaves of departure, a place of loss and cafes or communal apartments can be spaces of creativity and transition. They are interpretive and not geographically strict but assist in bringing out the way space is allocated in the films and the way such allocation brings out class differences. The other methodological issue is how one can examine the affective conditions like alienation or depression but not convert them into clinical findings. The research considers mood with groups of visual and narrative indicators, such as slowed pace, routine, silence or instance framing. Conditions wherein the characters are explicitly fearful, fatigued, or purposeless are analyzed and compared to scenes where atmosphere is indirectly revealed as mood. These interpretations can be associated with the wider analysis of urban stress and youth vulnerability so that the readings cannot be supported by personal assumptions. It seeks to explain how depressive subjectivity may be viewed as a means of experiencing time and space by the reduction of momentum and reduced horizons to avoid medicalizing characters.

Since *Slumdog Millionaire* predicts extreme poverty, ethical problems of representation are also dealt with in the methodology. The literature on representations of deprivation urges against aesthetic representation of deprivation or spectacle of distress. In this regard, the meaning of scenes of violence or exploitation is studied through framing, narrative role and emotional placement instead of regarding them as a neutral piece of evidence. The paper considers the aspect of presentation of poverty as structural or individualised and correlation with wider social forces. In *Wake Up Sid*, where the level of poverty is less obtrusive, there is focus on nothingness, especially marginalisation of working-class labour and informal economies. This self-reflective strategy recognises that even academic interpretation is subject to the history of reinforcing hierarchies in that it objectifies disadvantaged communities. The approach that is based on theory is not restrictive. Different interpretive tools are dependent on concepts of urban studies, youth research, and film theory, but they are not applied as strict models. Memos captured during the research process are analytical on a specific observation about the observation related to the general concepts like sensory overload or social mobility. These reflections are repetitive, and over time, recurrent patterns of those reflections allow to establish the theoretical perspectives that are the most pertinent. Just like any qualitative research, the study is informed by the interpretive position of the researcher. Trying to choose what scenes to analyse and how to read them cannot but include subjectivity in the decisions. The lack of research on the audience shows that the dissertation does not purport to reflect the reaction of real viewers of the films. Its inferences relate to the strategies of representation and possible meanings as opposed to the estimable influence. Neither can the alleged tales be considered as the accurate testimony of actual city life. They are viewed as mediated constructions, which project and craft cultural anxieties. Ethical aspects encompass a tendency not to use sensationalist language to write about violence or deprivation and the acknowledgment of the gap in the presence of the film and real life. Its limited scope has been mentioned in the study as well. The results concerning Mumbai and these two movies cannot be simply extrapolated to other cities and filmmaking cultures. Thanks to its clearly enunciated methods of choice and constraint, the dissertation attempts to contribute to a clear form of analysis as to how *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* portray the intersection between urban alienation, sensory pressure, and youth subjectivity in early twenty first century Mumbai.

#### IV. Key Findings

The basic findings of this paper converge around three tightly linked aspects of the sensorial and spatial framing of urban including the subtle depiction of depressed youth subjectivity and the ideological work carried out by narrative closure in a neoliberal city. Combined together those strands show how modern cinema constructs the image of Mumbai not just as the place but as a living environment, which influences emotional existence, social role, and opportunities young individuals can get. To make visible class divisions the films, first, use quite different aesthetic techniques in terms of space and sensation exposed. *Slumdog Millionaire* invites the audiences to a city characterized by speed and liveliness. The use of handheld camera shots, fast cuts, crammed framing and structured sound creates the aura of perpetual movement and unreliability. Even Jamal finds himself in a precarious and vulnerable state, be it the small maze of slum thoroughfares, or the sheer gleam of the television studio. The city seems like something that should be maneuvered around, and one needs to always be alert and strong. In comparison, *Wake Up Sid* gives us a more serene visual landscape in the work using long takes, harmony in compositions, and sound control. There are apartments, cafes, seaside promenades, which seem to be well-organized and cozy, but this stability has its emotional burden. Mirrors of surrounding things and routines turn into the worlds where time is prolonged and goal loses its sense. The city, in this movie, buzzes in the background as opposed to bullying on all angles. Such deviated styles indicate that more than showing space, urban is depicted in cinema. It is the space that is structured in such a manner that it reflects the emotional situations. To underprivileged youths, disorder only adds to their susceptibility, whereas to privileged youths, it only adds to their aimlessness. Second, the films delinquently formulate depressive subjectivity not as a medical condition but rather as a cultural response to the demands of the urban life. In *Slumdog Millionaire*, emotional distress can be observed here and there among the incessant needs

of survival. The way Jamal reacts to loss and violence in a muted manner and the way Salim reacts in a reserved hardness and even the times of blank stillness reflects a psychic cost that can not be completely evaluated. According to the storytelling, surviving becomes one of the coping strategies, as numbness acts as a shield in an unfavorable world. The speed of the city renders its inhabitants little time to stop and think, and its memory and knowledge becomes a means of survival and progress. Emotional malaise in *Wake Up Sid* has a more pleasant tone. Sid is not in crisis but lacks direction that is conveyed by lethargy, avoidance and disengagement. His inability to conform creates indistinct feeling of incompetence that will linger even with material satisfaction. The daily routine of accomplishing the household chores or returning to creative pursuits, etc, reinstate meaning in life and recovery after all is associated with routine rather than alter-ego. Taken cumulatively, the movies reveal that mood is strongly associated with the space conditions. The targeted experiences of alienation to Jamal are heightened by tight and unstable settings in contrast to the being an outsider as Sid in open and secluded home settings. Cinema, in such a way, proceeds the psychological situations appearing in the form of visual and spatial and shows inner misery through the arrangement of the city itself.

Third, the alienation of the narratives is finally resolved in the form of personal success stories which consume or obviate wider structural analysis. The ultimate event in *Slumdog Millionaire* is an extremely symbolic triumph whereby the experience of Jamal going through hard times is the determining factor of his success. The meeting at the rail station turns the chronicle of struggle into a story of fate and success, and takes the focus out of the systemic realities that created the circumstances of struggle. *Wake Up Sid* has a less dramatic epilogue. Emotional attachment and valuable work build up the feeling of belonging in Sid instead of the spectacular success. The changes that he undergoes indicate that fulfillment is possible by self discovery within available social structures. Additional patterns can be seen in the films through comparative analysis. Spatial inequalities have upheld social inequality where vertical imagery has severally been used to delineate the line between privilege and deprivation. The female characters tend to be the stabilizing factor on the male protagonist in supporting their development without receiving the same narrative attention. The difference between emotive worlds is also brought out through the use of sound design, where thick noise is credited to precarity, whereas minimal noise is attributed to introspection. Hope is promoted in both instances as an individual accomplishment and not a communitarian change.

