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The lived space of the youth – The social production and reproduction of urban space at night in Pune, India

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I dedicate this thesis to the flat above Hotel Panchami and the people, who filled it with life, stories and surprises.

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1. Introduction

A couple of years ago, I was in Bangalore with a good friend of mine from India. We went out for dinner and had a very intense discussion about personal perceptions of life, cultural differences and universal values. This discussion ended at the limit of our empathy for each other's point of view, which basically means it ended up in a big fight. After accepting that we won't come to any agreement, he looked at me and told me that there were some things about Indian society I would never truly understand. As you can imagine this line made me think a lot and left its traces in my mind. Now, a couple of years later I must say that he was right; to a certain extent. He is right that I will never be able to see things in the same way as he does, he is right that there are limits to empathy and comprehension of other perspectives. But I wouldn't give up on trying to work on the ability of putting myself in somebody else's shoes and therefore getting the chance of truly questioning my own perception, view and opinion about the different worlds I'm living in, about societies. And that's the point where social science comes into play. Social science offers you the tools and challenges your abilities to find ways of understanding societies in a profound way. It enables you to take a step further from empathy for a good friend to methods and theories of grasping dynamics, structures and processes how societies and the diverse perceptions of them emerge. Science is the functional tool for reflecting, analysing and acknowledging the diversity of points of views and their embedding in the constant production and reproduction of societies. My first scientific steps with this thesis offered me the chance and the provided the framework for critical reflection on collective processes and the development of society in India; an aim that emerged from many personal encounters, experiences and big fights.

This personal anecdote and my motivation might give you a hint for my understanding of space in this thesis and my choice of theory. The concept of social space is interesting because it gives you a new perspective on society and enables a deeper understanding of the reasons and dynamics of social realities. The critical engagement with space is rather a *Gesellschaftstheorie* than a spatial theory, as Lefebvre rightfully argued¹. So apart from the

¹ cf. Schmid 2005: 202

very general aim of proving my friend wrong and trying to understand more about Indian society, what is the aim of this thesis?

The analytical starting point of this research work was the very basic question of how space is produced and reproduced. Which dynamics are relevant, which dimensions of society do play a role and lie behind the space we use and create in our daily life? Furthermore I wanted to figure out how this idea of social space can be connected to the realities of contemporary urban India. Even if the question of social space is not only relevant for cities but for any socio-spatial constellation, I decided for the urban sphere in India because on the one hand cities are centres of diversity of economic, political and socio-cultural processes. On the other hand cities are the centres and leaders of development of contemporary India and this idea made it very interesting for me to critically analyse these spaces. In this concern Pune was the optimal choice because it is a city with a much diversified history and presence and one of the leading metropolises in the current economic development experiencing many transformations.

The interest in critical engagement with such a praised centre of Indian development was not about entering the European mainstream third-world city discourse only focusing on topics like slum development, poverty and lack of infrastructure to disclose the many negative aspects of the actual realities of this development. The interest was rather to put the cart before the horse and concentrate on a field and social group, where the benefits and advantages of this transformation towards a liberal and globalized accumulation regime are supposed to be visible. Therefore I decided to take a closer look at the urban middle class, or as named in the recent literature the new middle class and to critically question this assumption of them being the beneficiaries of the developments in Pune. The interest was to analyse the differentiation of this group and their role in the production of space to see if they are not only the beneficiaries but also the creators and leaders of this development.

More concretely, I chose to work with middle class students in Pune, which is known as the Oxford of the East, and aim at understanding what the contemporary social production of urban space in Pune means for their life realities and which role they play within.

The research project was explorative and qualitative and aimed at a multiscale and multidimensional analysis of the process of production and reproduction of space. It was explorative because it started from the very basic question of how social space is produced

and what does this mean for subjective life realities in Pune. It was empirical, qualitative social research because this was the only option to truly engage with subjective life realities and understand the relationship between the different scales of the social production of space. Only a multiscale analysis including broader developments of India, contemporary Pune as a specific temporal and spatial constellation and individual life realities, can live up to the aim of understanding the relationship between society, space and individuals. Only a multidimensional analysis including the social, economic and political dimensions of the different layers of social space can enable a deeper understanding of Pune's development.

At the more general level the aim of this these was a critical analysis of the relationship between society, space and individual through explorative research.

The relationship between society, space and individual means in other words the dialectic of structure and agency within the production of space. More specifically this means to analyse how individuals and communities deal with spatial structures that enable or inhibit their acts and space of manoeuvre.

Are the spatial practices of students in Pune a mere reproduction of already existing structures of the production of space or do they critically engage with this socio-spatial order, they encountered in their city. Therefore the final interest of the analysis of this thesis is to identify reflective and transformative potential in the agency of students and its significance for socio-spatial structures. Reflective and transformative potential refers to the ability of middle class students in Pune to consciously participate in the process of the production of space, to become producers of space and not remain mere users of the spaces that are structured by the liberal and global development dispositive and its economic, political and social elites and dominant groups. The analysis of this interactions and processes of structuring and producing of space are located in the urban night in Pune. In this thesis the night is understood as specific time-space constellation, which has received increasing attention and relevance as social space and political arena through the restructuring of spaces in the city.

This general outline of my research led to the following analytical steps, which you will be able to explore in the upcoming chapters.

First there is a theoretical exploration of the concept of social space following Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. Since his work is a critical and holistic

analysis of society through the theory of the production of space aiming at transforming the dominant, capitalist mode of production, it was the best choice for this research project.

The theoretical challenge was that his work remains in many cases on a very philosophical and abstract level. Therefore it was important to connect it with theories of the dialectic between structure and agency to be able to connect his very valuable approach with empirical, qualitative social research, which explored social, economic and political processes in Pune and subjective life realities of students. After a short introduction into the role of the night for the production of space in Pune, you will find a historical exploration of urban space in Pune, which enables the analysis of the temporal dimension of social space and is an important foundation for the understanding of contemporary social, political and economic structures. Before we then turn to these structures in contemporary Pune, there will be a short outline of the significance of the national transformations since the New Economic Policy in 1991. This compendium of political reforms is considered to be a caesura in the Indian development and the fact that Pune is now one of the leading cities of the national, economic development can be partly led back to this substantial economic, political and social transformation. With the analysis of theory, history and the macro-level of Pune's development, the background for better understanding of the economic, political and social structures. The first part of the empirical analysis will talk about those structures and their role within the production and reproduction of space in Pune.

The last chapter will focus on the reflective and transformative potential within Pune by analysing the different dimensions of agency among students in Pune. Insights in the content, motivation and perception of agency will be provided and the broader significance for the city will be explored.

To sum up, here are once more the research objectives of this thesis:

To achieve a deeper understanding of the interrelations between society, space and individual within the production and reproduction of urban space in Pune, with a special focus on the time period after 1991.

- To identify and analyse socio-cultural, political and economic processes and structures that are relevant to understand the contemporary production of urban space in Pune.

- To furthermore explore the historical embedding of these processes and structures and the relevance of the interdependent global, national and local scale for them.
- To critically question the significance and influence of these processes and structures for subjective life realities and agency of students in Pune.
 - To identify different forms of agency of students with special focus on urban space at night.
 - To examine the transformative potential of agency for socio-spatial structures and the dominant mode of production of space in Pune.

Figure 1: Map of contemporary Pune²:



² <http://groups.msn.com/Geography/localgeographyofpune.msnw> , 03.08.2007

2. Theoretical Exploration of Social Space

Writing about cities and everyday life of social actors in urban environment does not necessarily include writing about space. This statement might sound surprising or even weird but for a long time the examination of space as dimension, concept, and social reality did not exist in social sciences. The city, the house, monuments and fields were merely containers or stages where social processes took place. Even in natural science, where space as dimension did play a major role, until the beginning of the 20th century space was reduced to Euclidean space.³ Due to developments of thought in natural as well as social science the discussion about space changed and it started to become an analytical tool for historical changes, construction of identity, social interaction and many other topics. This break with traditional perceptions and concepts of space was named with the term *spatial turn* and more and more scholars started emphasizing the importance of theoretical exploration of space as a relational, dynamic and social process.⁴ Along with that, space got included as an analytical variable and a matter of examination in many different disciplines. What perhaps hasn't happened till now was a broader shift of perception and general scientific approach that includes space as one irreplaceable dimension of being, producing and living. Space is considered to be socially produced and relational in research on spaces in the field of urban studies, geography, urban planning and others. But when it comes to analysis of social processes in other fields, which are not directly related to space like, this dimension is often left out and space is reduced to being scenery for social processes.

Different disciplines have included space as a concept in manifold ways; in anthropology for example it plays a major role in the discussion of identity building processes. Especially due to the intensification of global movement and the transformation of the role of nation states, borders, places and spatial flows came into the fore of anthropological scholars like Arjun Appadurai, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson. Critical geography connected the importance of space to the analysis of political economy and possibilities for alternatives to the hegemonical mode of production of capitalism. David Harvey is perhaps one of the most well known theorists in this concern, and one of his aims is to theorize about a

³ cf. Soja 1996; Löw 2001; Läßle 1991

⁴ cf. Soja 1996; Döhring 2008

political economy of space.⁵ In Sociology most authors, like Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu, and Martina Löw explored the relationship between social actors, the constitution of spatial order and structures that build an underpinning of this process. The question of the role of the dialectic between structure and agency in the constitution and perception of social space is at the centre of their scientific work.⁶

To include the critical analysis of the concept of space in the different disciplines also led to a more interdisciplinary approach towards social sciences. Scholars like Dieter Läßle, who comes from an economic background, and his famous “Essay über den Raum”⁷ show this holistic theoretization, which is crucial for the further development of spatial theories.

Of course this account on work that has been done on space is short and doesn't cover even a small portion of the extensive research that has been done on space, especially in the last thirty years.⁸ The development of theory production is insofar important to this thesis to understand the decision of the theoretical approach towards the exploration of the interaction between urban space and students in Pune. The aim of this project is not just to write about a city but to concentrate more on the understanding of production of space at a certain moment and within a particular social order. This research considers space as one essential instrument to understand society, because space constitutes our social being as individual and collective. Lefebvre stated in his work “*Social space works (along with its concept) as a tool for analysis of society.*”⁹ To be able to work with space as an analytical tool, perspective and condition of being, it is indispensable to understand the creation, constitution and production of space and its implication in a very broad manner because it is the starting point for all the arguments and thoughts that follow. For the theoretical moment of this project disciplinary categories are not essential but rather disturbing.

Therefore the theoretical challenge of this research is to explore theories and create an analytical framework that achieves to connect a profoundly elaborated and broad concept of space with a possibility for operationalization for empirical research on life realities. That

⁵ cf. Goonewardena/ Kipfer/ Milgrom/ Schmid 2008; for further reading see Sayer, Andrew (1984): Method in social science. A realist approach. Hutchinson University Library, London; Massey, Doreen (1994): Space, place, and gender. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press and Gregory, Darren/ Urry, John (ed.) (1985): Social Relations and Spatial Structures. Macmillan, Basingstoke

⁶cf. Löw/Sturm 2005

⁷ cf. Läßle 1991

⁸ For further reading on the spatial turn see: Schmid 2005, Löw 2001

⁹ Lefebvre 1991: 34

shows quite clearly that just to understand that space is relational, produced and dynamic is not enough to take further analytical steps neither it should just be an auxiliary mean to diversify my argumentation about social processes. The main ambition of this thesis is to trace down the interrelations between space, society and individuals in a contemporary urban setting in India.

2.1. Why to choose “The production of space”?

The production of space as theoretical project of Henri Lefebvre is one of the best examples of a Universalist and interdisciplinary exploration of space itself as well as space in relationship to society and mode of production. One of the main achievements of this theory is that Lefebvre manages to create a very fruitful bridge between Marxist thought of capitalist transformation, linguistic and phenomenological analysis of perception and representation and the exploration of the meaning of lived experiences. His main focus in this is actually the bridge, which means their interrelationships and furthermore these theoretical approaches as constituent parts of the production of space. Lefebvre aims to create a social theory (*Gesellschaftstheorie*)¹⁰, or in better words, a socio-spatial theory with revolutionary potential.

This aim to understand spatial and social processes with an analytical framework, which is not bound to disciplinary limits, gives the possibility for network thinking, creative exploration of social reality and detains the analyst from one-dimensional argumentation. At the same time, it is a big challenge to be able to grasp the essential ideas without reducing Lefebvre’s project to one discipline and achieving to use it further for the analysis of concrete and real situations and processes.

In the reception of Lefebvre it quite often happened that his work got either used for research in the field of political economy, leaving out the big part of lived experiences and subjectivity that is crucial for the production of space. In the postmodern thought, represented mostly by Edward Soja, Lefebvre’s theory of space became a playground for creative explorations of exactly these lived experiences and their political potential for change. In this case the mode of production was understood in a solely abstract way, leaving out the actual production process and Marxist analysis of capitalist development,

¹⁰ Schmid 2005: 202

which are of high importance to Lefebvre's understanding of space.¹¹ Lefebvre's approach starts from a dialectical understanding of social realities and integrates the structural macro-level of society through the analysis of the relations of production and reproduction as well as the micro-level of social and individual life realities through the focus on the lived space. This makes Lefebvre's approach adequate for a holistic and multi-scalar analysis of the production. Furthermore Lefebvre not only aims at a holistic analysis of the production of space but ultimately he wanted to disclose the transformative potential of a critical and multi-dimensional understanding of space to achieve social change. Therefore he also understood space in its historic development and embeds the dynamics of transformation and reproduction in concrete historic-geographic settings.

For these reasons the theoretical work of Lefebvre matches the crucial interest and aim of this research project of understanding the interconnectivities between the production of urban space, individual life realities, and society with its economic, political and social components. The first step will be now to examine critically the concept of space and production in their historical and social embedding and then concentrate on the interaction between society and individual, between structures and agency.

2.2. Space as social product

"The project I am outlining, however, does not aim to produce a (or the) discourse on space, but rather to expose the actual production of space by bringing the various kinds of space and modalities of their genesis together within a simple theory."¹²

Space can't be understood without understanding society, there is no simple definition and image of what space exactly is because then it would be a static object and not as Lefebvre argues a social product.¹³ Now it could be argued that a product in common definition is only an object, but Lefebvre speaks against this notion of space, saying that the "*production process and product present themselves as two inseparable aspects, not as two separable ideas.*"¹⁴ This means that space is historical and dynamic and constitutes initial point and outcome of dialectical-material social processes. Generally it can be said, that the important

¹¹ cf. Goonewardena/ Kipfer/ Milgrom/ Schmid 2008

¹² Lefebvre 1991: 16

¹³ cf.: 27

¹⁴ cf.:37

realization here is that every society is spatial in its being and therefore by the interplay of structures, in a sense of relations of production, and agency space gets produced and at the same time space is an ordering system of these structure and gives the floor for individual and the collective to act. That's why it is possible to look at space to understand society and its mode of production because "*...every society - hence every mode of production with its subvariants (i.e. all those societies which exemplify the general concept - produces a space, its own space.*"¹⁵ Till now space might sound like an abstract concept hard to grasp and therefore it is difficult to imagine how it can serve as a tool of analysis. Hence it is crucial to apprehend one more aspect of space as a social product that is that space always includes its material manifestation in places, monuments or social practices, it is "*a materialization of 'social being'*".¹⁶ Exactly this material dimension of space can be the starting point for all kind of analysis of the interconnections between space and society. We will come back to the different dimensions of space in the following chapters.

2.3. The process of production

Space, being socially produced is consequently based on the mode of production that consists of relations of production and social relations of reproduction that are closely linked to each other¹⁷. Furthermore natural resources play an important role as they are the material starting point of creation. The relations of production can be seen as structures of a socio-spatial order that is connected to a certain moment in time and undergoes constant reproduction and transformation. That is what Lefebvre refers to when he says that every society produces its own space. A society, which consists of different actors, produces and reproduces its own spatial structures which demonstrate themselves and get mediated through spatial practices which are bound to division of labour and means of production. This process is embedded in an arena of hegemony and power, fuelled with representations and ideology, aspects, which have a strong influence on the possibilities for a society to create spaces that are democratic and appropriated by the majority of people.

For example the transformation of the Indian political economy towards a more liberal and globally oriented mode of production had a major impact on the organization of labour,

¹⁵ cf.: 31

¹⁶ cf.:101

¹⁷ cf. *ibid.*: 32

distribution of means of production and therefore on the production of space. That can be witnessed in the change of built environment in Indian cities, as well as in the ideological or strategic representation of them through city marketing or planning decisions. Furthermore social hierarchy is transforming, new social forces are coming into being, having more and more influence on allocation of means of production among other important decisions about the production process.

This analysis of relations of production as well as class struggle is essential for Henri Lefebvre because his theory is not only concentrating on understanding space but it is also a critique of (neo-)capitalist economic order. Through the exploration of space and its mode of production he tries to find explanations for this hegemonic capitalist development and at that same time he traces down potential for transformation and revolution. For Lefebvre this possible change is inter alia a result from the inherent contradictions within capitalism.¹⁸

“...the passage from one mode of production to another is of the highest theoretical importance for our purposes, for it results from contradictions in the social relations of production which cannot fail to leave their mark on space and indeed revolutionize it.”¹⁹

But these contradictions are not enough to actually initiate change because at this point the question of power comes into play. Space can be an instrument for exercise of power and the reproduction of dominant structures; therefore there is no possible transformation of social order if there is no transformation of spatial order.

In this spatial hegemony that is concerned with control over of spatial relations²⁰ different elements play a major role. Ruling classes and the state are the predominant actors and ideology, representation and technocratic organized knowledge are the mediators of the reproduction of social relations.²¹ Lefebvre puts a major emphasis on the role of actors in the perpetuation or transition of spatial order; a position, which distances him from a solely structuralist analysis.

¹⁸ cf. *ibid.*: 52

¹⁹ cf.: 46

²⁰ cf. Gottdiener 1985: 124

²¹ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 11

*“The analysis of any space brings us up against the dialectical relationship between demand and command, along with its attendant questions: ‘Who?’, ‘For whom?’, ‘By whose agency?’, ‘Why and how?’”*²²

In his theory the dominant actor is the modern nation-state, an argument that is comprehensible while looking at the publishing date and place of “The production of space”. The state controls and organizes space according to the needs of its own perpetuation as monopoly of power.²³ Considering the shifting role of the nation-state, the colonial history and the postcolonial political development of the Indian nation-state, this argument might now not hold true and should be critically examined during the empirical analysis. The actors might be different and the state being the main disposer over the spatial order might be an outdated assumption, but it is important to understand the main thought behind this, that “*Spatial organization [...] represents the hierarchy of power*”²⁴. Space is a powerful tool for social groups and their interests and gets mediated through the usage of images, discourses and knowledge.

But for Lefebvre reproduction of social formations and unequal distribution of means of production is just one part of the production of space, the other one is the possibility for creation.²⁵ The creation of space includes the possibility for change, revolution and appropriation of spatial order by different classes of society. In the process of creation users become producers of space, which means that users appropriate space and create it anew following their needs of self-representation. Lefebvre even takes it to the level of a whole society and states:

*"It is not the work of a moment for a society to generate (produce) an appropriated social space in which it can achieve a form by means of self-presentation and self-representation."*²⁶

Before we take a closer look at the role of actors and agency within the mode of production, which establish socio-spatial structures and the possibilities for creation it is important to understand the different dimension of socially produced space in Lefebvre’s theory. Just

²² cf.:116

²³ cf. Gottdiener 1985:125/126

²⁴ Ibid. : 126

²⁵ The relationship between production, reproduction and creation is well illustrated in the following citation: “...*production without creation – mere reproduction.*” Lefebvre 1991:116

²⁶ Lefebvre 1991: 34

through the apprehension of these dimensions and their dialectical relationship, power relations and their historical transformation can get specified.

2.4. *The three-dimensional dialectic of space*

Until now we have figured out that space is not an empty container that hosts social processes but it is a social product that is based on a specific mode of production/society. This production process consists out of structural aspects that facilitate social reproduction and possibility for agency which can fosters the ablation from dominant social formations towards a creation of space. This process is supported by the inner contradictions of capitalism.

For our analysis we came to the conclusion that it is important to take into account the contemporary mode of production, social actors and their hierarchy, as well as material spatial manifestations to understand the interaction between space and society. But this lies still on a far too general level, without clear indications of this interaction. To specify this and stick to his general aim of thinking dialectical Lefebvre detected and named three dimensions of space, “spatial practices”, “representations of space” and “representational space”.

2.4.1. Spatial practices

Spatial practices are the material manifestation of society. “*Die räumliche Praxis kann also als materieller Aspekt der sozialen Praxis verstanden werden.*“²⁷ It is the dimension of space that can be perceived with our senses, therefore when space is related to actors and the experience of space, Lefebvre named it *perceived* space. One the one hand it includes the built environment, the process of construction, the material side of production. On the other hand spatial practices are everyday life routines of members of the society. It is the road in a city and the act of walking on this road everyday to work. As spatial practices are based on routines and everyday life practices, they enable the reproduction of social formations and support the continuity and even reinforce the dominant mode of

²⁷Schmid 2005: 211; Spatial practice can therefore be understood as the material aspect of social practice; translation by author

production.²⁸ This idea is closely connected to Lefebvre's work on the critique of everyday life, where he argues that it is important to liberate the entire life environment to enable a broad and profound social transformation because "...*Lefebvre considered the everyday to be the decisive category linking the economy to individual life experiences.*"²⁹

Spatial practices are not reflexive practices; they follow certain structures and routines of everyday life and presuppose a certain common sense and practical knowledge about the interpretation and usage of spatial formations.³⁰ Hence the critical examination of these practices is missing and alienates the subject from its space. This alienation due to capitalist mode of production is one of the biggest concerns of not only the theory on the production of space but for Lefebvre's theoretical work as a whole. "*The declared goal of his intellectual project was, above all, a "revalorization of subjectivity" and the quest for spaces that allow for autonomy and creativity.*"³¹

Spatial practices can be critically examined through the questioning of allegedly common and normal acts as going to the supermarket or driving to work and seemingly objective and static buildings of a city. This is important because "*the spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space;*"³² which means it secretes relations of production and dominant interests of ruling groups by pretending spatial practices to be apolitical.

2.4.2. Representations of space

Representations of space are the outcome of a social process of abstraction with a major influence on concrete spaces. These representations are based on the conceptualization of space of "*scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent – all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived.*"³³ This process of conceptualization are lined with ideology and knowledge and embedded in a specific moment and mode of production. Representations, which have to be understood as „*Verdoppelung des Wirklichen*"³⁴, are

²⁸ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 33

²⁹ Ronneberger 2008:135

³⁰ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 33

³¹ Ronneberger 2008: 135

³² Lefebvre 1991: 38

³³ *ibid.*: 38

³⁴ „Doubling of reality”; translation by author

based on theories, allegedly objective and scientific elements³⁵ that pretend a transparency and inner logic of space. They can be images and verbalized sign and symbols, as for example maps, plans, transport and communication system³⁶, as well as dominant discourses and legalized rules and regulations.

These representation of spaces have as already mentioned despite their high level of abstraction a decisive power in the production of space, because it is impossible “...to see a space without conceiving of it, without concentrating discrete perceptions by means of a mental act, without assembling details into a whole 'reality', without apprehending contents in terms of their interrelationships within the containing forms.”³⁷ These *conceived* spaces are the dimension of space which enables the reproduction of specific social formation through categorization, naming, and simplification of socio-spatial processes and give a structural guideline for spatial practices. This causes an increasing distance between subjects and their life realities, it concentrates the ownership over concepts of space, and therefore over a dominant sphere of space itself, in the hands of social actors that possess the technical and intellectual skills as well as political power. Lefebvre identifies an increasing importance of the representations of space in modern history that diminishes the possibilities for revolutionary incentives and an alternative social order. The tricky thing of the representations of space is similar to spatial practices, the missing awareness and critical questioning of the hegemonic processes that lie behind. A more detailed exploration of the power of concepts and images and their relation to concrete space and subversive strategies will follow in the chapter about the historical transformations of space. This idea of abstraction that leads towards a homogenization and fragmentation of space is central to Lefebvre's analysis of the production of space, because it relates to one of the major questions, which is about the ownership, domination and appropriation of space.

Once again it must be noted that the characteristics of actors that control this space is related to a specific regional and temporal moment of history. The presumed importance of scientists, urbanists and planners is embedded in a western European, post-war, fordist context. For this analysis of contemporary urban space in India it will be important to

³⁵ cf. Schmid 2005: 219

³⁶ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 233

³⁷ *ibid.*: 94

review the position of these of social actors and the figure out which other groups can be considered to have conceptual and discursive power over space.

2.4.3. Representational space

Now we come to the dimension of space that is probably the most difficult to understand and to explain, first and foremost because one of its most important characteristic is that it eludes verbalized and systematic expressions. Representational space, that is also called “lived space”, “...*need obey no consistency or cohesiveness*”³⁸, which means that unlike representations of space it is not produces through technocratic science and planned categorization, but created out of symbols, imaginaries, dreams and artistic expressions.³⁹ These subjective elements and not reflected emotions, like desire, pleasure and suffering that lie behind, are connected to collective and individual experiences of space.

That is the point where is one of the major differences between the ideas of representations concerning “conceived” and “lived” space. The representations of the representational space are actually not related to a hegemonic knowledge and ideology but, “*sie repräsentieren gesellschaftliche „Werte“, Traditionen, Träume – und nicht zuletzt auch kollektive Erfahrungen und Erlebnisse.*”⁴⁰

This explanation about lived space leads us directly to the question about the actors and relations of power. Lefebvre points out that representational space is “*the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’, but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who describe and aspire to do no more than describe.*”⁴¹ This means that there is a participatory, collective ownership of space which also enables this space to unfold potential of change. Because of the multilayered codes and subjective symbols that mediate lived space, this space escapes discursive power and daily routine and makes subversive practices and a “*veiled criticism of dominant social orders*”⁴² possible.

The emphasis on the symbolic sphere and emotional experiences does not mean that lived space exists solely in a metaphysical and disembodied dimension; it is always connected to

³⁸ Ibid.: 41

³⁹ cf. ibid.: 38/41

⁴⁰ Schmid 2005: 223; “...They represent social values, traditions, dreams – and last but not least also collective experiences.; translation by author

⁴¹ Lefebvre 1991: 34

⁴² Shields 1999: 64

spatial practices and material being. Discussing the character and role of representational space leads to two difficulties that should be critically examined.

First of all it is the role of symbols, collective values and traditions that following Lefebvre's argumentation are the opposite of systematic, hegemonic knowledge that serves a certain elite to remain in their social position. The focus on the role of subjective and emotional elements is indeed very interesting and special about Lefebvre's theory because he connects it to capitalist mode of production and discursive structures. But in his argumentation he concentrates too much on the position of organized political power, as the state or urban planners and leaves out the very complex sphere of traditional, community based power relations. He sees subversive potential in collective creation of meaning apart from the formalized, hierarchical system of the modern nation-state, which is definitely one possible idea, as plenty of work on public culture has shown us⁴³. On the other hand the collective does not represent a vacuum of power with democratic structures. Traditions, religious belief and rituals are often connected to economic interests, political power play and a social hierarchy apart from classes and a nation state. We could consider that this sphere of traditions and common practices he includes into the social relations of reproduction, but because he doesn't clarify the aspects of these social relations any further, the concepts of symbols and collective imaginaries are quite diffuse. A possible approach towards this sphere is on the one hand to concentrate on these elements as expression of subjectivity which enables agency beyond dominant social formations, and the other one is to critically explore the role of symbols and the actors that stand behind their creation and production in the specific setting of research. Questions to be posed could be about the role of modern rituals and the use of technocratic means for revolutionary agency on the one hand and about the appropriation and domination of symbols and traditions. Perhaps the focus for understanding representational space should be more on the terms of imaginaries, dreams and memories which Lefebvre uses in a psychoanalytical conception. In this context the imaginary should be understood as „eine Art ursprüngliche Besetzung der Welt und des Selbst mit einem Sinn“⁴⁴ which is based on the ability of subjects to create images

⁴³ cf. Public Culture: An interdisciplinary journal of transnational cultural studies. <http://publicculture.org/>, 6.4.2010

⁴⁴ Castoriadis 1984: 220; a kind of original allocation of meaning to the world and the self.; translation by author

that don't follow any causal or symbolic logic. It leads „auf eine ursprüngliche Fähigkeit zurück [...] sich mit Hilfe der Vorstellung ein Ding oder eine Beziehung zu vergegenwärtigen, die nicht gegenwärtig sind (die in der Wahrnehmung nicht gegeben sind oder es niemals waren).“⁴⁵

The imaginary and the lived experience as the main elements and media of creation of representational space are theoretically well argued but put another difficulty for the further exploration of the production of space.

The problem is how to explain and understand lived space without enslaving it with representations of space through the act of conception.⁴⁶ Processes and dynamics of lived space, that are crucial for the possibility of change, can't be put into words or questioned critically, because it exists in a sphere beyond words and systematically thought.

„One of the deepest conflicts immanent to space is that space as actually 'experienced' prohibits the expression of conflicts. For conflicts to be voiced, they must first be perceived, and this without subscribing to representations of space as generally conceived. A theory is therefore called for, on which would transcend representational space on the one hand and representations of space on the other, which would be able properly to articulate contradictions (an in the first place the contradiction between these two aspects of representation).“⁴⁷

Not just theory has to try to capture the lived space, empirical research as well carries this approach within and therefore the most interesting and crucial aspect of social transformation is at the same time the most difficult to include into academic research and this thesis. One could argue now that qualitative, empirical research is actually the most adequate method to grasp the dimension of representational spaces, because the idea is to abstain from generalized and categorizing analysis but focus on meanings of subjective life realities. Furthermore the reflection on the researcher's position in the production of knowledge and the power relations, one encounters in the practices of investigation, are subject to critical working process of every qualitative project. That leads at least to a certain awareness of the relations between subjective life realities and the documentation

⁴⁵ *ibid.*: 218; “back to a original ability to envision a thing or a relation with the help of imagination, which are not visible (which are or have never been perceivable); translation by author

⁴⁶ cf. Schmid 2005: 224

⁴⁷ Lefebvre 1991: 364

and analysis of them. But in spite of these aims and methods, qualitative research can't escape the written word and the use of concepts about space to be able to share it with a broader public. Therefore this approach as well falls in the trap of representations and discourse of space.

One option would be to concentrate on the development of new methods of empirical research and its documentation. To put the focus on spontaneous interaction, oral history and artistic expression or to include psychoanalytical techniques would be ideas that could be interesting to explore further, and at the same time they would be a good instrument of changing dominant structures of science. But still these would be just little steps to converge towards a spatial dimension that is impossible to capture because it is a living and contradictory process. Before getting lost in despair after this realization and questioning the purpose of this thesis we should examine Lefebvre's theoretical work a little closer and focus on his argument that these three dimensions exist in a dialectical relationship with each other.

2.5. Aiming for a theory of unity

Lefebvre is therefore aiming for a theory of unity, not for a categorization of spaces into the three dimensions. The idea of unity includes that the constituent parts can just be understood through the whole. The aim shouldn't be to divide aspects of social reality into three categories but to apprehend their dialectical relationship between each other. The challenging task in this theoretical and empirical process is to overcome boundaries of thinking, to transcend disciplinary boundaries but still keep up with a clear and intelligible argumentation. Another crucial aspect of the idea of unity is to prevent fragmentation but acknowledge diversity. This thought is one of the keynotes in Lefebvre's work, unity with integration of diversity and difference should stand against the strategic fragmentation and homogenization of spaces by dominant interests and the state. Lefebvre sees this fragmentation and homogenization, which is closely connected to the process of abstraction, as major tool of exercise of power and control over spaces.⁴⁸ Thus to be able to grasp the unity between the three dimensions of space it is necessary to examine not only the dimensions itself but also their interaction between each other.

⁴⁸ Cf. Ibid.: 11/27

2.6. *The relationship between the dimensions of space*

From the perspective of philosophy of science and historical materialism Lefebvre names this interaction as three-dimensional dialectic. This approach towards dialectics, which Lefebvre worked on mainly in his work “*Le Matérialisme dialectique*”⁴⁹, is very strongly discussed in secondary literature. The positions are diverse but after carefully reading a variety of argumentations⁵⁰, Christian Schmid in his latest paper manages to grasp Lefebvre’s theoretical approach and main aim the best by explaining that through the inner contradictions and interactions of the first two terms, a third one develops, that carries aspects and definitions of the first two within itself. The character of the first two terms can therefore just be understood out of the creation and content of this third term, which in Lefebvre’s case would be the representational space.⁵¹

*“At a general level, the fundamental dialectical figure in Lefebvre’s work can be understood as the contradiction between social thought and social action, supplemented by the third factor of the creative, poetic art.”*⁵²

These three dimensions play different roles and hold each one a specific position in the power relation between each other, which is connected to a certain intersection of time and mode of production. The mode of production and the historical moment establish a hierarchy between spatial practices, representations of space and representational space, and get reproduced or changed by their interplay.⁵³

*“In different historical conjunctures, the three ‘facets’ of spatialisation will, in Lefebvre’s view, dialectically combine in distinct structural systems and even as hierarchies.”*⁵⁴

This is the main thought which serves as the basis for Lefebvre’s historical analysis of political economic transformation of space and society. He carefully looks at the roles of the three dimensions, connects them to Marxist critique of the capitalist socioeconomic order and creates his utopia of change out of it.