This interpretation is enhanced by a series of other repetitive elements. The working of memory in the two stories is different. The fragment of the past in *Slumdog Millionaire* traverses the trauma on the city, determining current identity in relations to the violence and displacement that history recalls. In *Wake Up Sid*, the meaning builds up due to daily experiences, but not flashbacks. Different descriptions are also shown in work and social relations. The world of Jamal is dominated by informal labour and unstable friendships on the contrary, the world of Sid is associated with stable friendship and formal opportunities. Even the visual motifs help the audience to perceive, making people connect some spaces with something either dangerous, cozy, motivating, or home-like. The foreign viewer might interpret the slum setting as exotic or appalling, but the viewers in the country will identify the lifestyle of middle-class society as normal. Nevertheless, the two films share common ground in that each of them depicts the city of Mumbai as a melting point where the identities of youths are formed through the clash with the contradictions of modernity.

Collectively, these results help to indicate a more general suggestion. Urban alienation and youth distress as presented by contemporary cinematic descriptions of Mumbai are presented as being supported on the basis of space. The way of environment assignment, movement rhythm, and tactile correspondence of everyday life are emotional conditions. Though the movies recognize inequality and disorientation, the conclusions to the conclusions focus on personal adjustment but not structure. The city does not appear as a mere background, but as a main character that has its pressures and opportunities controlling the courses of characters who live in it. Youth identities are shaped by their continued negotiation with this space, and the struggles represented on screen cannot be decoupled of such spaces in which they are acted.

## V. Main Discussion

### 5.1 Urban Modernity and the Counter-cine Urban Environment

The contemporary city has always had a strong connection with cinema that has undergone metamorphosis. Movies do not just capture city scenes, but they shape how one perceives and experiences a city. Since the early symphonies of the cities praised the powers of industry, and nowadays the films that question the inequality and fragmentation with the help of the cinema, to some extent, makes the metropolis a vast narrative space. Seeing the city through the use of the screen is not a mere background picture; it is a vibrant text that can be made up of images, rhythmic and sounds, which audiences can learn to read. The films take the audiences through the city in an imaginary way thanks to framing, editing, lighting, and sound design, which introduces viewers to its surfaces, contradictions and concealed tensions.

The interpretation of the city as a text can help scholars to treat cinema as a kind of spatial writing. Similarly to the case of written stories that carry ideology and relationships, cinema representation of urban life has hidden suppositions of class, movement, inclusion, and desire. The urban film studies focus on the fact that cinema does not only reflect the city, but it is one of the factors that create it. The images on the screens are used to construct images of places and find them in our memory and even govern. By doing so, film is taken to act as a participant in the social construction of the urban space. The concept provided by Henri Lefebvre in relation to spatial production can also be useful to analyse this process. Lefebvre holds space as an alternative that is constructed socially in the three dimensions that would relate to one another. Perceived space means day-to-day activities of commuting, working and dwelling. The planned representations of space, which include maps, architectural plans and media

representations, are all conceived space. Lived space involves sentimental and symbolic significances formed due to memory and imagination. Cinema exists on the three dimensions at once. It shows planned images of the city that influence viewers in perceiving and their preparation to live in cities emotionally. Movies also educate the audience about where to find, what to fear and what to desire. These dynamics stand out particularly in films whose background is Mumbai. Quick editing and the police camera rushing around the crowded streets create the impression of inexorable movement, recreating the overload of the senses of contemporary life in the city. On the other hand, slower rhythms that traverse exteriors, rooftops, or rain-covered streets generate some break and reflection. These contrasts indicate that the city encompasses several temporalities, emotional registers, which are available with the help of diverse cinematic techniques. Mumbai thus does not emerge as a complete whole but it is the overlaid and combative space.

To even greater extent, the urban gaze concept sheds more light on how cinema makes power hierarchical in the city. Taken over to the bigger concepts of visibility, this concept explains how the arrangement of the camera space organizes the probing connection between space and the viewer. High position of skylines is usually inspirational and sends a sense of power aligning the viewers with dominant positions. The close up views in the streets especially in congested or informal settlements create intimacy but also vulnerability. Using these visual hierarchies, films give authority to various areas of the city making viewers have an emotional response towards certain areas and be non-emotional towards the other ones.

The cognitive mapping is the possibility to place oneself inside complicated social and spatial orders. Having collapsed in the scale and density of cities in late capitalist cities, this capacity often fractures. This loss of direction is reflected in films that make use of fragmented narratives, quick Montage or winding spatial movement. Listening of chase trails across populated neighbourhoods or transport infrastructures brings about confusion that reflects social dislocation of characters. Cinema therefore traces not just physical landscape but emotional and ideological land which portrays the city as a place of anxiety, aspirations as well as alienation. Modernity and globalization have completely transformed the Indian cities since the late twentieth century with Mumbai being one of the most effective symbols. The metamorphosis of the city name of the former Bombay into that of the world Mumbai has been the movement of the economic policy, cultural identity and urban imagination after the liberalization changes of the early 1990s. These changes enhanced privatization, consumerism and internationalization. Cities turned out to be sources of both opportunity and of further inequality. Mumbai is the reflection of this paradox. As the heart of the Hindi film industry, it creates fantasy of success around the world as it is still characterised by drastic inequalities between enclaves of luxury and informal sprawl. The large-scale cinema enhances these contradictions and the city becomes a landscape in which the dreams of mobility meet the structural boundaries.

In the film portrayals of Mumbai, Modernity is reiterated in some ways because of the approaches of Georg Simmel to the life of a metropolis. Simmel thought that the emotional detachment was a defensive mechanism to constant sensory stimulation. Speed, overcrowding, and noise may even result to psychological exhaustion and apathy. This hyperstimulation is seen on the screen in form of dense compositions, fast movement and crosscutting sounds. Characters are often drowned by places that they cannot control. This is heightened by globalization which brings in corporate towers, shopping malls and international brands which promise cosmopolitan belonging by replacing the older traditions of urban diversity. These symbols of global capitalism are mixed with informal settlements like Dharavi that are usually described as being chaotic and economically rich.