⁴⁹ Lefebvre, Henri (1939): *Le Matérialisme dialectique*.

⁵⁰ For further reading see: Shields 1999, Soja 1996, Elden, Stuart (2006): *Understanding Henri Lefebvre*. Continuum, London.

⁵¹ cf. Schmid 2008: 32

⁵² *ibid.*: 33

⁵³ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 46

⁵⁴ Shields 1999: 167

2.7. *Understanding contemporary space as historical product*

Lefebvre argues that the development of the modern capitalist mode of production is inextricably linked to the transformation of space. Following his terms the development of the modern nation state and the (neo-)capitalist economic order can be explained as transformation from absolute to abstract space. Absolute and abstract space as two opposite spaces that are characterized by a specific constellation and interplay of spatial practices, representations of space and representational space. Especially the discussion of abstract space is very relevant for contemporary social science and this thesis, because Lefebvre identifies abstract space to be the space of modern capitalism. Abstract space is characterized by a domination of representations of space over representational space, a high level of abstraction. It cuts our daily experiences in little, categorized and systematic pieces and places and postulates coherent and homogeneous meanings and symbolic logic.

*“We already know several things about abstract space. As a product of violence and war, it is political; instituted by a state, it is institutional. On first inspection it appears homogeneous; and indeed it serves those forces which make a tabula rasa of whatever stands in their way, of whatever threatens them – in short, of differences.”*⁵⁵

Unlike abstract space he understands absolute space, located in different historical spheres before the enlightenment, as a mythical, cyclic space that relates to the body and the spiritual dimension of life. Absolute space creates social meaning that abstains from representations but, following Lefebvre’s argumentation, is the *space of truth*.⁵⁶ The relationship between the different dimensions of space is crucial for the understanding of absolute as well as abstract space, therefore he argues:

*“Here and there, in every society, absolute space assumes meanings addressed not to the intellect but to the body, meanings conveyed by threats, by sanctions, by a continual putting-to-the-test of the emotions. This space is 'lived' rather than conceived, and it is a representational space rather than a representation of space; no sooner is it conceptualized than its significance wanes and vanishes.”*⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Lefebvre 1991: 285

⁵⁶ cf. *ibid.*: 236

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: 235/236

This concept of absolute space is important for the deeper understanding of the idea of spatial transformations, but many moments of the book can be criticized for a very nostalgic, glorifying and naïve view on absolute space and historical development. Surprisingly it seems that he sees nature, religion and even politics (exceedingly politics in ancient Greece) as spheres of life that are untouched by representations and logic of production⁵⁸.

The main thought behind this abstract and absolute space and its historic transformation is that due to the establishment of capitalist mode of production as dominant socio-spatial order, subjectivity, appropriated experiences, differences and people as creative forces got overruled by strategic images, the distinction between experts and layman, and a centralized power by the ruling class which through pseudo-democratic measures or enhancement of consumption enforces alleged consensus of people.⁵⁹ Schmid even argues that this concern with „*The critique of practical power and the force of abstraction – of thinking, of writing, and of language – is a leitmotiv that runs through the whole of Lefebvre’s work.*”⁶⁰ This also leads to the fact that Lefebvre is very useful for critically analysis of media, because he criticizes the domination of the verbal and visual sphere over the lived experience quite often, because it reduces processes and meanings to their own representation and reflection.⁶¹ It is definitely an interesting argument that holds true in many cases, but it is too short-sighted to reduce media and the written word to this because it leaves out the potential of critical media. Texts and images can be subversive instruments to voice opinions and express subjective experiences; the crucial question here is once again about the role of actors and level of appropriation of spaces and thoughts. That shows that media, the written word or symbols cannot be directly linked to one of the spatial spheres, they have to be looked at in their socio-spatial embedding, the ownership and the motivation of usage.

One more aspect that we have to include to understand the character of transformation correctly is that the transition from absolute space to abstract space and the shifting interplay of the different dimensions of space can’t be seen as traceless step from one entire

⁵⁸ cf. *ibid* 236 ff

⁵⁹ cf. *ibid.*: 57

⁶⁰ Schmid 2008: 32

⁶¹ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 52

and enclosed being to another one. Space carries within its own preconditions and shows historical continuities especially through representational space. It's crucial to see that representational space never ceases to exist neither it disappears within abstract space, it is shifted towards the underground side of life.⁶² Therefore space is a social and historical product.

The interplay between the different dimensions is one of the main points of analysis for the empirical part as well, because through understanding this process, the production and reproduction became clearer and the questions of why people act in a certain ways gets elucidated a little further. This perspective on the production of space creates furthermore a connection between the macro- and microlevel of social processes and provides an insight into the relationship between society, its mode of production, space and individual life realities, which is crucial to this research.

2.8. *General thoughts on spatial transformation of society*

Lefebvre doesn't stop with analyzing the actual state of contemporary socio-spatial order; he takes one step further and tries to disclose possibilities for agency, which could lead to a social transformation and a socialist revolution. His claim for a revolutionary project was the starting point for many critical geographers to develop concepts of thought and practice to challenge the dominant capitalist world order. This thesis doesn't aim to highlight such revolutionary and political strategies of transformation neither the field research concentrates on such movements and organizations. It concentrates mainly on the potential for transformation and alternative spatial practices starting from the everyday life realities of one specific group of people in the city of Pune. Therefore in this chapter there won't be an extensive discussion on strategies for alternative socio-spatial order in theoretical literature⁶³, with David Harvey⁶⁴ as one of the most prominent representative. What

⁶² cf. Schmid 2005: 253

⁶³ Edward Soja also provides us an extensive discussion on the possibility for alternative concepts of space in his book "Thirdspace". Further exploration of his concept would be taking things too far for this thesis, because the main focus lies on empirical findings and their relevance for subversive and creative spatial processes.

⁶⁴ For further reading, see Harvey, David (2000): Spaces of hope. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh

interests us at this point is to understand profoundly and question critically the thoughts of Lefebvre about social and spatial transformations and the role of the three spatial dimensions and subjectivity in this process. These thoughts we should keep in mind when we later on explore the empirical findings and try to figure out which potentials for transformative agency does actually exist in this specific time-space continuum of contemporary Pune.

If we talk about spatial transformation in connection with Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, it is concerned with the creation of space and not the mere reproduction. Through creation, which implies the spatial expression of subjective needs, a shift in the relationship between representations of space and representational space occurs. At the same time this shift enables the strengthening of creation over reproduction. Transformations can also happen within capitalism at a small scale but a revolution, which is the goal of Lefebvre's project, must conquer everyday life.

"A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space - though its impact need not occur at the same rate, or with equal force, in each of these areas." ⁶⁵

If these profound changes happen, a new space establishes together with a different socio-spatial order and mode of production. Lefebvre calls this space *differential space*. The concept of differential space is one major thread to be understood, when we talk about spatial transformation. The second one, that matters perhaps more to the empirical part of this thesis, is the role of actors which is marked by a growing emphasis on subjective relationship to space.

Differential space can be seen as a counterhegemonic development against abstract space, which highlights natural differences that abstract space tried to eliminate through homogenization and fragmentation.⁶⁶ Differences refer to aspects like gender, natural resources, country, as well as occupation, economic background, way of life, necessities or desire. That doesn't mean that Lefebvre want to categorize society and space due to these differences or social order should be structured according to these differences, because that

⁶⁵ Lefebvre 1991: 54

⁶⁶ cf. Lefebvre 1991:52

is what dominant actors producing abstract space do. They instrumentalize *minimal differences*, as Lefebvre names them, for their own purpose of reproduction of power structures. The politicization of religions, identity politics or hegemonic tools like censuses would be examples for processes where differences are incorporated in a capitalist mode of production and abstract space. Kanishka Goonewardena and Stefan Kipfer relate to these processes in an article about multiculturalism in Toronto.

*“By minimal difference, Lefebvre refers to the lived experience of capitalism, dictated by spatialized clock time and rationalized production processes, wherein differences appear in the form of quantitative distinctions between serialized, homogeneous and interchangeable instances. In our context, these would include the reified manifestations of cultural hybridity or multi-culture induced in everyday life by the commodity form or bureaucratic logic: fashion items, ‘ethnic’ cultural festivals, cookie-cutter houses in a suburban development.”*⁶⁷

The differential space, Lefebvre aims for, should be characterized by the production of *maximal differences*, which should be understood as concept and practice⁶⁸, and stand for the integration of diversity and multiplicity in unity. Furthermore this *“...maximal, or produced, difference implies a “shattering of a system”. It points to festive, creative, affective, unalienated, fully lived forms of plurality and individuality that assume rich social relations unfettered by forms of “indifference” (individualism, pluralism, imitation, conformism, naturalized particularism).”*⁶⁹

Differential space is a critique of processes of alienation, abstraction and commodification of integral aspects of identities and a plea for space produced by its users. It promotes unity with diversity instead of homogenization with division by class, race and gender⁷⁰. In this space people find their own self-representation following their needs and desires that don't have to fit in ready-made social categories. This would lead to the development of different ways of life and as well to a different mode of production, which would be the ultimate socialist aim of Lefebvre's project.

⁶⁷ Goonewardena/Kipfer 2005: 675

⁶⁸ cf. Schmid 2005: 276

⁶⁹ Kipfer 2008: 203

⁷⁰ cf. Goonewardena/Kipfer 2005: 675

2.9. Appropriation and Subjectivity

„Ich suche meine Heimat dort, wo man die Vielfalt schätzt, ohne sie auseinanderzudividieren. Ich suche meine Heimat dort wo man Menschen nicht zerstückelt.“
Fatou Diome⁷¹

Differential space is appropriated space, a thought which leads us to a very important point in the process of transformation, the relationship between actors and space. Appropriation of space means, that “...a *natural space* [is] *modified in order to serve the needs and possibilities of a group*...”⁷²

This concept is about ownership of space, not in a literal sense of property, but concerning the fact that people can call a certain space their own, in a sense that they find themselves in this space, they find answers to their needs and desires. Appropriated space enables the expression of experiences and leads to a revalorization of subjectivity. This focus on the role of emotions, experiences and desire is in contrast with the current mode of production and abstract space, because abstraction leads to the loosing of the connection between the 'user' and his self-reflection. He can't perceive himself anymore due to the supposed absolute character of space.⁷³ That's why “*the true space of pleasure, which would be an appropriated space par excellence, does not yet exist.*”⁷⁴

I have already mentioned in the former chapters that the role of actors is crucial for understanding the different layers in the production of space. Any revolutionary transformation requests a new positioning of actors in the concept and practice of space. It means to overcome the barrier between *producers* and *users*⁷⁵ of space, which has to hand in hand with a critical deconstruction of representations of space and the domination of urbanists, planners, technocrats as well as images and scientific knowledge. These elements and actors of hegemony and the successful pseudo-reality that is created by them, are the

⁷¹ Diome, Fatou (2006): Der Bauch des Ozeans. Diogenes, p. 273; Where diversity is appreciated without dividing it, there I seek my home. Where human beings are not fragmentized, there I seek my home. Translation by author

⁷² Lefebvre 1991: 165

⁷³ cf. *ibid.*: 93

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*: 167

⁷⁵ "Perhaps we shall go further, and conclude that the producers of space have always acted in accordance with a representation, while the 'users' passively experienced whatever was imposed upon them inasmuch as it was more or less thoroughly inserted into, or justified by, their representational space." *Ibid.*: 43

reasons of the “*silences of the ‘user’*”⁷⁶ and the missing revolution. The tricky thing as it was mentioned before is that abstraction isn’t noticed as such because of the alienation of the subject from its own experiences and emotions, therefore produced and commodified expectations of life are mistaken for real desire and needs. This discussion also connects to the critique of modernization and city life in the work of Walter Benjamin and the exploration of psychogeography by Steve Pile.⁷⁷ He states in his book on dream work, the production of space and city life:

*“Indeed, the endless phantasmagoria of commodities taps directly into the conscious wishes of modern individuals. Unfortunately, although commodities seemingly embody and fulfil people’s wishes, they remain alienated from people’s actual, historical desires.”*⁷⁸

Historical constellations of space, as abstract space or differential space, are a product of the interplay of spatial practices, representations of space and representational space with their different attributes and the interaction and hierarchical structures of various groups of actors. The main thought that lies behind is that subjective, unalienated emotions are the source of revolutionary potential because it leads to a critical examination of the hegemony of the pseudo-reality of representations.

*"Any revolutionary 'project' today, whether utopian or realistic, must, if it is to avoid hopeless banality, make the reappropriation of the body, in association with the reappropriation of space, into a non-negotiable part of its agenda."*⁷⁹

2.9.1. How to transform space and society?

The production of space is always a process of continuity and change, of reproduction and transformation. Both of these elements shouldn’t be understood as static outcome but as a process itself. To apprehend continuity and change and the dynamics that lie behind, it is important to see the interplay between structure and agency in the production of space because these are the constituent party of any kind of social transformation. The balance between them and the kind of structures and agency we are dealing with leads to

⁷⁶ Ibid.: 51

⁷⁷ For further reading, see: Pile 2005

⁷⁸ Pile 2005: 55

⁷⁹ Lefebvre 1991: 166/167

conclusions about the transforming or stable character of certain socio-spatial constellations. Spatial structures are, following the work of Anthony Giddens and Martina Löw, are part of social structures, which are rules and regulations that are embedded in and organized through institutions. They produce meaning and regulate behaviour and serve as guidelines for social interactions. Structures enable agency and at the same time this agency can reproduce them.⁸⁰

*“Das heißt, gesellschaftliche Strukturen ermöglichen raumkonstituierendes Handeln, welches dann diese Strukturen, die es ermöglichen (und anderes verhindern) wieder reproduziert. Gesellschaftlich organisiert wird diese Reproduktion über Institutionen.”*⁸¹

Spatial structures in Lefebvre’s theory can be identified as relations of production and social relations of reproduction. That includes the system of labour, the urban planning system, family structures and the relationships between generations and men and women.

Furthermore he identifies discursive structures that find their manifestations in the representations of space, which can be images, theories, maps and all kind of concepts of space. These elements can be embedded in institutions as planning authority, the university or media authority as editing houses, television stations and many more. The social structure that lies behind all these spatial structures is the capitalist mode of production. This general structure can be compared as structural principles, class and gender that Martina Löw identifies. She says that both class and gender are two principles that run through all other structures because they are physically lived and therefore they even influence our spatial perception, value system and social meanings, our habitus.⁸² I would agree on that gender works as well in the setting we are concerned with and it should be mentioned as Lefebvre leaves this topic mostly out of his theory. Class as structural principle is a more difficult question in urban India as there has been a different development of capitalist structures and caste still plays a major role in the social order. Therefore I would rather like to stick to the more general notion of capitalist mode of production as social structure or structural principle.⁸³ Lefebvre’s concept of alienation

⁸⁰ cf. Löw 2001: 167; cf.: Giddens 1988: 67 ff

⁸¹ Löw 2001: 170

⁸² cf. *ibid.*: 176

⁸³ cf. Patel 2006: 24; 28

would be the incorporation of the structural principle of the capitalist mod of production and abstract space.

To understand in which way agency now reproduces spatial structures and to find the location of possibility for transformation, it is important to take a closer look at the characteristics of agency. Agency with reproductive impact is based on routine and everyday life; therefore spatial practices are one part of agency. In this case actors in their specific habitus use their practical knowledge and consciousness to organize their acting.⁸⁴

Giddens argues that people are very much aware of what they are actually doing and they control it, even if they do not verbalize it.⁸⁵ It is therefore a not-outspoken mutual understanding between the spatial users of a certain setting. Even if there is a certain control over one's acts, it doesn't mean that this agency is anyhow connected with one's own desire or critical questioning of dominant structures. That is exactly the point Lefebvre criticizes that through abstraction and the creation and satisfaction of hegemonically produced aspirations, everyday life routine leads to the reproduction of dominant spatial structures. For the subject it means to lose one's awareness of needs and desires, lose itself as individual and social being.⁸⁶

We can say that spatial practices and the agency that lies behind the concepts and representations of space carried out by experts and technocrats are part of reproductive agency.

This would be the first focus of the exploration of the empirical material, to figure out spatial structures and reproductive agency in the contemporary urban setting of Pune. Just by understanding that it would be possible to trace down practices that incorporate representational space and living experience that carries within a transformative potential.