In such a setting, it is impossible to say that modernity is not associated with spectacle. *Slumdog Millionaire* associates the keep out of poverty with the international appearance in the form of competition which is aired on TV and the success is individualized and sudden. By comparison, *Wake Up Sid* portrays a less aggressive manner of middle-class modernity which revolves around individual development and artistic self-definition. The city is not that hostile, although it is also organized along the privilege. Collectively, these films expose the visage of inequality of experience of urban life as a result of globalization, whereby certain subjectivities are privileged and others are marginalized. The image of Mumbai cinema is often pegged on the combined themes of anarchy and ambition. Disorder is brought across through the pictures of overcrowding, commotion, and uncertainty. There are bodies and goods, crowds of people in the markets, taxes of people in trains, and rainy monsoons that disturb day-to-day activities. These photos show a city that is on a constant motion and that only the flexible will survive. Aspiration on the contrary is pictured in the height and the openness. Facing the sea, rooftop views, expensive cars and up-up camera shots are some of the symbols that signify hope and mobility. Signs of tranquility in the world of mayhem are frequently hard to find, and as such tranquility appears, so does the probability of something to happen or something to change.

*Slumdog Millionaire* enhances chaos by means of fast editing and furious camerawork in slum settings, where Mumbai is depicted as the labyrinth of challenges and possibilities. It is always in motion and even spaces like trains or rooftops are places of transition between the confinement and the freedoms. The scene of the game show brings another worldview of glittering prosperity, disputable and unstable. *Wake Up Sid* is a more tactful film with a focus on the inner world of the houses, cafes, and thoughtful walks through rains covered streets. The aspiration in this case is not a bang, but the slow and gradual one, engulfed in the process of personal development and emotional attachment.

These opposing descriptions make Mumbai come out as a city that is characterized by ambivalence. Prison and dream exist together and make urban experience both strenuous and promising. The connecting aspect of this tension is taken up by impression, and the metropolis is shown by cinema not as a unity but as a multifaceted field of conflicting desires, inequalities, and possibilities.

## 5.2 Alienation and Youth and the Postmodern Subject.

The issue of urban alienation has always taken a dominant position in social theory. Developed as an idea of Marx and his estrangement and in the thoughts of Simmel on the life in the city, it is a state where people feel alienated to their jobs, their groups and even their personal identities. Migration, economic vulnerability and unequal development enhance this feeling of dislocation in urban areas like Mumbai which are changing hastily. A lot of them come in search of opportunity only to be stuck between their memories about some other place and the lack of new possibilities. Cinema makes this state visible in terms of spatial images: men and women lost in masses, small in front of enormous structures, and trapped in posh but vacuously decorated living rooms. Both *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* follow the adventures of the characters who travel the city without strong roots as they are neither a part of the place they live nor members of the community. The role of youth in modern India takes a highly contradictory position. Their lives are glorified as the embodiment of innovation and ambition, but they have to face unemployment, competition, and high social demands. This contradiction is captured in the film which portrays young characters who are swaying between hope and paralysis. The unsteadiness of survival economies, in which resilience replaces the institute, is witnessed in the case of Jamal, whereas the privilege may result in aimlessness rather than meaning is viewed in the case of Sid. The two characters represent a postmodern sensibility because of fragmentation, overload of media, and seeking meaning in a framework where one can aspire and at the same time be restricted in achieving security.

The mental fatigue of city living can easily look like tacit retreat, instead of a hysterical breakdown. Cinema expresses depression in a certain way: extended silences, remote looks, slack gestures, postponed aspirations. Calls breakdown, inspiration dies, hope is provisional. This is even complicated by media and technology. Screens assure connectedness and familiarity but often facilitate relationships in a manner that increases loneliness. Direct interaction has now been replaced by the televised spectacle and digital communication accomplishing the part of giving living images with lack of intimate connections in these films. Misery is turned into entertainment, and communication is divided into short conversations. Cinema therefore reveals the irony of the modern urban existence: the world of the images and interconnectedness in the immediate future where true belonging is hard to achieve.

## 5.3 The City in *Wake Up Sid*

*Wake Up Sid* presents a considerably subdued and introverted portrayal of Mumbai, as an acute contrast to the experiential bombast of city stories like *Slumdog Millionaire*. The movie directed by Ayan Mukerji happens to be following the story of Siddharth Mehra, a young man who is cushioned by the riches but is paralysed by indecision. Instead of making the city a dangerous survival of the fittest, the story brings out Mumbai as a silent but incessant power that subtly drives Sid to maturity. The city does not attack him with a knife and starvation, provokes him with daily life, anticipation, and need to understand himself. The use of private spaces, wet streets, and well-constructed urban landscapes leads to a quiet mood that is not emergent. Mumbai seems too close too personal, a place where one can find a lot of comfort but never any sense of direction. The shift between inertia and purpose in Sid occurs, however, through minor shifts in occupying space, and this implies an alienation as not in shortage but in surplus.

Sid's world is defined by ease. The residence in Bandra is a representation of this privilege as he has large sized rooms, decor and large windows that look out into the sea. These details are an indicator of security and of potential but they are also a way of making him closed off to the world outside his immediate surroundings. The home also acts as a refuge and entertainment free zone, where he is safe as he is walled in. His failure in schools does not threaten his livelihood and neither does it compel him to change. His disconnection is an attitude of indifference and not rebellion. He rejects work in the corporations without suggesting options and he strolls through everyday life without being determined. The movie does not cast scorn upon this situation using space symbolism scenes instead of literal condemnation. It is the same spaces which carry connotations of achievement which give rise to the inertness, and Sid is left with opportunity and no sense of direction. This emotional immobility is supported by a visual form that Mukerji adopts. The interiors are captured in a warm and visual-rich manner, to make the interior inviting, but in the dormant way. The interaction of a family is in wide spacious rooms where not talking can be more than talking. His mother indulging Sid even further cushions him and his father is the symbol of discipline and expectation. The war between them is manifested geographically in the fact that Sid does not want to enter the world of office his father is in. The difference is dramatic when he momentarily does so. His alienation is aggravated by uniform cubicles, fluorescent lighting and strict routines. This city is not an outright hostile one but a rather passive corrective one, revealing the vacuum of his rejection.

One of the characteristics of the film is its adherence to stillness. Unlike in Mumbai, which is often portrayed as busy and hectic, this story focuses on the action of resting and watching. During the long takes and during stable compositions emotional states are developed slowly. The natural light diffuses interiors and the negative space surrounding Sid emphasizes his isolation. The noise in the city does not take much of the center stage; the listeners are reminded of the presence of the city. The use of colour by cinematographer Anil Mehta is subtle to warn of emotional changes. The warm colors give a sense of coziness with a touch of stagnation, whereas the cool colors are used during the times of hesitation. Rain, which is a common scene in Mumbai movies, is made more contemplative as opposed to dramatized. The monsoon scenes, tend to confuse the border of the inside and the outside, which are associated with the concept of suspension and silent change as opposed to crisis.

This change of Sid does not start with revelation but with displacement. He can no longer stay at home after his failure at school, and his confrontation with his father after which he has to leave home leads to the beginning of a new relationship with the city that is based on hard work and not on comfort. The entry into the small apartment of Aisha becomes a landmark. The small dimension,

ineffective facilities, and the collective duties characterize the differences in the way he lived his life before. This is the first time that Sid experiences Mumbai on the streets. Markets, crowds, pavements covered by monsoon require one to pay attention and become part of them. He is additionally exposed to an ambition culture and cooperation at his workplace, a busy magazine office where Aisha works. This place creates models of thoughtful city life, although he at first feels inappropriate. Regaining the passion of photography turns out to be a turning point as he started to actively think about photography, instead of drifting through the city as a lazy tourist.

There are also findings of reconciliation, which may happen within the periphery of the city, especially in the waterfront at Marine drive. The dialogue about the open sea implies freedom and continuity, as it is stressed that growth is obtained through the persistent experience as opposed to some active conversion. Mumbai does not act as a battlefield, but rather as a healing teacher, where one can find a time to think and relate. The movie depicts depressive subjectivity in softer terms as withdrawn agony instead of anguish. Numbness on part of Sid manifests itself through distracted behaviour, deprivation of motivation, and emotional detachment. He is not depicted as ill, but as purposeless by virtue of being privileged to be so. The presence of Aisha does not break this stagnation in the form of rescue but an example. This independence and determination of hers puts him to task in order to define what he wants to do. The domestic life they spend together makes them intimate and collaborate, which slowly rejuvenates his ability to connect. With the emergence of work patterns and the transformation of the apartment into a home, the city transforms into a conducive place.

However, the decision is still limited by the hierarchy. The plight of other poor citizens does not get much screen time. The success of Sid in regaining his health relies on safety nets, education, and availability of opportunity. Although the movie attempts a fine description of alienation and renewal of the bourgeois, it also predicts implicitly that they cannot permeate everywhere. Mumbai fosters growth in Sid, though necessarily within the shield of privilege.

#### 5.4 Comparative Analysis

The comparison of *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* after having read them together results in a stark difference between the two films shot in the same city and yet yielding such opposite perspectives on the theme of urban life, young identity, and emotionality. The two stories take place in Mumbai but emanate out of different aesthetic cultures, ideological orientations, and views of classes. Per the *Slumdog Millionaire* that was shot by Danny Boyle, the city is depicted as being volatile and unpredictable, where survival relies on endurance, improvisation, and chance. At least in *Wake Up Sid*, by Ayan Mukerji, Mumbai is depicted as the less active space of personal contemplation, in which development is achieved via routine and intimate association. The films allow one to conclude that the city is not a meaning that can be summed up. Mumbai is instead presented as a multiple and transitional space, whose meaning varies depending on the occupants and their occupancy of the place.

One of the principal areas of difference is that they contrast in terms of urban aesthetics. *Slumdog Millionaire* creates Mumbai as a place of insatiable flow and sensual overload. The camera runs through and between the streets, markets, train lines and small alleyways and can hardly give the viewers a chance to stabilize the camera. The high-speed editing and handheld camera technique creates an anxious visual rhythm which reflects the instability of the life of informal settlements of the city. This instability is increased by sound design. There is constant noise of traffic, screaming merchants, sirens, and mixed-up sounds, which imply that the city is incessantly forcing itself upon its population. The slum environments are very rich in colour and they are suffocating but at the same time highlight vitality and constraint which are characteristics of highly saturated colours. Architecture is towering over people which further supports their powerlessness in an enormous city system. Not merely background but the order of things, chaos is transformed into the capacity to exist.

*Wake Up Sid* takes the reverse of this strategy. It is careful with its visual language, and depends on still shots, prolonged shots, slow rhythm. Lighting is gentle indoors and scenes are shown with the least amount of interruption giving an impression of an atmosphere of simplicity and space. Mumbai is depicted in the form of domestic environment, cafes, offices and seafront promenade and not in congested slums. Even in times where the crowds seem to be there, they do not appear dangerous. The city appears amenable and discursive as opposed to oppressive. This contrast is accentuated by rain, which is another common subject in the two movies. Rain in *Slumdog Millionaire* is a part of danger, running or disorder. In *Wake Up Sid*, it is speculative. Water flowing down the windows or leisurely strolls during the monsoon make one reflect, but not to scale. With the aid of such the contrary aesthetics, the movies offer two stratified experiences of urban space. The city is treacherous ground to Jamal and safe earth to Sid where he can let emotional uncertainty in.

Although they are not the same, in both movies, the city is recognized as common infrastructure. Examples of transitional areas in the two stories include trains, which are seen to symbolize possibility and movement. These overlaps imply that though experiences differ significantly, the urban life continues to counter of making the disparate social worlds interrelatable. The images of being young also make the films more unique. Due to deprivation and trauma, youth is formed in *Slumdog Millionaire*. Jamal has a life of loss and of violence and displacement during his childhood. Instead of a secure period of experimentation, it is a struggle to survive that is now very protracted in young people. The state of emotional distress seems to come in short spurts in his silences and sleepy faces, but he cannot meditate about the despair since survival protocol must take action at all times. Modernity in the given case is spectacle. Poverty in the world exists in parallel with other global media, tourism and entertainment industries and experience becomes commodity. The fact that Jamal is a member of the game show reflects hope and criticism. He is an expert of

observing pain, a system that turns pain into entertainment. Youth is proven to be hardy yet exploited, as a result of influence that he or she cannot control.

The youth of Sid is revealed in different circumstances. He is in an environment of comfort, education, and financial stability, but not a lack of anything material. His depression is in the form of apologetic traits and boredom, as well as being at cross roads. He does not perform well in school due to not being able to and his disputes with his parents occur because of not knowing what he wants. The contemporary life introduced to him is that of excessiveness and professional comfort but it is not complete. His battle is internal and not external. Sid has a diffuse suffering, in contrast to the obvious misery of Jamal. These opposite depictions reflect the two-sided nature of modernity. To the poor it adds more insecurity and mobility without permanence. To the privileged, it is a comfort that has no realization. The two conditions bring on the alienation but in other forms.

The movies differ too, in the way they work out this alienation. *Slumdog Millionaire* ends in spectacle. The meeting of Jamal and Latika takes place at the joyful environment of a railway station, and must turn the place which is linked to danger into the place of celebration. His game show win makes him stop being unknown and become famous, which causes an abrupt change of hopelessness to collective happiness. The effect of music, dancing, and emotional exertion of crowds is cathartic and gives the impression of being above all the tribulations. Though critics have pointed out that this ending idealises poverty, it still comes out to explain a strong fantasy of redemption.