These social practices would include a different way of consciousness about one's own agency as well as the unpredictable active and productive force of the unconscious. For Lefebvre the necessary precondition for such social practices is the reappropriation of the body, which means the recovery of the subjective self. That is quite vague and he doesn't explain more precisely what kind of practices that could be and which conditions would be

⁸⁴ cf. Hamedinger 1998: 103

⁸⁵ cf.: Giddens 1988: 66

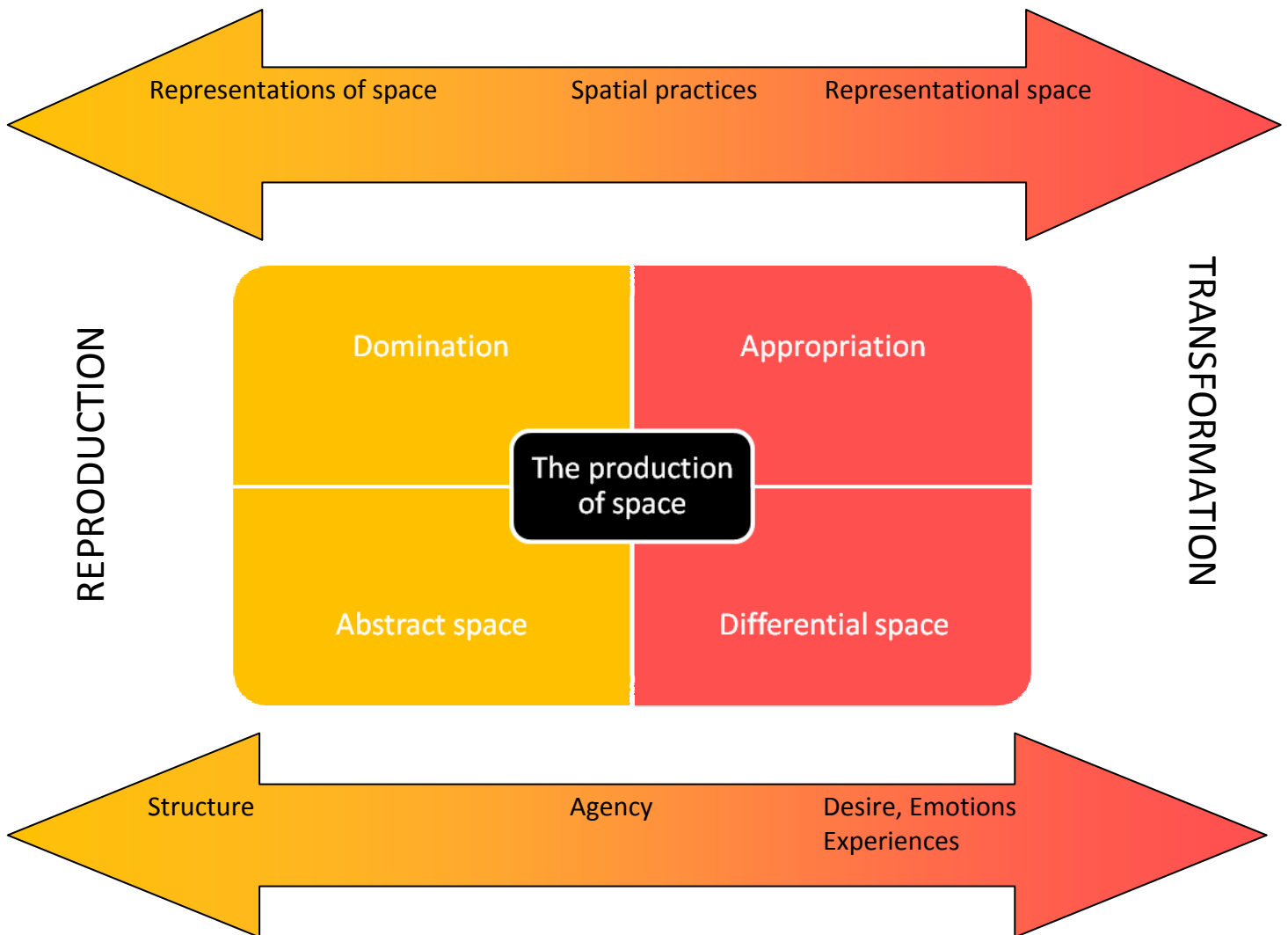
⁸⁶ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 61

necessary for that. As well he thinks on a very big scale about the revolution from abstract space towards differential space and the end of the capitalist mode of production. A most certainly inspiring utopia but we will concentrate a little more on the small scale possibilities for transformative agency, which Martina Löw calls aberrations from routine or creative acting that can lead to the establishment of countercultural spaces.⁸⁷ These specific forms are connected to a reflective consciousness as well as physical desire, the encounter with new, unknown situations for which old routines don't work anymore. That could be related to the behaviour of others or the experience of strangeness.⁸⁸ I don't want to go further into detail about the agency that creates and possibly transforms because that is the second important focus of the empirical part of this thesis. It connects Lefebvre's idea of representational space with the notions of the diversity of agency, while looking at the specific socio-spatial interactions at night in Pune.

⁸⁷ Cf. Löw 2001: 185

⁸⁸ Cf. *ibid.*: 187

Figure 2: Graphic on the production of space between reproduction and transformation⁸⁹



⁸⁹ Graphic by author

3. The night at the intersection of space and time

As the title of this thesis indicates, the processes that are analysed are located in the urban night. This time-space intersection implicates a very particular social constellation, which is based not only on the fact of its natural features like darkness but on the discursive construction of the night and it shows quite well the subjectivity and relativity of the concept of time.

There were several reasons, which make the night quite fascinating and led to the decision to concentrate the field research and the analysis on nocturnal spaces.

At a more general level it can be said, that the night has always represented a special time in a city, partly because of the fear connected to the darkness, partly because of the unknown possibilities that lie in the invisibility. It has been space for rebellion, exploration and lack of domination as well as increasing social control. As Juhani Pallasmaa says in the first quotation of this chapter, there is a very close relationship between space and the body, and one aspect of this relationship is our sensorial realm. Our senses influence our perception of space and can make a certain place comfortable. It can be that we feel good at a certain place because the smell reminds us of beautiful moments in the past or we dislike going to a big street because the loud traffic noise makes us feel nervous. When night falls down and darkness spreads in the city, our sensorial perception of spaces changes because our reliance on the sight is questioned.⁹⁰ This means a lack of control over space, which could result in fear of the darkness, which is also connected often to the archetypal images of darkness, which are socially reproduced through tales, media and spatial regulations.

“Nightfall brings forces very different from those that rule the day. In the symbols and myths of most cultures, night is chaos, the real of dreams, teeming with ghosts and demons as the oceans teem with fish and sea monsters [...] Every time the sun rises, the world and the light are created anew; in every sunset the world and the light, the sphere of solidity and Apollonian masculinity, again descend into the flux of the darkness.”⁹¹

Historically there was always the attempt to control this space, which seems to slip out of our eyes and hands, on the one hand through legal rules and regulation as for example

⁹⁰ cf. Zardini 2005: 45

⁹¹ Schivelbusch 2005: 66

curfew hour in medieval Europe⁹², and on the other hand through the “enlightenment” of the darkness.

It started with torches that had to be carried around while walking through the city in medieval European cities, continued with area wide installation of lanterns and was intensified by electricity and modern town planning.⁹³ There is no such account on the history of public lightening in Indian cities, but as the modern town planning scheme, which included the supposedly rational categorization of public spaces, it can be assumed that at least the city-wide system of public lightening was introduced in a similar way as in European cities. Marko Zardini calls this process the colonization by the eye that erodes the sensorial experience of spaces⁹⁴ and also Henri Lefebvre criticizes in his book the predominance of the visual sphere and the produced images which enhance the distance of the full embodied being from the space, in which it is are embedded in.⁹⁵ He and most other authors on this topic, place this development in the Western world. To assume that it has happened in all the other parts of this world in the same way would be clearly Eurocentric, but to expect that in India this overemphasis of the vision wouldn't exist, would simplify and exoticize the Indian urban reality. These arguments about the darkness and the night, which I elaborated here, shouldn't be taken as truly investigated aspects of night in Pune but should be taken as inspiring thoughts that are often left out in purely socioeconomic research.

This attempt to enlighten the dark through public lightening in the city and the intensified social control after dark is based on the safety discourse, which especially concentrates on women and their vulnerability. Crime scenes and endangered bodies are mostly placed in the night and this social time-space continuum is even part of the line of argument of this assaults. One of my interview partner told me that “*It's like पुणे में दिन में कोई नहीं होता, 1% crime दिन में होता , और 99% crime रात में*”⁹⁶ (It's like in Pune during the day nothing happens, 1% of crime happens in the day and 99% happens at night, *author's translation*). To deny the correlation between certain crimes and the night in the city would be wrong,

⁹² cf. Ibid.

⁹³ cf. Ibid.

⁹⁴ cf. Zardini 2005: 44

⁹⁵ cf. Lefebvre 1991: 75

⁹⁶ IP (Interview Partner)16 in Groupinterview with IP 5, IP 15, IP 16 and IP 17

but my interview partner reflected in his statement more the discourse on nocturnal crime and images that are produced through media and dominant social actors, than the real situation. Especially in Pune there is no significant difference in the crime rate at night and during the day and on the whole the city-wide crime rate is quite low in comparison with other metropolitan cities in India and worldwide.⁹⁷

*“...[Pune] it is very safe. Of course with such a huge population, some small incidence here and there do happen but compared to the size and population of the Pune, it is quite insignificant.”*⁹⁸

Therefore the critique that the illumination of the night is not only for security reasons, but for political power and the modernist paradigm of the rational categorization and control of urban space, sounds quite reasonable.

*“We have been able to cross the frontier of darkness with the help of artificial lighting, which offers us an illusory sense of security. [...] We may, however, overlook the fact that the electricity which makes it possible for us to illuminate our cities today, and thus to see clearly around the clock, also powers the closed-circuit television cameras that permit the city to keep us under constant observation.”*⁹⁹

Generally at this more metaphorical and sensorial interpretation of the night it can be said, that the night can be a possibility to discover different urban landscapes and that this exploration doesn't have to go along with an illumination of the darkness. It is rather the confrontation with the *“clandestine or underground side of social life”*¹⁰⁰, as Henri Lefebvre put it, and the realization of the potential for challenging the dominant mode of production of space.

This quite abstract discussion of the significance of the urban night is not the only thought, which leads to the choice of this particular social moment for this research. When we look at the more concrete characteristics of nocturnal space in Pune, we will soon realize that there is a correlation between the socio-economic shift towards a liberal accumulation regime and the social meaning of urban spaces after dark. In India and Pune, where the night as modern urban landscape has only recently been integrated into the social

⁹⁷ cf. Interview with Expert 10

⁹⁸ Interview with Expert 10

⁹⁹ Zardini 2005: 44

¹⁰⁰ Lefebvre 1991: 33

consciousness of people¹⁰¹, the night and its construction are associated with the idea of invisibility and freedom, social control and immorality, and vulnerability. The night, especially for students and young people, is only getting slowly discovered and conquered with the help of liberalization processes and the upcoming entertainment industry. Traditionally, the night was supposed to be a time to stay at home, like the Marathi saying “सातच्या आत घरात” (Be home before seven, *author’s translation*) indicates. The only reason to be out in the city during the night would be religious rituals¹⁰² that would also take place in the streets. When we look at the “nightlife”, which would consist of mostly of young people and especially students, going to bars and clubs, we realize that in India it is limited to the big cities, and in Pune it is a very recent phenomenon. The first nightclubs opened up in Pune at the beginning of the 21st century and until now there are very strict closing hours and police control on the streets. This is also connected to the discursive construction of the night, and the images that are conveyed by families and social authorities, which leads to the portrayal of the night as dangerous place for the existing social order. My interview partners were mostly stating that the nocturnal city has a bad image, because of the fear of crime and the possibility for “immoral” behaviour.

“There is an impact on every person’s mind that late night is bad...My parents are thinking नहीं रात को तु party वह क्या, smoke करेगा, drink करेगा”.¹⁰³ (My parents are thinking “no” at night you go for party and all that, you smoke, you drink, *author’s translation*).

The urban night has a growing significance for students in Pune as social space, because it gives certain privacy and at the same time with a causal relationship to the first point, the urban night is becoming a political arena of conflict and struggle.

¹⁰¹This doesn’t mean that there hasn’t been a social imaginary and relation with the urban night earlier, but the night as institutionalized entertainment space for young people only have been emerging only recently.

¹⁰² During the Ganapati Chaturthi in Pune or the Durga Pooja in Calcutta, the people normally go out at night to see the different statues of goddess Ganesh and Durga. This movement through the city can go till after midnight.

¹⁰³ IP 19 in Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

4. Field research as an exploration of space

“Thenceforward reflective thought felt that social space was accessible to it. In fact, however, that space is the seat of practice consisting in more than the application of concepts, a practice that also involves misapprehension, blindness, and the test of lived experience.”¹⁰⁴

The core of the engagement with urban space in Pune in this research project was the field research I’ve conducted from March till September 2007 in the city. It was the motivation, inspiration and challenge for the idea to work on the social production and reproduction of space. This time helped me to understand many dynamics and theoretical thoughts in a new way and simultaneously created more questions and doubts about how to connect theory and lived reality, which is incoherent, surprising, contradictory and still sometimes predictable. There are many methods and strategies to cope with this dilemma, plenty of books have been written on qualitative social research, which give good guidelines and main rules for a professional and well designed field research. Apart from these guidelines and tools it is a process, which relies strongly on the intuition of the researcher, on the decisions you take and the perspective you want to choose as well as on your social and cultural background. I don’t mention this point to start a long and redundant discussion on the role of objectivity as a scientific concept, but to disclose the thoughts that brought me to my decisions on methods, evaluation and analysis. Objectivity can’t be realized, but I do believe that it is the responsibility of every researcher to reflect critically on his/her way of working and to provide his/her readers the most transparent account on the process of a project. Therefore I would like to give a short overview on the methods and the field I’ve chosen, the motivation that lies behind and which conflicts and problems appeared during the process.

4.1. Research design

*Space is a social product*¹⁰⁵ is one of the main ideas of the theoretical analysis of this work and it is a great first line to start with the chapter on the research design as well. Space is dynamic, exists through concepts and lived experiences in its material manifestation and is

¹⁰⁴ Lefebvre 1991: 297

¹⁰⁵ cf. Ibid: 27

an analytical tool for social processes. That means that an adequate research has to cover the exploration of physical spaces, analyze critically concepts, discourses and categories and has to try to understand the complexity of subjective life realities. Furthermore this research has to consider the broad historical developments, which will be analysed in the upcoming chapter, because all socio-economic developments in cities have to be understood from a historic-geographic perspective.

The exploration of subjective life realities requires a focus on individual perception, experience and stories about space, which can only be found by using qualitative social research. Henri Lefebvre points out the importance of the subject in his work quite often, because the subject is where “*lived, perceived and conceived (known) come together within a spatial practice.*”¹⁰⁶ Therefore one of the challenges of understanding the relationship between space, society and the individual consists of being able to listen to the subject and to analyse their social construction of their own life reality in the city. This idea was the main thought which lay the groundwork for my research design.

To be able to find applicable methods, it was important to take into account the state-of-the-art of academic research on the interconnection between society, space and individual in Pune, which until now is mainly non-existent. Most of the work that has been done on urban space in Pune, is inspired by the more simplified view on space as a container for social processes, and concentrates mostly on infrastructural and political aspects like slum redevelopment, residential patterns or urban governance.¹⁰⁷ This lack of literature was one of the reasons why I decided exploration to be one of the main pillars of the field research. The other reason was, that this qualitative field research was not supposed to prove an already elaborated theory but inspired on the one hand by the Grounded Theory by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss the collected data played the central role in the choice of central categories of analysis and data collection and analysis were understood as interrelated processes.¹⁰⁸ The Grounded Theory aims at generating theories from the empirical data itself and requires therefore a full dedication to the process of qualitative field research without using theoretical categories as framework.¹⁰⁹ On the other hand the research

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*: 230

¹⁰⁷ cf. Pandit 2003, Washikar 200, Kulabkar 2002

¹⁰⁸ cf. Corbin/Strauss 1990: 419 in Novy/Beinstein/Voßemer 2008

¹⁰⁹ cf. Glaser/Strauss 2005

followed circular, additive research logic aiming discovering new correlations and the complementary use of different methods and theories and thereby concede more space to the integration of the theories into this circular process and a dialogue with the empirical material than in the Grounded Theory.¹¹⁰

The circular research process is an incremental process starting from previous knowledge and the deep interest in understanding particular social phenomena. The interpretation of the collected material is carried out step-by-step building the basis for further decisions on the field research agenda. Therefore the research is flexible and reflexive moving back and forth between interpretation and field.¹¹¹

This circular logic was apt for this research, because the theoretical approach of Henri Lefebvre and other urban theorist played a major role before, during and after the field research. The idea of space being a social product, the relevance of the dominant mode of production and the importance of the interconnections between perceived, conceived and lived space never fell prey to a theoretical tabula rasa. But the sometimes missing clarity of Lefebvre's concepts and the specific historical embedding of his theory, two aspects, which have often been criticized, were very feasible theoretical elements for an explorative, qualitative research with strong reliance on the collected data. It can be said that the research was inspired by spatial theories but the design was not only determined by that but was mainly influenced by the field research process itself.