*Wake Up Sid* finds its way out in a less dramatic way. It does not have one defining transformation moment. On the contrary, change is a process that is slow and driven by routine, work and relationships. The continual stress of day to day living in the humble apartment of Aisha makes Sid face daily responsibility, and photography provides the creative outburst which recovers the sense of direction. The reconstruction of emotional continuity is achieved through reconciliation with his parents. This development is reflected in spatial transitions. The areas that were linked to comfort turn into conflict zones, whereas unknown areas turn out to be places of identity. Scenes of pure air like the beach come along with the period of clarity, implying growth and not running away. Heal comes when it is a result of a long-lasting interaction instead of a grand achievement. These contrasting resolutions indicate more major ideological tendencies. To a great extent, *Slumdog Millionaire* underlines the role of fate, fortune and outstanding achievements. *Wake Up Sid* is a prescriptive of labor, endurance and slow self discovery. But both movies conclude on the ability of Mumbai to facilitate change. The city is an engine and a barrier at the same time, walking every one of the protagonists on their path. Both tales have hope and identity as their emotional cores yet they are expressed differently. The identity of Jamal is based on experience and memory. Every response he makes on the game show comes about through firsthand experience in the violence and the kindness of the city. Devotion to Latika gives the film years of separation continuity, and their meeting up justifies the persistence of the bond in an oppressed world.

This hope is social and dramatic, as observed by the people and imprinted on collective space. The city turns out to be the furnace where Jamal is formed as a person. The identity of Sid also emerges because of choice and not through being able to survive. Photography also enables him to be creative in his expression and his relationship with Aisha is not founded on rescue but recognition to both. Hope is more subdued and it revolves around own agency and satisfaction. Mumbai is not a battle ground but a canvas of reinvention but is an area that is open to many of those that are lucky. The fact that poverty does not exist in the world of Sid highlights the boundaries of this hope and reminds the viewers that such opportunities are distributed unevenly.

Put in aggregate, the films indicate that cinema constructs the metropolitan imagination. *Slumdog Millionaire* offers Mumbai as a place full of extremes and miraculous survival whereas *Wake Up Sid* offers it as a place of self-discovery and self-development. Both descriptions are not exhaustive, but each of them sheds light on some aspect of city living. Youth comes out as powerless and defiant, optimistic and disadvantaged by situation. The alienation is present without end because it cuts across the borders of the classes, yet the cinema allows the auditors to find the accounts and consider the interactions, changing situation, and temporary alleviation. The city landscape in the two films *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* is influenced by the severe division of classes which is best conveyed by vertical accents. Height, elevation and downward position is used as a visual cue of privilege, vulnerability, ambition and alienation. The city is not a mere horizontal sprawl but it is a vertically-layered sculpture and power is lodged in the architecture itself. Towers stand over slums, balconies are above congested streets, offices are above informal economies and rooftops act as precarious gateways between various social worlds. Verticality therefore turns into a visual language in which inequality is brought to the fore and, at most times, aggrandized.

Settlement like Dharavi are recurrently placed at the lowest point of the urban environment in *Slumdog Millionaire*. The camera frequently gazes down the small avenues or sweeps over limitless corrugated metal surfaces at a focus of solidity and space-tightness. The bodies are seen as squashed by the surrounding, their movements are constrained by narrowed corridors of movement and blocked outlines. Discipline: There is physical and social entrapment as captured by this spatial compression. The city stifles instead of opening up hence it is easy to feel trapped. The experiences with height experienced by Jamal promote the insecure position of the urban poor in terms of mobility. He works on unsound scaffolding, walks on tops, and stands on buildings that are about to fall. Every scale is unknown and unsafe, implying that one can never be sure they will get up the ladder but can. Promotion is dangerous and it may be undone at any time. This corporeal motion is turned into figurative motion in the game show narrative. The stages that Jamal goes through in the quiz resemble an increase in invisibility to recognition. Egocentrically though, hierarchy still exists in the studio. High lights, seats on levels, and the presence of the host are some of the things that encourage a hierarchy of power. Jamal occupies an empty centre of a grand spectacle, his triumph is just a marvelous rise to the top through the bottom. More importantly, this ascension is personal. He is getting up and the structural conditions of the city have not

changed another person. The film finds a momentary escape in rooftops as an escape of these divisions. When Jamal and Latika meet above the slum, they occupy a niche which temporarily suspend the social boundaries. Such moments of elevation are not stable and last. Rooftops are not where one goes but stopgap shelters against an order which at once recovers itself.

*Wake Up Sid*, on the contrary, introduces verticality as the banal factor of middle classes life. The family house that Sid lives in is an apartment on high which offers privacy, airing and space between his house and the hell below. The balcony represents a repeated point of view through he can see the city but is not fully involved in the city. City life is taking place beneath him as remote spectacle and not as direct need. Noise is attenuated, bodies are obscured in nameless movement and the distance creates emotional isolation. Strengths in this structure are corporate towers. Offices elevate above the street level and provide co-ordinated settings of time, conduct and productivity are stringently monitored. The feelings that Sid experiences when he is in such spaces are not the result of suffering but a feeling that they are one of his predestined futures, which he is not eager to attain. Paradoxically, the presence of such a way of walking is an indicator of his privilege.

These hierarchies are rarely challenged directly by *Wake Up Sid* as the case is in *Slumdog Millionaire*. The issue of poverty is not a focus of the frame but escapes through a hint. The hierarchy of the city appears to be the normal and stable vertical order, which runs into daily routine. This ideological normalization in itself is ideological since it makes inequality invisible. When the movies are taken as a whole they do expose how the vertical space inscribes the experience of classes. To Jamal, there is little, risky and unguaranteed upward movement. To Sid, being on top of things is a habit and comfortable. One of the films reveals hierarchy by spectacle, whereas the other covers it by comfort. Space in both instances is a tool that is used to reproduce social differences. These stories also have a strong gendered experience of the city. Men and women have different restrictions and move around the city and these structures represent larger patriarchal patterns. Protagonists are male characters who have been accorded liberty of movement, storytelling and change of identity, unlike female characters who have been allotted the subordinate or auxiliary status. This limited mobility is the case with Latika in *Slumdog Millionaire*. She is also regularly positioned behind partitions like windows, doors, or gates, which literally makes her powerless. The rooms that she lives in, the brothels, safe houses, room guards, imply a sense of imprisonment and not protection. Her efforts to run away are also short-lived and risky; with not many safe ways to go with an uninsured woman inside the city. Her look is turned into a potent theme. Peering out of these confined areas she expresses desire, terror, and patience, but again is mostly aligned as one of those to be saved and not an initiator of her own freedom. Though there are signs of her resistance, her movement will come down to the one that Jamal follows. This dynamic has been part of a recognizable patriarchal story where women are used as emotional stabilizing points of men. Latika is a symbol of continuity and moral orientation and her presence helps Jamal stay grounded during the years of displacement. The connection of the city to her is not explored but experienced.