4.2. *The field and the target group*

Pune is an Indian city which is currently witnessing an intense experience of transformation, connected to population growth, steadily increasing construction activities and discourses on changing identities.¹¹² This actual transition and the images and ideas about it are embedded in the broader national framework which we have discussed in the last chapter. This also includes a shift in the socio-spatial order of a city and the upcoming of new social actors, as for example the new Indian middle class. Keeping this in mind

¹¹⁰ cf. Lueger 2001; Novy 2002; Novy/Beinstein/Voßemer 2008

¹¹¹ cf. Novy 2002: 29

¹¹²cf. Times of India 16.11.2007 Pune assuming new identity
The Hindu 12.08.2001 Pune: past, present and future

there are several reasons, why I decided to choose young students involved in Bachelor or Master studies to give me insights on the production and reproduction of social space in Pune. First of all Pune is well known for its educational institutions and enjoys the reputation of being the “*Oxford of the East*”. Therefore students enrolled in colleges and universities could be seen as important social group in the city, not only because the city administration should take care of their needs, like accommodation, transportation but also because the educational sphere is deliberately used to create a distinctive image of Pune. Therefore one of my interests in this group was to explore if students are actually benefiting from this environment, which would mean that they can and do influence the production of space.

Secondly, students, meaning young people with a good educational background, do play a major role in the discourse on liberalization, similar to the new middle class. They are seen as the leading force for the transformation of India to a global player.¹¹³

Thirdly, students partly represent an actor in the recently increasing consumption culture and therefore could have the possibility to influence the urban development through their purchasing power. Concluding it can be said that these young people, due to their education and location in Pune, could be seen as influential producers of social space. This assumption is what I wanted to critically examine through my field research, taking into account that the student community in Pune is highly diverse considering structural elements like gender, economic background, regional background, language and religion.

The group of interview partners consisted of 19 young students which were at the time of the interviews involved in different Bachelor and Master Careers. They were part of three different institutions in Pune. The first institution was Fergusson College, which is one of oldest and prestigious public colleges affiliated to the University of Pune. The second group was studying at the Creative-I-College, which offers courses in multimedia technology, fashion design, mass communication and interior design.¹¹⁴ The third group of students was from different colleges but all of them were working voluntarily for CYDA – Centre of youth and development activities in Pune. During the research it became clear that the

¹¹³ cf. Kalam 2003

¹¹⁴ The course offer changed since the field research in 2007. My interview partner studied back then either digital arts, product design or fashion design.

distinction according to different institutions and involvement in a civil society organisation were not as important as the inner differentiation of perception and experience based on other structural factors as above mentioned. I explained earlier, the research process itself was one major inspirational source for the further research design and that also happened with the choice of my interview partners. The field research was highly explorative so the first couple of interviews and the continuous literature and media analysis were decisive for the forthcoming selection of students. These structural aspects, which I included in the selection, will be discussed further in the analysis of the production of space based on the field research but right now I would like to give you a short overview on my partners in this research.

Table 1: Students participating in this research as interview partners (IP)

	Gender	Age	Student	Institution	Career	Type of residence	Mobility	Pune Origin	Mothertongue	Economic background	Work	Religion
IP 1	F	21	yes	CYDA	Master of Social Work	Family	No	No	Marathi	Middle Class	no	Hindu
IP 2	F	21	yes	Fergusson	Bachelor of Science	Family	Bike	yes	Marathi	Middle Class	no	Hindu
IP 3	F	21	yes	CYDA	Bachelor of Child psychology	Family	Bike+Car	no	Gujarati	Middle Class/Upper middle class	no	Hindu
IP 4	F	19	yes	Fergusson/CYDA	Bachelor of Economics	Shared flat	No	no	Hindi	no answer	no	no answer
IP 5	F	20	yes	Creative-I-College	Fashion Design	Hostel	No	no	Marathi	Middle Class	no	Hindu
IP 6	F	21	yes	Creative-I-College	Fashion Design	Shared Flat	No	No	Gujarati	Upper Middle class	no	Bohri Muslim
IP 7	F	20	yes	Fergusson	Bachelor of Economics	Family	Bike	yes	Gujarati	Upper Middle class	yes	Shia Muslim
IP 8	F	23	yes	Fergusson	Bachelor of Arts	Shared flat	No	No	Ao	Middle Class	no	Christian Protestant
IP 9	M	23	yes	Creative-I-College	Fashion Design	Shared flat	No	no	Marathi	Middle Class	no	Hindu
IP 10	M	25	yes	MMCA	Bachelor of Architecture	Family	Bike	yes	Marathi	Middle Class	yes	Hindu
IP 11	M	18	yes	CYDA	Bachelor of Science	Hostel	Cycle	no	Marathi	Middle Class	no	Hindu Maratha
IP 12	M	20	yes	Fergusson	Bachelor of Computer Science	Family	Bike	yes	Rajput	Middle Class	no	Hindu Rajput
IP 13	M	20	yes	Creative-I-College	Fashion Design	Hostel	No	No	Marathi	Upper Middle class	no	Hindu
IP 14	M	26	yes	Creative-I-College	Digital Arts	Shared Flat	No	No	Marathi	Middle class	yes	Hindu
IP 15	M	20	yes	Creative-I-College	Digital Arts	Family	Bike	yes	Marathi	Middle Class	yes	Hindu
IP 16	M	25	yes	Creative-I-College	Digital Arts	Family	Bike	yes	Marathi	Middle Class	yes	Buddhist
IP 17	M	20	yes	Creative-I-College	Product Design	Hostel	No	no	Tamil	Middle Class	no	Hindu
IP 18	M	23	drop out	CYDA		Flat	Bike	no	Oriya	no answer	yes	no answer
IP 19	M	25	yes	Creative-I-College	Digital Arts	Family	Bike	yes	Marathi	Middle class	yes	Hindu

This categorization of students you can see here is based on social indicators which I used to collect comparable data but should obviously not be understood as only determinants for their behaviour or experience. These structural aspects can be seen as framework of orientation which is based on many discussions, extensive literature review and experiences from the interviews itself. This approach was part of the interview method I chose, the problem-centred interview¹¹⁵, which is semi-structured. In this table you can see all the socio-statistical questions I asked the students before getting started with the semi-structured interview.

Table 2: Questions of the socio-statistical questionnaire

1.Age	open
2.Gender	Male/female
3. Student	Yes/no
College/University	open
Career	open
Current academic year	open
4. Place of residence	open
Type of residence	Hostel PG Accommodation Shared flat Family Others (Specification)
5.Housemates	open
6.Ownership of a vehicle	Bike Car None
7. Transportation to college/university	open
8. Pune is the city of origin	Yes/no
Place of origin	open
Time of migration to Pune	open
Reason for migration to Pune	open
9.Mother tongue	open
10.Languages in everyday use with friends	open
11. Self-assessed class	Upper class Upper middle class Middle class

¹¹⁵ cf.: Witzel 1982

	Lower middle class Lower class
12. Currently working	Yes/no
13. Amount of money at monthly disposal	open
14. Religion	open
15. Boyfriend/Girlfriend	Yes/no

These categories also represent some of the main structures which are encountered in urban space in Pune by my interview partners. That means that most of them are crucial for their possibilities for agency and their experience of space. Everybody, who is familiar with Indian social structures, might wonder why I didn't include caste into the sociostatistical categories which provide attributes that create social groups. It was never a clear decision because even if caste was officially abolished after Independence, in certain social settings it still plays a major role in the socio-spatial order¹¹⁶. I wanted to give my interview partners the possibility to decide on their own if they would like to include caste into their social characteristics through the question of their religion. I noticed that some of them would include their caste in their belonging to Hinduism automatically and other would rather keep it more general in presenting themselves as Hindus. How to deal with the highly complex topic of caste in India is a decision every researcher has to take personally after discussing all the arguments and connecting to the field.

Before I explain more in detail the method of the problem-centred interview I want to add that students as the social group which I wanted to concentrate on were not my only interview partners. Due to the significant lack of literature on the topic and the focus on an ongoing process of production of space instead of a historical period, it was more than advisable to include a variety of expert interviews into the research. To fulfil the transdisciplinary approach of this research project it was important to me to discuss my ideas, the collected information and the public discourses with representatives of different specialties. The expert interview is one of the most important tools for the generation of knowledge and information, especially while doing research in an Indian city, where you can only find very little documentation on spatial processes. The conversation as crucial

¹¹⁶ cf.: Fernandes 2008 and Patel 2006

source of information should never be underestimated but in an environment of missing social, political and economic documentation it becomes indispensable.

My conversation partners, who represented a wellspring of information as well as often polemic opinions, can be seen in the following short overview.

Table 3: Experts participating in this research as interview partners

Name	Occupation	Additional Information
Expert 1 female	Landscape Architect	ISOLA – Indian Society of Landscape Architecture; involved in project on public spaces in India
Expert 2 female	Landscape Architect	ISOLA – Indian Society of Landscape Architecture; involved in project on public spaces in India
Expert 3 male	Manager of a nightclub and lounge	
Expert 4 male	Lawyer and Professor of Law;	Involved in organizations working on masculinities and sexuality
Expert 5 male	Leader of the Bharatiya Janta Yuva Morcha – Youth wing of the BJP in Pune	
Expert 6 male	Director of the State institute of urban development at YASHADA – Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of development administration	Former head of the ministry of town planning in Maharashtra
Expert 7 female	Director of CDSA – Center for development studies and activities	Foremost activist for concerns of urban infrastructure and the development of urban space in Pune
Expert 8 male	President of SAMYAK – Resource Center for Masculinities and Development	
Expert 9 male	Director of CYDA – Center for youth and development activities	
Expert 10 male	Deputy commissioner of Police, Pune City/ Crime branch	

4.3. Detailed description of methods

The qualitative interview is only one element of the compound of methods which enable an integrative and holistic empirical social research. Other methods as participant observation, group discussions and collection of primary data, as media resources, protocols of meetings or written stories would be other options to find a way to encounter the subject and its construction of reality in a certain field.¹¹⁷ For understanding spatial production processes and its connection to different groups of people, participant observation is an essential tool because we remember Lefebvre's argument that space never exists only in an image or thought but always finds its material manifestation. Therefore participant observation was apart from interviews the second method I used during my field research in Pune. Finally due to the lack of secondary literature and scientific writing on the interconnection between subject, space and society in Pune, it was obvious that primary data like newspaper articles and movies became important for the collection of relevant data. So the choice and combination of methods followed the concept of triangulation¹¹⁸ to enable the circular research project and generation of hypothesis in the best way possible.

The field research in Pune consisted of the following methods:

The interviews followed two different approaches, the problem-centred, semi-structured interview with the students and the guideline based, structured interview with experts.¹¹⁹ Furthermore I conducted two group discussions, which can be seen as complimentary method to the problem-centred interviews, which were most of the time single interviews. Group discussions offered more insights into social interactions, relationship dynamics among students, which are crucial for the understanding of space as a relational concept. One group discussion was with the team behind the short movie on Pune at night, to which I will come back at a later point of this work. This short movie, produced and directed by students from the Creative-I-College will be also one of the collected primary sources, which will be part of the analysis. The second group discussion was with students living in a hostel and student living with the family, three boys and one girl, which was quite

¹¹⁷ cf. Lamnek 1995: 240

¹¹⁸ cf. Flick 2004

¹¹⁹ cf. Froschauer/ Lueger 2003

illustrative because it was possible to grasp the different opinions and reactions towards it in one interview situation and the behaviour within the group.

At this point of the explanation of the methods, it would be important to dedicate some lines to the research realities, one can encounter in the field, and makes the application of certain methods rather challenging. Often it is mentioned that two of the characteristics of qualitative research, which distinguishes it from everyday life interactions and conversations is on the one hand the research purpose as framework of acting and perception and the systematic planning and conduction of this process on the other hand.¹²⁰

Especially the second point became sometimes difficult in the implementation during the field research in Pune. It was very important to me to be as open and flexible with the requirements of the field and to treat my research partners with the utmost respect to enable a circular research process and discover new correlations and ideas for interpretation. This made it even more important to have clarity and proper knowledge about methods and their connection to the research purpose. Furthermore the attitude of the researcher and his/her positioning is crucial because he/she can barely influence the behaviour of the participants in the research and if he/she does situations easily become artificial and uncomfortable. Concretely in Pune it meant that for many single interviews more than one person was sitting in front of me, because my interview partners decided that they wanted to take her boyfriends, her sister or his best friend along or interviews started in unplanned situations and locations. Shortly speaking the reasons for that may lie in the different idea of systematic planning in Pune and a different attitude towards social interactions, like a single conversation with a young woman, which my interviews were. I wouldn't generalize that but that were some observation of research realities encountering systematic planning.

For the single respectively collective interviews with the students I used the method of the problem-centred interview by Andreas Witzel. It is related to the Grounded theory but concentrates more on interplay between deduction and induction¹²¹ and takes the discursive-dialogical interaction as basic element of the process of questioning.¹²² The central problem of the research is used as the backbone of the interview but understanding

¹²⁰ cf. Lamnek 2005: 256

¹²¹ cf. Witzel 1982: 2

¹²² cf. *ibid*: 5

the interview as process is crucial for achieving reflexivity and flexibility during the conversation. Therefore the problem-centred interview can include narrative elements, descriptions as well as short question-answer sequences. With the experts I used the guideline based interview, but still process-orientated and as open as possible because the experts came from such different field of expertise therefore it was important to adapt the strategies to the respective situation. The interviews were conducted mostly in English, some of them in Hindi. As I do speak both languages, it was up to my interview partners to choose the language in which they would like to express their thoughts and ideas.

The need of high flexibility to adapt to the respective situation also holds true for the different forms of participant observation I was conducting during my field research. Basically I chose different places and situations in the city at night, which were crucial for the understanding of social and spatial dynamics. The range was from a College party to streetscapes, interaction between students and the police and a popular-religious festival in public space. Most of these observations were unstructured and partly hidden since they were integral part of my everyday life in Pune, because I was not only a researcher but also a young student in the city participating in all kind of socio-spatial interactions.

To sum up, this table shows a short overview on the methods applied in this field research:

Table 4: Methods and their purpose applied in the field research

Method	Purpose for this research project
12 problem-centred, single interviews with students	Understanding subjective life realities and perception of urban space at night in Pune for an interpretation and in depth-analysis of lived space
2 problem-centred, group interviews with students	Getting more insights on social interactions and relations between students in Pune to grasp the relational concept of space in a better way
10 guideline-based, structured interviews with a broad variety of experts	Understanding and analysing the development of urban space in Pune from a multidimensional perspective and getting insights into different representations and concepts of space from primary sources
8 unstructured participant observations	Including the spatial manifestations of social space in Pune into the interpretative work and adding the researcher's perspective to the accounts of my interview partners of specific socio-spatial interactions in urban

	space in Pune
Analysis of primary sources (newspaper articles, movies, public speeches)	Due to the lack of secondary literature on many aspects of the production of urban space in Pune, primary sources were important additional tools for the interpretation of concepts and representations of space and the constellation and relations of different urban actors.
Collection of secondary data and literature	Embedding the primary narratives, observations and other data into the bigger picture of urban development and scientific research of Pune

The interpretation of the collected material was based on the methodological approach of interpretative social research, which is the apt option for analysing space as social production and the relationship between society, space and individuals.

Interpretative social research understands reality as social construction and is based on the assumption that there is more than one way of constructing reality. Therefore it is important to be open to different ways of arguing and interpreting statements, observations and interactions. This approach enables the discovery of new interconnections and makes social research innovative.¹²³ The main task is to deconstruct reality and structure it along the key topics that are identified by the researcher by connecting individual perceptions and meanings of social phenomena with the knowledge about the specific context and the structure of the broader socio-spatial context.¹²⁴ The chapter of the empirical analysis is formed by the process of structuring realities through interpretation.

In the case of the interview interpretation this meant using the method of “*Circular deconstruction*” that is inspired by the circular research logic to generate theories. The aim of this method is to oscillate between creative, intuition-led and systematic, theory-based thoughts to enable the combination of a great variety of perspective and discover the different layers of the material and new insights.¹²⁵

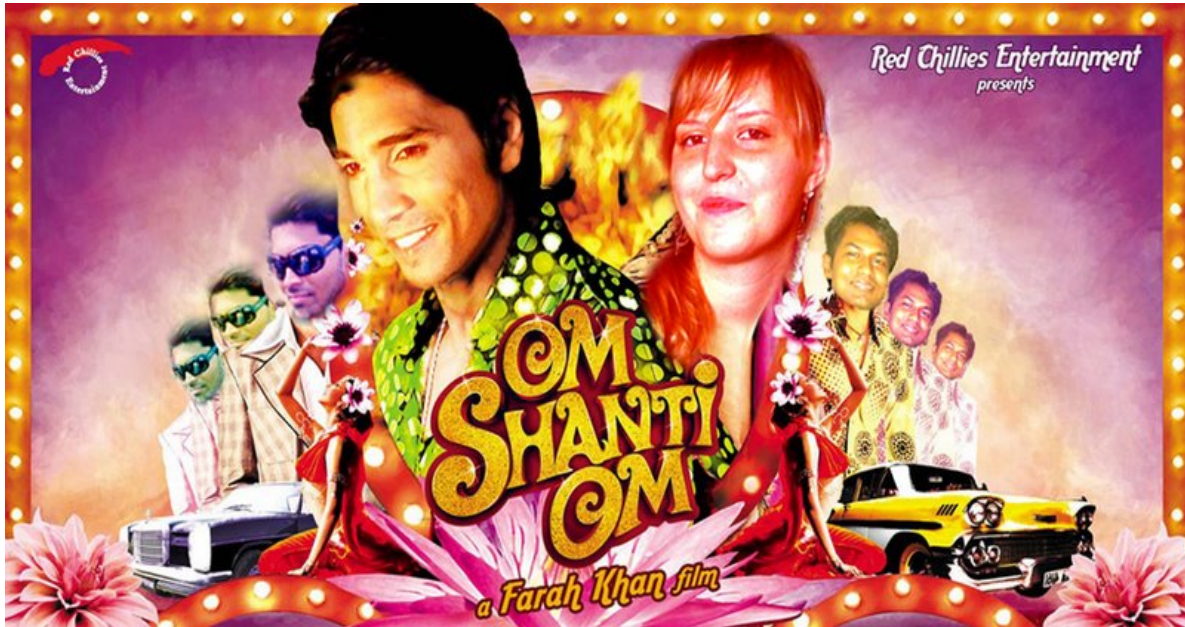
¹²³ cf. Novy/Beinstein/Voßemer 2008

¹²⁴ cf. Novy 2002:10

¹²⁵ cf. Jaeggi/ Faas/ Mruck 1998: 5-6

4.4. My role as a researcher

Figure 3: Picture of the author and three interview partners made by one of them¹²⁶



All methods of qualitative, social research are based on intensive interaction and require openness from the researcher itself which consequently includes understanding the researcher as a subject in the process. You have to accept that you influence the process and you are assailable in your actions and ideas, which to my mind can be used very fruitfully for the own learning process. The degree of dedication to the field is strongly discussed in social science and it is always a balance between “going native”¹²⁷ and pseudo-objectivity.

During my time in India, it can be said that I was most of the time 24 hours a day, seven days a week in the field because I was a student at the University of Pune, staying in a shared flat with other students and going out at night with my friends.

Furthermore I’m a European, a young woman from a middle class family. I had long blond hair and could speak fluently Hindi. All that are features I can’t change and they influence my actions, my perception as well as the perception others have of me. That are limits I have to be aware of but I’m not inescapable bound to them. You can never determine how people perceive you as a researcher or a human being. You can try to set priorities and

¹²⁶ [http://www.orkut.com/Main#AlbumZoom.aspx?uid=4802877658341777236&pid=37&aid=1\\$pid=37](http://www.orkut.com/Main#AlbumZoom.aspx?uid=4802877658341777236&pid=37&aid=1$pid=37), 12.08.2008

¹²⁷ Girtler 1992: 54 et seqq.

behave consciously with the people you are working with but at the end of the day it's up to them and their socialization which image of you they will use as guidelines for their actions and their statements. It is a question of consciousness of yourself and your representation. In my case I was a spatial actor at night, I was part of spatial practices and had to carry a luggage of concepts about me and the field and at the same time I did research about exactly this topic. The fact that I was that much integrated in the field itself opened a lot of doors for me and made it possible to capture many situations, conversation and dynamics, which deepened my understanding of the relationship between space, society and individual. But at the same time it made it very challenging to keep up to a certain methodical quality and responsibility towards my partners in this research as well as my claim to conduct a profound and professional academic investigation. But these lines are always thin and it makes it even more important to stay true to your material and be able to argue your decisions of analysis. It is a question of critical reflection and transparency of the steps you take as a researcher and more than anything else, it's a question of what you make out of it with analysis and communication of knowledge. Due to my social embedding in the field I had the chance to work with the participants in this project and with my friends as partners in the process of understanding the social production of space in Pune. We spent a lot of time discussing our different perceptions due to cultural differences, gender relations and personal histories, and that is the idea of dialogical interaction to generate knowledge and theories. The methodical control would then be, that I concentrated on the concrete material I analyze for this project, which would be 14 problem-centred interviews, 10 expert interviews, a broad collection of newspaper articles, two movies and 8 participant observations, which I connect to historic developments of the city, the theory on the production of space and developments on the national scale. But this analysis is based on a broader journey of learning and development of my mind frame.

Figure 4: Copy of the article in the Times of India about this research¹²⁸

EASTSIDE PLUS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2007

Atithi Devo Bhav

Sarah Habersack from Austria is in the city on a research study of the relationship between the student culture and urban space. She goes on to speak about her experiences in our City



Amruta Byatnal | Swargate

She's been searching, looking for the spirit of a city called Pune. She's talked, listened and absorbed all that the city has got to offer her and she's sure to go back with a lot more than just happy memories.

She is Sarah Habersack who is in town to study the relationship between the student culture and urban space. A sociology student coming from the University of Vienna in Austria, Sarah's research in Pune is in collaboration with the University of Pune.

Titled 'The production and reproduction of Urban spaces', the research though outlandish sounding, means that she's here to know how the youth here spend their free time, use their 'space' and the factors that governs their behaviour. The image of pune in the West being a 'students city' made her choose to come here and she's definitely

come here after doing her homework about the city and its youth. She took Hindi lessons in Austria and many a head turn when she's heard chatting away in Hindi!

Taking interviews of the youth from all strata of the society is a major part of her research and living the life she wants to know about is really important for her. So be it the Fergusson College Sociology Club, Café Mocha or some obscure tapri in Swargate, she's caught all of young Pune expressing itself in her tape recorder.

Speaking of her experience in the city she says that there's literally no 'space' in pune where the youth can hang out and have fun without having to pay like in the European countries. Everybody seems to have been caught up with the mall and multiplex culture, which has been now stereotyped as 'fun'.

Different Strokes

AMRUTA BYATNAL

¹²⁸ Times of India 02.10.2007

5. Passages to historical Pune

A variety of different discourses and representations as well as social practices are related to contemporary Pune. There are certain keywords like education, Maratha culture and pensioner's paradise that are immediately associated with the city of Pune. These aspects, and the built environment one encounters in the city, are among other things the outcome of historical development and can be only understood and analysed by taking the broader historic picture into account. Time and space are inextricably linked to each other and it is impossible to comprehend the production of space without taking the temporal dimension of processes into account. Every society produces its space at a certain moment of time, which means that the historic period play a major role in the constitution of this particular socio-spatial order. Furthermore, every spatial practice, representation of space and spatial symbols and imaginaries leave their trace and can't be completely erased by a new mode of production or political order. These elements change the role they play in the production of space, different meanings can be attached to it, but still they are inscribed in the social memory and influence perception and action. The third reason why it is important to include the historical development of Pune into this work is that most of spatial theories, including Lefebvre's, are products of European knowledge production and start from a Eurocentric perspective. Of course this could be criticized a lot but to my mind it is more important to be conscious about it and try to scrutinize theories with a global perspective, including asymmetrical power relations and colonial history. This consciousness and critical thinking will be a constant companion through this research project.

Pune is a city in Western Maharashtra with 2 540 069 inhabitants¹²⁹ located at the confluence of Mula and Mutha rivers on the Deccan plateau. Pune is located around 160 kilometres from Mumbai, a city which has exerted a major influence on Pune. Pune is considered to be the cultural capital of Maharashtra, a centre for education, and a residential and by now also an economic alternative to Mumbai. But let's not anticipate too much information about the city before looking at the history that lies behind.

¹²⁹ Maratta Chamber of Commerce 2002: G 36; The number of inhabitants is from 2001 (last Census of India). Together with Pimpri Chinchwad the number of inhabitants in 2001 would be 3 546 486. The projected number of inhabitants in 2005 for Pune city would be 3 006 036. cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2005

Generally the development of Pune can be distinguished in three major periods, due to constellations of actors, mode of production and planning pattern, which are labelled as *Peshwa Pune*, *Colonial Pune* and *post-Independence Pune*. The third period could be furthermore distinguished into the time from 1947 till the establishment of the *New Economic Policy* (NEP) at the beginning of the nineties and since then till present-day Pune. But till now the account on the development since 1991 is hard to overlook and not coherent at all hence it is hard to make general statements on spatial patterns, urbanization and social order since then.

Especially the categorization into colonial city and cities after Independence is common among Indian urban studies, because of the profound impact of colonialism on the mode of production, which would be the introduction of capitalism, and on the production of urban space, which would be either the establishment of so-called *dual cities* or the colonial foundation of cities.¹³⁰

5.1. Peshwa Pune

*“From 1728 [...] till 1818, when it passed into British hands, the fortunes of Pune became inextricably linked with those of the Peshwa family. It became a political city, its raison d’etre lay in the politico-military activities of the ruling class.”*¹³¹

Unlike Mumbai, Calcutta or Madras, Pune was not a colonial foundation, but it was an indigenous city and for around one century the administrative and political centre of the Maratha Empire, represented first by Shivaji and then the Peshwa family¹³².

The rise of Pune from a small town to a city of national and regional importance can be traced back to the mid 17th century when Pune was handed over from the Muslim king of Ahmednagar to Shahaji Bhonsle, Shivaji’s father.¹³³ During the reign of Shivaji, who *“had himself crowned as the first Maratha King in 1674”*¹³⁴, Pune didn’t go through a period of

¹³⁰ cf. Patel 2006; Kosambi 1980

¹³¹ Diddee/ Gupta 2000: 55

¹³² Peshwa was the term for the Chief minister in the Maratha Empire. It became the name for the family that started taking over the administration of Pune at the beginning of the 18th century. This Chitpawan Brahmin family came originally from the Konkan coast in the West of Maharashtra and had the surname Bhat. It is a good example how the position of a family due to their work became their primary denomination. cf. Gokhale 1988: 3

¹³³ cf. Kosambi 1980: 137

¹³⁴ *ibid.*: 138

markedly urban development, but the historical figure is important for two reasons. First of all he was one of the main actors in the establishment of the Maratha Empire, which was afterwards governed by the Peshwa family, who was the main author of Pune's history before the British rule. Secondly Shivaji is of great importance for Maharashtra and Pune in the 20th century because he became the symbolic figure of the Marathi identity. He was appropriated as an integrative symbol for nationalist movements at the beginning of the 20th century and as leading representation of the imaginary of a Marathi culture that Hindunationalist parties and organizations¹³⁵ are using for their political struggle.¹³⁶ During the time Shivaji was reigning, Pune wasn't of any political importance therefore the Maratha Empire shared the power with the Mughals and it took until Shivaji's grandson Shahu that the power balance changed.¹³⁷ Shahu, who was the king at Satara, a city south of Pune, appointed the Brahmin Balaji Vishwanath Bhat as his Peshwa, his officer in Pune.¹³⁸ As this administrative office became hereditary and the Maratha king Shahu had a lot of trust into the abilities of his first Peshwa and the following, "*Poona*¹³⁹ *became the permanent official seat of the Peshwas for nearly a century. It was with the rise of the Peshwa dynasty to power that the fortunes of Poona rose*¹⁴⁰."

Generally speaking during the Peshwa period, which lasted till 1817, Pune did not just grow physically but also in political and military importance. It was a feudal city that was formed by the needs for self-representation of the Brahmin administrative elite.

*"The moral and religious tone of Poona City, and of the Peshwa territories in general, was set by the Brahminic code of conduct, and the Peshwa was required to arbitrate in matters relating to the rights, privileges, and duties of the various castes and communities in the territory under his jurisdiction. The result was a certain uniformity of costume and observance..."*¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ One of the most prominent examples is Shiv Sena, a hindunationalist party founded by Bal Thackeray mainly working in Maharashtra who carries Shivaji even in its name. Shiv Sena= The army of Shiva (Shivaji)

¹³⁶ cf.: Lane 2000

¹³⁷ cf. Kosambi 1980: 138

¹³⁸ cf. Gokhale 1988: 3

¹³⁹ Poona was the British name for the city and Pune the Marathi one, which is in use nowadays.

¹⁴⁰ Kosambi 1980: 138

¹⁴¹ Ibid: 159

But the city was not planned, as many other indigenous towns in India despite of the detailed rules that can be found in antique texts on town planning¹⁴², and the different parts of it, which are called *peths* spread and developed according to social structures as kinship, caste and community.¹⁴³ This pattern was not unique to Pune but a strong residential segregation according to these characteristics could be found in many indigenous cities in India and traces of that can still be found in contemporary urban India.

Pune's inhabitants in the 18th century were by majority Hindu and Marathi-speaking and therefore it can be said that the population “*was ethnically homogeneous, both in the linguistic-regional and the religious sense, and represented socio-cultural and linguistic unity.*”¹⁴⁴ Most of these indigenous Hindus belonged to the Maratha¹⁴⁵ caste, furthermore there was a small amount of Muslims, indigenous and migrants and immigrant Hindus that were mostly involved in trading and commercial activities. These groups were settled separately in the different peths of the city, where the land use was mixed of commercial activities and residential areas.

*“A broad picture of the socio-economic and ethnic features of the different parts of the City is thus revealed. The western peths of the City were Brahmin –dominated, prosperous, and mainly residential ; the central peths were ethnically more mixed and commercial-residential in character; and the eastern peths were not only ethnically heterogeneous, but also largely non-Brahmin and low-caste residential, as well as commercial. This pattern had crystallized during the Peshwa times, and was to be further accentuated later.”*¹⁴⁶

This should illustrate quite well the social structure of the city by that time, accounts of practices of everyday life and symbols which would represent the common man and woman would require a broad historical research for which the framework of this thesis is not enough.

The built environment of the city was, as I mentioned before, not planned and the space was characterized by narrow, crooked lanes full of stores and booths, with very few open

¹⁴² Diddee/Gupta 2000: 23

¹⁴³ *ibid.*: 67

¹⁴⁴ Kosambi 1980: 159

¹⁴⁵ Maratha is one caste in Maharashtra that forms the middle part in the social hierarchy. “*As mentioned earlier, the indigenous Hindu population was hierarchically arranged into three broad strata according to caste status: Brahmins at the top, Marathas in the middle, and the ‘outcaste’ communities at the bottom.*” Kosambi 1980: 158

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*: 164

spaces.¹⁴⁷ The most prominent built feature were most certainly the wadas of the affluent, upper class groups of the city, which were large buildings with courtyards and the rooms arranged around them. *“Their physical construction, including the huge complex of rooms and other units, and their self-sufficiency have been conducive to maintaining their pristine purity, with the least interference from outside”*¹⁴⁸. The most famous wada in Pune was and is Shaniwar wada, the central attraction for locals and tourist, which was constructed from 1729 till 1736 by the Peshwa Bajirao I.¹⁴⁹

Figure 5: Photograph of Shaniwar Wada¹⁵⁰



Pune was a feudal city with agricultural and trading activities but it could not be considered an economic centre. The main focus was on the administrative and military power as it was the centre of the Maratha Empire. This lack of manufacturers and economic centrality can be witnessed in the city till after Independence and is closely related to the economic prosperity of Mumbai. During the Peshwas, Pune’s focus on education was not really established; the only aspect that can be seen as starting point for the later development of

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*: 16

¹⁴⁸ Damle 2006: 178

¹⁴⁹ Kosambi 1980: 144

¹⁵⁰ http://photo.net/photodb/photo?photo_id=5868401&size=lg, 10.12.2007

institutional concentration of schools, colleges and university is the importance of Pune for charitable and religious institutions for educated Brahmins.¹⁵¹

Concluding it can be said that in the 18th century Pune was a prosperous city dominated by administrative, Brahmin elite, which had a major influence on the socio-spatial order due to the feudal system and the hegemonic caste system. This social order with a strong segregation between different social groups can be seen as broader framework that can be encountered in many different Indian villages, towns and cities. But within this framework there was little interference in the spatial pattern of different dwellers, the city grew without any kind of systematic and bureaucratic planning system. This interplay between rigid social structures, a feudal hegemony, and self-reliant spatial development is important to keep in mind to understand the changes that took place during the British rule and afterward.