In *Wake Up Sid*, the character of Aisha is much more independent as compared to Latika, although her life is gendered in a similar way. She comes to Mumbai her ambition being professional and with a clear vision as to making a life out herself. Her small, rented apartment is a place of independence, which she picks and takes care of. Nevertheless, her narrative part is tightly intertwined with the development of Sid. She counsels, supports, and tries to push him, and there is so much of her emotional influence to make him grow up. Though she is a successful person by herself, this success acts rather as a driving force to his self-realization. The visual implication of equality is in their shared walks over the city under a monsoon, the characters move with the same side but the bigger picture still favors the coming-of-age story of Sid. Although it is more eminent than Latika, Aisha is a female part that has been subjugated to the male protagonist margin partially.

The two films together show how the modernity in the city generates gender structures among various classes of people. Women must also be stable emotionally and offer relationships, whereas men are supposed to have time to discover themselves and get noticeable. The city is turned into a topography, where male identity is created, and female characters are placed in it as the markers of this process. Such a remark does not weaken or water down Aisha or Latika, but it shows the limitations of such portrayal through the mainstream filming models. The subject matter of gendering is constructed not only by the availability of the space but also by the narrative precedence. Sound is also used to organize the experience of the city. Soundscapes in both movies can be viewed as maps of emotions between precarity and comfort. *Slumdog Millionaire* can be defined as being sonically intense. The traffic, screaming, machines, and human screaming meet each other all the time and create the feeling of urgency and immediate attention. Silence is rare. The trains also break the rhythm by introducing some thunder and whistles, which announce danger and opportunity. Music tends to come in a burst of energy and it provides a small break of elation in face of adversity. Sound in this world beats on the body, strengthening the feeling that one must be vigilant at all times, or they will perish.

Comparing to *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Wake Up Sid* looks forward to silence. Extraneous noise like weather beating the windows, ceiling fans, and traffic are not loud enough to prevent an ambient level of sound. There is a few seconds of silence, and the dialogue does not cross with such piercing backgrounds. This is the moral of restraint that is reflective of the inner condition of Sid who is somewhat depressed but not in crisis. The music used in the film is soft and pensive, with some scenes of indecisiveness and slow sensitivity opening up. Sound is some kind of a shielded zone where vulnerability may manifest. These two soundscapes encode the experience of classes. The life of Jamal is surrounded by noise whereas the life of Sid is in relative silence. One of these places requires patience; the other replies to meditation. Although quite different, both movies deal with the problem of alienation by means of a personalized change, which represents a larger neoliberal logic. It is the success of Jamal, according to *Slumdog Millionaire*, that structural injustice can be defeated by hard perseverance and fate even though the conditions that caused his misery are still the same. Group disparity is placed at the side-stage, and individual success is placed at the center stage. *Wake Up Sid* also

focuses on self-improvement. Work, emotional maturity, and mended relationships are the factors that allow Sid to solve his crisis, whereas the privilege that allowed him to drift so long is not questioned. The social malaise is translated into a personal challenge in both cases and not a systemic issue. There is a promise of hope, though in a fundamental sense as an individual accomplishment. The direction taken by the films is also different in their address to the audiences. Focusing on the audience of the entire world, *Slumdog Millionaire* does not portray Jamal and his plight as a tragedy but focuses on exposing the desperate reality in a way that makes it dramatic, turning the tragedy into an inspiration. Commodity-focusing on domestic audiences, *Wake Up Sid* makes the perplexation of the character of Sid a common place and usual matter. Such attitudes define who struggles to become known internationally and who lives locally. Finally, both stories imply that Mumbai is not one city; it is a portrait of intermingling realities that are created by existing classes, gender, point of view, and ideology.

In *Slumdog Millionaire*, the memory cannot be separated with trauma and survival. The plot of the film is based on the idea of the recollection because the past of Jamal is shown via flashback, prompted by the police interrogation and the game show questions. Every response is tied to a lived experience based on a particular locality within the city of Mumbai, which makes the city a great store of pain, perseverance, and pain. Lesions of emotions are left behind on the streets, slums, in the railway stations, and tourist landmarks rather than acting as a non-emotional surroundings. In the case of Jamal, it is not really a matter of choice to remember. It is necessary because of the continuation of the quiz and its retention of a feeling of self in a city that has already attempted to take away all his identity a number of times.

The time in the film is resistant and repetitive. The past invades continuously the present and collapses temporal space and refutes the closure. Childhood recollections of violence and displacement and slavery slip over into adulthood where one lives in suspicion and interrogation. Mumbai turns out to be a stratified space where each place is imbued with remnants of preceding pain. Unlearning is something Jamal can not afford. Memory is his last and the only reliable means and it is the one thing that cannot be stolen. Paradoxically, the experience of struggle is translated into winning in the spectacle of game show bringing to the mind the disturbing reasoning where even trauma itself becomes marketable. This time frame indicates the unpredictability of life in the poverty in the city. The time is cut short and unpredictable. Childhood is suddenly terminated, the future is highly unstable, and the present must be watched over at all times. The childhood of Jamal does not begin as a safe phase of growing up but is a series of crises. The city keeps on imposing on him its past thus he is forced to carry it into the present to be able to manoeuvre through. *Wake Up Sid* provides the experience of time and memory in a very contrasting way. In this case, time passes in somewhat linear uneventful fashion characterized by routine but not disruption. Few flashbacks are implemented, and the story is being delivered in the rhythm of such mundane college existence, household duties, cafe talks, and monsoon afternoons. It is not a list of traumatic milestones that is lived through in Mumbai but a time of constant moment that Sid gradually loses his consciousness on and finds himself class privileged in the smoothness of time. Time seems like it has plenty, it forgives and stretches. His failure is not his defining feature, or an end to further prospects. The alienation in Sid is not caused by traumatic disruption but because of inertia. He lives in a prolonged future where there is nothing pressing enough to necessitate change. However, he does not have to dig into the past to survive like Jamal. In fact, he does not give much attention to it. It is only when he takes a responsibility and invests in the world around him that the events of a daily nature eventually start taking some levance. The lunchtime togetherness, the outing in the rain, and the run-of-the-mill things add up in the memory that helps him with his identity balance. Mumbai is important not in that it hurts him but in that it follows his gradual growing up. His memories are soft and dispersed as opposed to sharp and episodic.