5.2. The colonial city

The battle of Khadki, in which the British defeated the Peshwa's armies, and the following invasion of the British in 1817 had not only major consequences on the spatial growth of the city, but also on the social hierarchy, mode of production and domination of the imaginary. As Ackbar Abbas points it out in his work on urban space in Hong Kong "*Colonial space can be thought of as the projection of a colonial imaginary that maps out symbolic order in whose grids the real appears and disappears for a colonial subject.*"¹⁵² This thought we have to keep in mind while proceeding with the exploration of the colonial, urban space in Pune, as there is very little historic work on the colonization of the imagination and symbolisms in this region.

In India two kind of urban settlements during the British rule can be distinguished. One the one hand there were newly founded cities that "*were related to international commerce and trade and the growth or major infrastructure projects such as railways and ports. These projects reshaped the national landscape and facilitated the integration of the national economy as well as its regions and cities into the imperial economy.*"¹⁵³ Examples for such spatial patterns would be Mumbai, Kolkata or Chennai. On the other hand there were

¹⁵¹ cf. Kosambi 1980: 174

¹⁵² Abbas 1999: 148

¹⁵³ Patel 2006: 22

indigenous cities that already showed a certain degree of urban development and administrative importance, and therefore got reshaped as cantonment towns, which were important for “...*administrative, military, and security requirements of the imperial economy...*”¹⁵⁴. Delhi, Lucknow or Pune would be examples for such cities that are also known as *dual cities*. It is named dual city because the British settlements, which were the cantonment and civil lines, were totally separated from the yet existing indigenous city. Due to Pune’s strategic relevance and administrative power during the Peshwa period, the British were more than interested in establishing their cantonments there and simultaneously try their best to avoid any kind of indigenous rebellion and civil unrest. That was one reason why they minimized their interference into everyday life and socio-spatial order in the City.¹⁵⁵ This behaviour towards Pune changed with the years of British domination, especially in the second half of the 19th century.

5.2.1. Modern town planning

Till the 1850s Pune was marked by poverty, decrease of population and urban decay in the City and the shift of administrative power from the old centre to the newly established cantonment and Civil Lines, which were meticulously planned and consisted of spacious areas with bungalows and green lanes in safety distance to the City. But due to starting municipal growth in the colonial areas of the city because of better communication with Bombay and the construction of the railway the “safety” distance between the two areas of Pune decreased¹⁵⁶ and for example hygienic problems with transmittable disease became a general problem for the whole urban space. Therefore the 1860s became very interesting for urban development in India, one the one hand because of the establishment of municipalities¹⁵⁷ and secondly for “*the growth of modern planning, colonial architecture, development of urban services and infrastructure such as sanitation, drinking water, health and education.*”¹⁵⁸ This system of modern town planning was primarily characterized by the attempt of the British rule to avoid any kind of “problems” with the indigenous cities

¹⁵⁴ *ibid*: 22

¹⁵⁵ *cf.* Kosambi 1980: 170; The term „the City” should from now on be understood as the indigenous part of Pune

¹⁵⁶ *cf.* *Ibid*: 197

¹⁵⁷ *cf.* Diddee/Gupta 2000: 183

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*: 183

and the imposition of their spatial perception and order. The colonial administration became the leading actor in the production of space in Pune and many other Indian cities and the potential for development in the indigenous settlements was neglected or limited to the needs of the British rule. This dynamic started changing in the first half of the 20th century along with the growing nationalist activities through modifications in the municipal system of governance. Until 1921 the municipal government was under strong influence of the Provincial Government, who “*was always reluctant to loosen its hold over the affairs of the city. Within the municipal administration it tried to exercise this control through the officials over the executive body and the nominated members, against the elected councilors.*”¹⁵⁹ After the Government of India Act 1919 “*local self-government was transferred to elected ministers in the provinces and Pune’s municipal administration was fully restored to its elected representatives.*”¹⁶⁰ But it took till Independence that the power over urban space was fully handed over to local, Indian representatives and self-government became possible. The change of actors didn’t necessarily mean the change of the planning system, therefore in the 20th century before and after Independence the strategy of modern town planning persisted and even developed further till the introduction of the first master plans that focused on the whole city in 1952 under the Pune Municipal Corporation, which was established in 1950. The spatial focus of these new town planning techniques, especially in the first half of the 20th century, was the enlargement of the city due to population growth. The main areas for that project were the unbuilt spaces on the left bank of the Mutha River. This crossing the river was the first step towards a broad development of Pune as you can experience it nowadays, the newly acquired lands where used for middle-class housing and for the establishment of educational institutions.

5.2.2. Education and political struggle

The time period after 1850 was also the time of the growth of Pune as an educational centre. The 1821 founded Hindu College, which was supposed to be an institution for fostering the tradition of the Brahmin community in Pune became the Deccan College in 1850 and was reformed through Western education and became the symbolic starting point

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.: 181

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.:181

for the establishment of many different Colleges, offering Western education in Pune. To show the spatial changes that took place, it is interesting to see that the Hindu College was originally located in an old wada in the City and in 1868 it was moved across the river in one of the upcoming settlements¹⁶¹, Deccan Gymkhana, Erandwane and Shivajinagar. The development of Colleges was often supported by associations of the civil society, which were highly interested in promoting education and public debated on social, political and religious questions.¹⁶² These associations were called Societies and one of the most famous was the Deccan Education Society, which founded the Fergusson College in 1885, which is still one of the most prestigious colleges in Pune, and a part of my interview partners for this research are enrolled there. The Deccan Education Society was founded by some of the most influential social reformers¹⁶³ to provide an alternative to the only other two providers of education, Christian missionaries and the colonial government.¹⁶⁴ It was closely related to political struggles in Pune and was seen as one tool to foster the fight for self-rule in India.

These societies and their aims showed another characteristic of Pune at that time, which was the strong civil society and leading role of social reformers. This process was closely related to the availability of Western education, which supported the appropriation of these facilities and spaces in the city by nationalist forces. This interplay between British rule and colonial subjects could be witnessed in many places in India.

*“As in Bombay, the spread of Western education led to an increased social awareness and social reform activity; and Poona City soon became “a major alternative centre of activity to Bombay” in this sphere.”*¹⁶⁵

Pune was definitely an important place of social reforms, anti-colonial struggle and nationalist policies from the end of 19th century on with famous representatives as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale or Mahatma Jyotiba Phule. The spectrum of ideologies ranged from liberal reformers, nationalist extremist to anti-Brahmin movements.

¹⁶¹ cf. Kosambi 1980: 176; 212

¹⁶² cf.: Diddee/Gupta 2000: 224

¹⁶³ Among others Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar were two of the most prominent members of this society and also strongly influenced political debates in the city. cf. Johnson 2005; <http://www.despune.org/history.htm>, 13.12.2009

¹⁶⁴ cf.: <http://www.despune.org/history.htm> , 13.12.2009

¹⁶⁵ *ibid*: 213

The reforms and political struggles that were taking place in the last quarter of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th were concentrating on critique of Hindu-Brahmin traditions and rituals that were structuring a big part of everyday life in the city. Questions of caste dominance and family structures, like child marriage, were put at the centre of discussions of social reforms.¹⁶⁶

Simultaneously the need for self-rule and dissociation from the British rule were essential for any political action and thought in this time. Therefore the main area of conflict consisted of the attempt to find an independent political, cultural and social way for India between dominant Brahmin traditions and colonial hegemony. Their activities, spatial strategies and relationship to urban space are particularly interesting for us. The representations and images of these social reformers still play a major role in the constitution of identity of different social groups in Pune and the city as a whole. The rise of political struggle was closely connected to educational development and the presence of colonial administration in the city “*As Pune’s educational facilities grew, it attracted migration from rural areas and the smaller towns. Availability of English education, printed books, job opportunities in the government offices and the new socio-cultural ferment proved a powerful attraction for all young people for whom Bombay was too far away or too expensive.*”¹⁶⁷ This constellation and the political reinvention of historic figures like Shivaji resulted in a newly established self-esteem about Pune’s history as capital of the Maratha Empire and fostered the identity of Pune as cultural capital of Maharashtra. Tilak was one of the major authors of these strategic, historic narratives and he was also one of the leaders of the political creation of space. Political spaces in Pune were on the one hand old wadas, which illustrates how historic buildings can acquire a new meaning and therefore play a different role in the socio-spatial order of a certain society. The first town hall for example was an old Peshwa mansion¹⁶⁸, a wada and provided a space of public meetings and the possibility to exchange ideas and opinions.

Another dynamic that started was the appropriation of streets and open spaces for political activities, which is particularly interesting when we look at the role of public spaces in

¹⁶⁶ cf.: Johnson 2005: 78/79

¹⁶⁷ *ibid*: 227

¹⁶⁸ cf. *Ibid*: 227

urban India till this point in time. Sudipta Kaviraj shows in his very informative work on the public sphere in Calcutta that public spaces in the modern, European definition¹⁶⁹ did not exist in urban India.

*“The idea of the public is particular configuration of commonness that emerged in the capitalist-democratic West in the course of the eighteenth century.”*¹⁷⁰ The differentiation of spaces in urban India was much more following rules of community, caste and gender. Their borders were hazy, because there was no political authority for urban space, like a municipal government until the British rule.¹⁷¹ Therefore it can be said that nationalist struggle and social reformers in Pune and other cities of India appropriated a concept of space to use it against the dominant actor who actually produced it and its space.. One of the most famous examples for the reappropriation of public space and its concept is the introduction of public celebrations of Ganapati Chaturthi in Pune. It is a citywide festival for the god Ganesh, which used to be a private festivity in the family. Tilak started to promote it as a public festival to foster cohesion and sense of belonging among citizens of Pune. The Ganapati festival is still celebrated in Pune every year and the contemporary meaning of today’s celebrations will be explored in the last chapter of this thesis.

The British colonial rule in Pune did change many aspects of the city. Not only it led to the expansion of settlements across the river and therefore laid the foundation for a totally new aspect of the urban entity Pune. British colonialism with its asymmetrical power relation to India, Maharashtra and Pune, changed meanings and symbols of spaces, created a whole new framework of concepts, plans and categories of urban space. This framework was critically appropriated and blindly copied for Pune during nationalist struggle and after Independence. For example during colonialism whole new dynamics of segregation were emerging based on race and class, instead of community and caste. There was no total replacement of these structures but rather a concurrence of these different aspects of socio-spatial order. It came to exclusion and domination based on interconnections of caste and class, an interface which is one of the most discussed topics of urban sociology of postcolonial India. Generally it has to be said that during the colonial rule the socio-spatial

¹⁶⁹ cf. Habermas 1990

¹⁷⁰ Kaviraj 1997: 86

¹⁷¹ cf. *ibid*: 86

order in the City continued, new social groups like Europeans, Parsis, Bohra Muslims etc. established only in the cantonment area and the attached bazaar¹⁷². New areas across the river like Deccan Gymkhana and Shivajinagar and at the borders between the City and British settlements, which were growing due to the increasing migration and establishment of educational institutions, showed a different socio-spatial order.¹⁷³ There was a lot of influence of European architecture¹⁷⁴, images of European lifestyle and every day routines with inhabitants from upper class Indian families. These diverse and segregated areas of the city were not just material-physical differentiation, but separate identities and images of each other.

“The distinct socio-cultural differentiation through which the localities developed their self-images were often in contrast to the images constructed of them by others. Both sides created stereotypes. The Brahmins prided themselves on their homogenous and elitist peths of Sadashiv and Narayan, which were considered the home of Marathi culture and literature. There was a decisive cultural difference between them and the other upper class neighborhood of Deccan Gymkhana (which grew in the third and fourth decades of this century), whose residents, also mostly upper caste, were considered to be westernized and belonging to the ‘bungalow-culture’¹⁷⁵ (author’s note). Within the city, the north-south Shivaji Road became the great divide between the Brahmin west and the mixed commercial area.”¹⁷⁶

Despite these transformations and the arrival of new social actors and different patterns of settlements in Pune, Jaymala Diddee among other authors has noted that *“In spite of these many layers of cultural and social diversity, despite the social, political and cultural*

¹⁷² Attached to the cantonment in Pune there was Sadar Bazar which was supposed to fulfill the requirements of the inhabitants of the cantonment. It was an area, where locals and migrants from other parts of India settled down and were involved in trading business. Sadar Bazar was actually an unplanned indigenous area of the city but with strict rules and regulations as it was very much connected to the everyday life of officers of the colonial administration. cf. Kosambi 1980: 221-229

¹⁷³ For more details about Pattern of residence in Pune read Mehta Mehta, Surinder K. (1969): Patterns of residence in Poona, India, by caste and religion: 1822-1965. In: Demography, Vol.6, No.4. p.473-491
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0070-3370%28196911%296%3A4%3C473%3APORIP1%3E2.0.CO%3B2-N,04.04.2007>

¹⁷⁴ A symbol for colonial architecture in Pune and other Indian cities was the bungalow. For further reading on the cultural significance of bungalows, see King, Anthony D. (2006): The colonial bungalow-compound complex in India. A study in the cultural use of space. In: Patel, Sujata/ Deb, Kushal (2006): Urban Studies. Readings in Indian Sociology. Oxford, p.43-58

¹⁷⁵ See footnote 172

¹⁷⁶ Diddee/ Gupta 2000: 237

integration of Pune with the larger Indian scene, and in spite of the fact that in many areas non-Marathi-speaking people dominated the population, the abiding image of the city remained, till the mid-twentieth century at last, as one of Maharashtrian Hindu and Brahmin culture – a continuity with the Peshwai past (though those who created the image in the new age were a different class from that of the previous age). ”¹⁷⁷

These multilayered representations of space and construction of identities is one core feature of urban India back then and nowadays perhaps even more. Traditional and historic representations don't disappear; they are inscribed in spaces and at the same time objects of constant transformation. It is very challenging to verbally analyze these images without invoking clichés and prejudices and fall into the trap of simplification. Even if the constraints of availability of material and scope of this thesis limit the historical analysis, the dynamics of continuity and change of images and concepts that produce urban space are crucial for the understanding of spatial development in Pune. A thought which is important to keep in mind is that these representations of space as well as their strategic use and unconscious reproduction through spatial practices are formed by ideology, power relations and a certain social hierarchy. Colonialism and colonial urban development would be one and perhaps the most extreme example of a dominant ideology and hegemonic rule in the production of space in India.

5.3. Pune after Independence

The first two decades of urban development in Pune after the Indian Independence in 1947 were characterized by the essential shift of authorities, the birth of the Indian nation-state and the challenge to cope with the heritage of the British rule. Streets got new names according to Indian national heroes like the Mahatma Gandhi Road (MG Road) which was earlier the Main Road of the British Cantonment.¹⁷⁸ On the institutional level the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) was founded in 1950 which meant that the city of Pune, with 480 942¹⁷⁹ inhabitants at that time, was raised from a Municipality to a Corporation.¹⁸⁰ The

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.: 240

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.: 244

¹⁷⁹ Maratta Chamber of Commerce 2002: G 36

¹⁸⁰ Diddee/Gupta 2000:248

Pune Municipal Corporation is the local government authority for the city of Pune¹⁸¹, which is in charge of the urban planning process and its implementation. The PMC followed with their master plans, the ideas of centralized Nehruvian Indian nation state, with a focus on industrialization, socialist planning and investment in higher education in the framework of capitalist development. For the first time in Indian history the modern nation state became the central authority and the dominant actor in the production of urban space. This urban authority and the people living in Pune were confronted with the British legacy in the lack of amenities and infrastructure in the old city and the dual structure of the urban settlements. In addition to this, there was a huge inflow of migrants, which were refugees of the partition between India and Pakistan and rural-urban migrants; a dynamic which led to the emergence of new social actors in the city. This and the expansion of the urban territory through incorporation of rural areas led to the conflictive situation of “*a duality in urban development. The dilemma was whether to concentrate funds in the old areas to improve amenities or divert to develop the new peripheral areas.*”¹⁸²

The distribution of funds, the lack of proper infrastructure and the establishment of a truly self-representative urban authority are still of great importance for the positive development of Pune, even if it seems that they are not always on the priority list of the PMC.

In the 1960s there were two important events to take into account to understand the further acting of the urban authority and the transformation of Pune as a city. 1961 the Panshet dam collapsed and the water of the Mutha river flooded the city. The banks of the river literally disappeared and a lot of houses and colonies got destroyed. Especially the old city was affected terribly by this flood which led to the resettlement of many families on the outskirts of Pune.¹⁸³ The new areas south and west of the city, like Parvati and Kothrud became fast growing residential areas for middle-class families, which came from the older part of the city and were mostly locals and Maharashtrians. This movement led to a new spatial order in the city and the growth into new directions, which represented the dilemma

¹⁸¹ More information on the role and organisation of the PMC will be provided in later chapters.

¹⁸² *ibid*: 250

¹⁸³ cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2006aa: 20

of the strategy of modernization and the urban authority, which is the big gap between planning and implementation.