The difference between these temporalities demonstrates that the class influences the connection between memory and urban space. It is imperative to remember the city of Jamal to be coped with whilst the city of Sid can be forgotten to be engaged with till meaning is created. One experience requires memory lest it perish; that the other allows being drifting till intent is decided. The contrasting urban realities are also depicted in *Work*. The labour of Jamal in *Slumdog Millionaire* is unregulated, unsafe, and unpaid. He lives as a beggar, crook, and actor as a child and begs, does menial labor, and acts, which are not bred, but maintained by muscular strength. His later employment as a tea server in a call centre is not much in terms of security or recognition. He is not seen, he serves the workers who have their voice over the international markets whereas his life is limited to the local sphere. The informal economy relies on consummability, in which labour is labor, and it is inexpensive, specifically because it is ubiquitous.

The body of Jamal is the instrument of survival in the real sense since it traverses through areas that are meant to generate hard work without any form of dignity. Eventual success does not come through the stable employment but through the commodification of his living through. The game show transforms the personal sufferings into the entertainment industry by turning memory into money. This kind of dynamic reveals a cruel contradiction. The marginalized people cannot be left out of the opportunity structures; they are still integrated into systems which will make money off the stories of these victims. The knowledge that Jamal possesses can only be relevant when it is packaged so that it can be consumed by the masses. His work ceases to be physical but is narrative performance with the same underlying system of exploitation to the use of creativity instead of valuing it.

*Work* is not presented in *Wake Up Sid* through the prism of a necessity to survive but a means of self-expression and a slow maturation. Sid is reluctant to follow traditional life at first, as living as a corporation position is meaningless and stifling. His alienation is brought about by excessive options instead of depressed security, which leads to a stalemate instead of a lack of purpose. Once he finally starts working as a photographer at a magazine, labour is his way of finding out about himself. The city provides him with objects to take photos, artistic inspiration, and business networking. Here, labor comes with the formation of identity as opposed to economic desperation. This image is symptomatic of the post liberalisation Mumbai economy of cultural

industries that are promising fulfilment as well as revenue. His talents are realised and nurtured, which enables Sid to develop a profession that interests him. Errors are not disastrous and result in adaptation and not destruction. However, the illusion of freedom is supported by something unseen. His aspect of creative work is explored based on financial security, education, and family support. The artistic labour in the film is emancipatory and the structural privileges are mostly ignored that allow such exploration to take place. The city serves as a store of potential to Sid as opposed to a danger. The two films taken together display some parallel urban economies which work in the same urban metropolis. One gains something out of misery and makes survival a show. The other rewards are prudence, ingenuity, and cultural capital. The two systems are not only a part of Mumbai, but they are quite segregated. Accounts of merit and aspiration hide the uneven nature of distribution of opportunity in the background.

The concept of community and friendship provides an opposition to alienation in both stories, yet the way they are expressed is radically different. The relations in *Slumdog Millionaire* appear in the world of total vulnerability. The relationship between Jamal and Salim is a product of traumatic events and a necessity and not a choice. Violence, lack of food and treachery continue to tear their friendship. The stability of the city is destabilized at every corner. There are teachers in slum communities that come together, then unravel under the action of the police, the criminal underworld, or financial factors. Confidence is weakened and existence at times requires silence or solitude. The limited opportunities that the people on the margins had ultimately lead to Salim engaging in criminal activities. Structural violence weakens solidarity as his choices destroy their relationship with Jamal. In such atmosphere, common life is uncertain and can be destroyed easily. In comparison, in *Wake Up Sid* social ties are represented as relatively stable. Sid regards his friendships through conflicts and does not disintegrate. Conflicts are solved by discussing them and not by means of force and relationships have an opportunity to be restored since they are not endangered by material catastrophe. The small circle of people that Aisha has gives emotional and professional assistance, which gathers in spaces that are aimed towards relaxation and comfort. In this case, the instability will more be psychological than physical. Every misunderstanding and disappointments put strains into relationships but hunger or displacement are not looming in the background. Reconciliation can therefore take place. The point of difference in belonging is evident in the comparison. Attachment is continually threatened to Jamal; to Sid, it is taken as a given and disturbingly displaced only temporarily. Not just living conditions but the strength of social bonds is determined by class. Both movies are also based on repetitive visuals that assist the audience in decoding the city. Trains in *Slumdog Millionaire* represent transition, danger and escape. They facilitate movement and subject bodies to danger. The use of money comes at a flash, thus highlighting its strength and unsteadiness. Challenges of violence and weapons are repeated, making it clear that one is under threat constantly. The perspectives of the city are conflicting as religious meetings and tourism attractions contrast religious devotion with spectacle. These details are shown on the background of slums, building sites, and warehouses, which depict Mumbai as incomplete and unstable. The repetition of such images also supports the idea that the danger is a cyclic and inevitable thing. The visual vocabulary is more subdued and homely in *Wake Up Sid*. Coffee mugs, laptops, notebooks, and cameras are all objects that denote introspection and creative labour. Balconies are where people study, which are places where the characters interact with the city without taking the risk of being close. The beach front at the Marine Drive is also repeated as the site of contemplation. These themes develop the environment of freedom and personal development.

It is revealed through repetition that the city is readable and navigable, linked to the process of self-development, as opposed to emotional turmoil. It is this contrast between the two films that creates different urban imaginations between one of scarcity, danger, and the other of possibility, and contemplation.

An attentive analysis should also pay attention to what each movie leaves. The two paintings paint interesting pictures of Mumbai, but they are both simplified understandings of the expanse of the urban life. *Slumdog Millionaire* has received criticism of reducing the experiences of slums into a formula of extreme poverty broken by miraculous luck. The wider histories of labour, migration, caste, and general struggle are being given minimal pay and the slum is rendered to a dramatic effect and still a palette but not a community, diverse. On the contrary, *Wake Up Sid* does not use the city of working classes so much. Service workers are presented on the stage only in the functional role and such problems as a breakdown in the infrastructures, political confrontation or constant unemployment are not in the frame. There is the presence of economic inequality that will not often be the focus of the narrative. Both movies as well provide scant examination of women outside their position in relation to their male heroes and also pay little attention to the idea of queer lives and subcultures. Such omissions alert the audience to how film cities are selective formations that are defined by the interests of the narrative and expectations of the audience. The comparative analysis is then able to show not only dissimilarities in representation, but also similar silences. These omissions give a direct way to the ethical questions that are going to be answered in the end, where the consequences of these approaches to understanding youth alienation are going to be discussed more in-depth with references to popular cinema.

## VI. CONCLUSION:

This dissertation has examined the film territories that the films *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Wake Up Sid* utter and utilize, as a way to prove how Mumbai is not a passive space but rather an active space in its contribution to experience, identity and emotional life. By the close reading and comparison interpretation of the text, the work indicates that the city space in both movies functions as a psychological landscape, but not a neutral space. The city turns into a format of experiencing and a geography where young people require to feel their way through economic stresses, societal anticipations, and spatial imbalances. In both the Mumbai is not viewed as a place; it is lived in, experienced and understood.

Weighed out in theory-based backgrounds, then on a film-by-film basis, and conclusively on the comparative synthesis level, the project has demonstrated the way the symbolic form of aesthetic expression captures the intellectual and emotional impacts of the modernity of the cityscape today. The use of camera movement, sound, pacing, architectural framing, and common motifs used in the city become part of the cinematic technique to make the city an affective presence. Sometimes it seems to be the pressure and enslavement, sometimes opportunity, or release. Throughout the analysis, Mumbai is not one unified and wholesome place but is a tectonic plate of conflicting forces between disorder and order, neediness and affluence, rush and stasis, despair and insincere optimism. Although the scope of narration, class emphasis, and the production context are evidently different in the two movies, they all come together in the depiction of youth in a world that is beyond their control. Jamal Mumbai is renegade and unpredictable that requires improvisation and hardiness just to exist. Comfort and material security provided by Sid in Mumbai, in turn, generate emptiness and spiritual straying. These directions vary in the conditions of the surfaces, however, overlap in their more profound implication that the city is developing the psychological processes. Mumbai is reliant not so much on location as a condition, a complicated social space that young subjects need to learn to make sense of, to create a picture of self.

This reading is not limited to film studies but applies to urban theory, sociology and interdisciplinary studies of youth experience in the rapidly changing societies. Popular films could serve as affective maps, according to the view of urban studies. The twin perspective of Mumbai as a mean street of the underworld or its symbolic paradise makes the homogenization of globalization efforts appear uniformly inspirational. Rather than showing this, the movies expose the unequal distribution of opportunity and psychological comfort among social classes in the present-day urban city. Cinema representation also plays a part in formation of imagination of people. The images of Dharavi as the location of a desperate survival, or of coastal neighbourhoods as the place of recreations impact the perception, discourse and even consumption of the city. Such mediated visions tend to drive tourism, branding and urban discourse. Planned excursions through informal sectors, rise fantasy of promenades, and dream tour retailing of high-rise accommodation all play off the typical film tropes. The emphasis on verticality as a symbol of class hierarchy in the dissertation is in line with the spatial theory, specifically the concept of space as a social product. The kind of filmic depiction of elevation, enclosure and segregation reflects actual urban development processes implying that the filmic narrative can seemingly stabilize the dominant planning views and social division. In terms of films, the project has a methodological effect and significance by focusing on affective form but not the narrative content solely. These differences between kinetic realism and contemplative stillness explain how class experience is encoded in a rhythmic, tonal as well as sensory design. It could be used to expand the cinematic orthodoxy beyond Mumbai to other city films in Europe, Latin America, informal settlement portrayals and to the modern city dramas of East Asia. Another essential but neglected aspect that is also predicted in the study is soundscape. The sensation of noise and silence and the musical textures or instruments influence the perception of space and the manner in which spectators associate themselves with characters thereby demonstrating that urban subjectivity is built through hearing, as well as, seeing. There is also the gendered analysis of the films. Female characters are usually given stabilizing or sacrificial roles which are associated with domestic or relational space, whereas male protagonists get more freedom of movement and development. Simultaneously, both stories have a propensity toward personal solutions, moving towards personal growth over macro changes. These endings capture larger post-liberalizing trends of mainstream cinema, in which social issues are repositioned as a matter of self-betterment, that plotting is similarly institutive of the neoliberal consumerism of self-accountability, neoliberal consumerism of mobility. The dissertation links interdisciplinarily the study of cinematic analysis and mental health research of the youth in dense urban settings. Overcrowding, financial instability, and sensory overload are often associated by studies in the sphere of public health with anxiety, depression, and isolation. The movies discussed in this paper are one way of giving national articulations to such conditions, dramatizing how pressures on space are rendered into emotional conditions. Depressive or disoriented subjectivity has become an option to occupy the space; the dialogue between the humanities and social sciences is promised to be open. In the light of youth studies, the different destinies of Jamal and Sid make it difficult to make blanket statements on the alienation between generations. Cities have not equally disillusioned urban youth; they exist through the lenses of the position of the class and resource status. In precarious conditions, alienation is based on insecurity and being prone to violence. To those relatively well off, it can be brought about by the lack of purpose or direction. The given difference highlights the significance of intersectional approaches that would take into account the economic background, education, and cultural capital in analyzing the identity formation of youth.

These films also are useful case studies in pedagogy of urban space, ideology and emotional life within contemporary culture. The involvement of students in such texts may encourage critical media literacy, where students learn to perceive the ways in which cinema techniques contain social hierarchies and beliefs regarding success, fit, and strength. There are also implications of the analysis to the policymakers and planners. By continuously linking wellbeing to being able to access open spaces, supportive communities and mobility, narratives can strengthen the argument relating to the utilization of open space to counter isolation and inequality in urban design. Simultaneously, the research has shortcomings. The concentration on two films will provide more depth but less generalization. In Mumbai, the film industry is varied and has independent, regional, documentary, and experimental films that may view the same issue in varying ways. The methodology of the project is based on the textual analysis as opposed to the audience research. Interviews or surveys might tell what these representations mean to viewers of various backgrounds in terms of real representations, aspirational fantasy, or problematic simplifications. In the study of poverty, there are also still ethical tensions concerning representations of the poor, where scholarly concern might actually reproduce the same gaze it is attempting to critique. The time situation of the films, an end of 2000s, also constrains its usefulness to today and the city, which has already been redefined by digital media, economic changes, and post-pandemic changes. Future research may expand the corpus to later texts, look at how

the text is received within communities, or include ethnographic data like diaries of youth or web stories. Transnational comparison with other cities in the Global South, gender-based studies, and digital humanities which reveal large-scale patterns of cinema in urban-based experiences would also help in gaining a better insight on the topic of cinematic urban experience. Finally, the research postulates that cinema continues to be an important tool by which societies fantasize about urban life and bargain over its contradictions. In a world of alarming urbanization, growing inequality and of widespread uncertainty among the youth, movies provide a glimpse into the emotional certainty that cannot be statistically defined. The implication of all this is that to read the cinematic city is to explore the inner world of its inhabitants; their fears, dreams, exhaustion and strength. Both Jamal and Sid remind us of the fact that the contemporary metropolis needs to be studied by focusing not only upon the infrastructure and economy, but also other aspects, including mood, perception and the delicate mechanisms through which people create meaning under the influence of overwhelming conditions. The city of Mumbai in the films is simultaneously the place and the state: a site that overloads, constructs and sometimes supports the life of the younger generation that is enacted in it.

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