*“In the next two decades, Kothrud became the most attractive area for many Puneites and was talked about as the fastest growing suburb in India. Unfortunately, an opportunity to redevelop the flooded-out parts of the city and improve the amenities while keeping the historic character intact was wasted. Kothrud too was not developed according to the plans laid down. It became a rather featureless tract of architecturally dull apartment blocks.”*¹⁸⁴

The other event in the 1960s was the establishment of the industrial township Pimpri-Chinchwad at the outskirts of Pune. Since then it has been symbol for the starting industrial growth of Pune, which has a huge influence on the built environment, labour structure, social hierarchy and self-perception of the city and its inhabitants. The decision of constructing an industrial centre in this area at the outskirts of Pune, which till then hasn't had a strong economic growth and was suffering from the closeness to economic giant Mumbai, was closely connected to these former disadvantages. The physical proximity to Mumbai became a big chance for the industrial development in Pune reinforced by Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC), which was established in 1962 by the newly founded state of Maharashtra¹⁸⁵. The policy of the MIDC was aiming at setting strong restrictions on industrialization in Mumbai and therefore new places for investment were required¹⁸⁶. Due to the high concentration of institutions for higher education and research Pune provided skilled labour and a good ground for the research and development sections of industries. The industrial focus in Pune was on heavy industries and high technology¹⁸⁷, and also *“The first software technology park in India was set up in Pune.”*¹⁸⁸

This growing industrial development didn't necessarily mean prosperity for the whole city and the often praised trickle-down effect could not be witnessed.

¹⁸⁴ Diddee/Gupta 2000: 253

¹⁸⁵ After Independence in 1947 the territory of contemporary Maharashtra was integrated into Bombay State. Only 1960 Maharashtra was formed as an independent Indian state and separated from Gujarat according to linguistic borders.

¹⁸⁶ cf.: Bapat 2004: 8

¹⁸⁷ cf.: Diddee/ Gupta:261/265

¹⁸⁸ Pune Municipal Corporation 2006aa: 1

*“So the structure of Pune’s industrial development is made up of a core of large scale unity which stand out as islands of high wages and labor organized into trade unions; the ancillaries make up for a sizable amount of production but are dependent on the large-scale units and numerous tiny units (over ten thousand) which are in the non-formal sector. This results in an intensely competitive milieu in which worker safety, social services, pollution control and adequate wages are ignored to cut costs.”*¹⁸⁹

These two sides of the industrial labour system in Pune can also be witnessed in the growing migration in these decades as well as in contemporary Pune.¹⁹⁰

*“Pune also witnessed two types of immigration: the impoverished rural labor which came in search of employment either in the organized factory system or in the unorganized tertiary sector of unskilled labor, or for service-oriented jobs; and the white collar, highly qualified professionals from other states, who swelled the ranks of the middle class and demanded quality residential accommodation and services.”*¹⁹¹ The first type of migration led on the one hand to the growth of informal settlement and informal work because of the incapability of the urban administration to cope with the growing population. The second type of migration had despite its relatively smaller number of migrants quite a big impact on the everyday life and representations of space in Pune. These highly qualified professionals and the affluent students, which want to become these professionals after their studies, from other parts of India are often portrayed as the cosmopolitan element of Pune, which give the city a young and dynamic character.¹⁹² These groups largely settled down at the outskirts of the city which got filled up with apartment buildings for middle till upper class nuclear families.

This was a very short portray of the transformations that took place since Independence till the 1980s and still exercise their influence on contemporary urban space. Of course many layers of these developments are left out and especially the role of the nation state, the influence of the British legacy and the growing problems that come with capitalist development and unequal distribution of resources would be very interesting to discuss more in detail. But doing this in a profound and critical way it would require more than this

¹⁸⁹ Diddee/Gupta 2000: 266

¹⁹⁰ cf. Khairkar 2007, Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a

¹⁹¹ Diddee/ Gupta .: 266

¹⁹² cf.: Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a: 21

research project allows that's why I want to concentrate more in detail on the economic, social, political and cultural structures that influence the production of space in Pune since the 1990s focusing on the life realities of my interview partners. That will limit the scope of analysis of some aspects of urban space and society in contemporary Pune but at the same time provides us with the possibility of a profound analysis of the key questions of the production of urban space. This projects aims at understanding the relationship of subjective life realities with the different dimensions and space as a whole in a profound way. For this it is necessary to identify dominant structures, which account for the socio-spatial order at a local, national and global level and the diversity of agency, which stands for the role of the individual in the production of space.

The time since the 1990s stand for the continuity and intensification of certain urban developments that we could witness in this historic journey, simultaneously it represents the most important shift of mode of production since India's Independence with a range of consequences for the socio-spatial order, spatial practices and images, concepts and symbols of space. As I've mentioned before it is not possible to give any account of the period retrospectively because the processes are still taking place and lead sometimes to unforeseen dynamics. That's why I want to use this research to illustrate and analyze urban transformations from the perspective of young students in contemporary Pune, which are actually living and experiencing this new mode of production with its relations of production and reproduction in their everyday life.

To be able to do so first we have to make short excursus about the New Economic Policy which was introduced in 1991 and can be understood not only as package of political and economic reforms, but also as symbol for a historic shift of modern, independent India.

6. A glance at the New Economic Policy

”Liberalization had set into motion a process of reimagination of the Indian nation through new signs and symbols.”¹⁹³

As I mentioned in the last chapter the beginning of the 1990s demonstrates an influential break in the historic development not only of urban India but of the Indian nation state on the whole. In short words we could say that with the New Economic Policy (NEP), which was implemented in summer 1991, the Indian economy was liberalized and the path of the import substitution industrialization (ISI), which was the main strategy since Independence, was left. This represents a major shift in the political economy of India but one should not mistakenly believe that it was only restricted to the economic sphere of the country. The NEP is crucial for understanding contemporary India and the account of subjective life realities in this research because as Leela Fernandes mentions in the first quotation of this chapter, India was reimagined. Gurcharan Das, a “strong supporter” of the New Economic Policy, even said that this package of reforms and its implications was a historic event as important as the Indian Independence.¹⁹⁴

For this research project the grasp of this political economic transition is important out of three reasons. First the liberalization of the Indian market and the shift in the Indian economic thought has had a major impact on social structures and socio-spatial practices that have taken place in urban India. Secondly, as already mentioned, the Indian self-perception and representation changed. New symbols came into place and we can witness the ceaseless attempt of certain new and old elites to produce the image of India as a global player. And thirdly the NEP had a strong influence on urban development and urban governance in India. We could even say that the term “urban” became one of the leading concepts of the upcoming economic and political ideology. The more tangible exploration of this transformation will be part of the empiric exploration of Pune and the lives of the students, but before we can go to the concrete level, it is important to take a closer look at the character of this New Economic Policy and understand the broader national framework.

¹⁹³ Fernandes 2008: 40

¹⁹⁴ cf.:Das 2000: 213

New Economic Policy came into place in India 1991 and is one of the main terms of the development of the Indian nation in the last 20 years. On the one hand it names a package of reforms and political economic measures that were implemented due to a fierce economic crisis. On the other hand the New Economic Policy, NEP, is one of the keywords in any discussion about the political and economic transformation Indian is going through. The last twenty years were marked by a liberal, export-oriented regime of accumulation, which sometimes went together with a broad privatization strategy. In the leftist discourse and literature on the political economy of India we can even find the term LPG, Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization. To subsume these processes like that would be too simplistic and superficial, but these three terms definitely play a major role in the transition since the New Economic Policy.

This package of reforms and strategies to overcome the fiscal and economic crisis of the Indian nation was not the first step towards a more liberalized economy.

In the 1980s Rajiv Gandhi already promoted with his policies and his image the “new” India, which focused on middle and upper class consumerism, urban and cosmopolitan way of life and a stronger integration of the Indian economy into the global market. Until the 1980s, the Indian government was strongly centralized and followed an import substitution industrialization which focused on the internal market through import controls, investment in public, large-scale industries.¹⁹⁵

Based on the first Prime Minister Nehru’s vision, the congress party, which was the monopoly of political force of post-Independence India, was trying to follow a modern, socialist path of development. The problems that arose were a dominant bureaucratic body and “*low productivity and inappropriate factor use of the production factor labour.*”¹⁹⁶ This low productivity was combined with high government expenditure for the public sector and subsidizing the industrial sector, two aspects that didn’t go well together and ended in combination with external factors in a severe fiscal crisis at the beginning of the 1990s. Rahul Mukherji takes this political dilemma even further and explains:

“Policy puzzles persisted due to the malfunction of the ISI-driven policy paradigm in India. Infant industries did not mature into competitive ones. Income distribution remained highly

¹⁹⁵ cf. Fernandes 2008: 37 and Mukherji 2007a

¹⁹⁶ Mukherji 2007b: 122

skewed, leading to rising aspirations of the less privileged but newly mobilized people. Increased demand for resources and low productivity led to an unsustainable fiscal crisis."¹⁹⁷

The moment the external economic situation was not favourable, due to the rise in oil prices because of the Gulf War, the Indian economy got into a severe debt crisis by the end of 1990. These economic difficulties met with an instable political situation in India because of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991.¹⁹⁸

This economic and political instability also led to a crisis of confidence of creditors and investors, domestic price inflation and falling economic growth.¹⁹⁹ After the culmination of the crisis in the summer 1991, the first reaction was an attempt to achieve stabilization through the devaluation of the Indian Rupee and other measures, as for example "*...restraint on public expenditure (for example, reducing subsidies on fertilisers, food and petroleum), reduction of the fiscal deficit, and removal of the restrictions on the flow of foreign capital.*"²⁰⁰ But these short-term stabilisation measures were not the most important part of the NEP and probably they alone wouldn't have led to such a profound transition of the Indian system. The second part of this reform package was a compendium of long-term measures, which were part of a structural adjustment program advocated and supported largely by the International Monetary Fund. The main idea behind this process was, similar to other liberalisation dynamics in Latin America or East Asia a little earlier, about opening the domestic market for the global trade and the global finance system. The target of these reforms was first of all to overcome the economic crisis, second of all they were meant to increase economic growth, which partly was successful, and to make India internationally compatible. This shows the belief in the redistributing trickle-down effect of a free market system, which would mean that due to strong economic growth and concentrated investment the positive economic development would slowly spill over the whole population. This was proven to be more of an optimistic assumption than an economic reality. Furthermore it shows a shift not only in the economic regime and political system but also in the discourse of the new Indian identity of a global player.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.*: 125

¹⁹⁸ cf. Kidwai 2006 :110

¹⁹⁹ cf.: Narayana 2008: 5

²⁰⁰ Byres 1999: 5

Let us look at some examples for reforms of the NEP. The main areas of liberalization were export promotion, opening up the finance market through the increase of foreign direct investment and free import of capital goods and intermediates.²⁰¹ Furthermore it became possible that foreign actors obtained full ownership of industries in India, which was not possible till then. For private investors it started to get easier to make considerable investments in the development of industries, especially in the software and communication technology sector, the restrictions on the amount and region of the investment by the central government were abolished and the bureaucratic apparatus of licenses was getting smaller.²⁰² The same happened with imports, when import licensing was step by step abolished, which was part of the general strategy to dismiss the so called *License Raj*, which was a long list of restrictions and limits to imports and global trade.

The nation state also cut down on expenditure in the public sector and private actors established as owners and managers as well as financiers of former public enterprises.²⁰³ This also led as above mentioned to a stronger decentralization and retreat of the central government in the executive economic sphere. This change of the role of the state also affected the national labour market; on the one hand there is a reregulation which led to certain job insecurity due to more short-term, contract-based work and reduction of jobs in the civil service.²⁰⁴ On the other hand outsourcing industries, a process which has been strongly supported by the central government through special concessions and investment incentives, has become the strongest growing employment sector in the general increasing service sector. We will come back to this argument and discuss it more in detail in the context of the restructuring of the economic and political-administrative sphere in Pune.

Of course this is a very short account on the dimension and complexity of the New Economic Policy, but the main point was to get an idea what this package of reforms consisted of to understand the interplay with urban space and the socio-spatial order. Generally it can be said that this political economic strategy led partly to economic growth but without a necessary redistribution and regulation for the masses of the Indian population.

²⁰¹cf.: Ahluwalia 2002: 94

²⁰²cf. *ibid.*: 96

²⁰³Narayana 2008:5

²⁰⁴cf. Fernandes 2008: 106

6.1. Liberalizing urban India

This missing redistribution and growing inequality in certain sectors of life applies also to the growing urban-rural gap that was intensified with the economic transformation. Metropolitan areas have been the centres and platforms for international trade, foreign investment and the “global”, cosmopolitan consumption patterns. The political and economic strategy was formulated as urban-centred and urban India became the symbolic location of globalizing India. Through the decentralization of political power and responsibility to the municipal authorities, they also got the possibility to provide infrastructure and amenities to foreign investors and therefore the competition between different regions increased²⁰⁵. As Saskia Sassen analysed in her work on global cities, urban agglomerations became the control centre for global trading activities and the national scale lost importance.²⁰⁶ This often led to an unequal growth of different regions in India. Pune can be seen as one example for economic beneficiaries of these processes, because it became one of the “most-wanted” places of investment and industrial development. These new upcoming areas as for example Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune also started being competition for the four big metros, Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai.

*“A new set of cities and regions are becoming favoured locations for investment, both foreign and private. Already such locations have emerged in the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat. This process of investment concentration will render employment rates, incomes, property values, and access to services much more spatially disparate.”*²⁰⁷

These new regions also face a steadily increasing population growth, partly due to increasing migration, which leads to a lack of adequate infrastructure. Investments in

²⁰⁵This was not only a positive development for municipal authorities because not only new possibilities opened up, but the financial responsibility was a lot bitter. *“In view of the fiscal constraints of higher levels of government to transfer more resources, municipal revenue expenditures are expected to be met with own tax revenues. In case of capital expenditures, urban local bodies are encouraged to supplement a part of total expenditure through borrowings from capital markets and institutional sources. This is the most noted change in financing urban development during post globalization period.”* Narayana 2008: 20

²⁰⁶ cf. Sassen 1991

²⁰⁷ Kidwai 2006: 115

amenities and improvement of urban space have been polarized and in cities itself can be witnessed a similar process as on the national level, spatial disparity of development.

This unequal distribution of services and resources is closely connected to the shift in the form and content of urban government in Indian cities, a process which can be witnessed all over the world. The more decentralized strategy of building “leading centres of the global market” was carried out through the abolition of zoning restrictions, dismissal of regulations on building activities and subordination of other land use patterns under the global market.²⁰⁸

The lobby of builders and developers is growing stronger because they provide the necessary link to foreign and local investors, which make cities internationally compatible.²⁰⁹ Lefebvre criticized in his work urban planners, the nation-state and technocrats for the dominant conceptualization and homogenization of urban space which regulates everyday life practices and doesn't allow differences. As I argued in an earlier part of this thesis the critique of the nation-state and urban planners is perhaps not perfectly adequate for the current situation in urban India because of the redistribution of responsibility between the nation state, local urban authorities and private actors. The typical modern town planning regime is not easily practicable anymore but does that lead to more space for the self-representation of users of space and their transition to producers of space? This logic doesn't not apply to most of these liberalizing transition processes because the diversification of actors involved in urban planning, financing and implementation of plans doesn't not automatically foster democratization and collective decision-making. Therefore it can be argued that the actors and their responsibilities of the Indian urban development reality changed but power structures that leave out big parts of the urban population from the process of decision-making remained the same.

Resources are not distributed according to the needs and desires of people but according to the requirements of a global free market. The constructed representations and the adjunctive symbols and signs shifted towards the dominant image Indian cities as international consumption spaces with the potential to become global players.

²⁰⁸ cf. Kundu 2000: 18

²⁰⁹ cf. Ibid.: 18

A good example for that are policies of slum redevelopment schemes, which are executed by the state together with private developers, wherein the “global” centre of the city wants to get rid of “low valued” activities.²¹⁰

*“The low income and slum colonies are the obvious candidates for relocation in city peripheries. The shift is being carried out by the state or local governments, often directly through eviction of slum dwellers, hawkers, pavement dwellers etc. Sometimes, it is done indirectly and discreetly through slum improvement schemes, “rehabilitating” them outside the city limits. Unfortunately, that has been done mostly without making any provision for alternative employment opportunities for the displaced worker. This can only lead to high disparity in population density and quality of life, and segmentation of the cities into rich and poor colonies.”*²¹¹

Indian cities are not only the centres for establishing global industries but also for the creation of new urban aesthetics. Leela Fernandes sees class purity as the leading idea behind these urban aesthetics, which find their manifestations in sociocultural spaces, which are supported by a growing leisure and entertainment industry, and are connected to a shifting socio-spatial order.²¹²

Pune is one of the leading examples of this development in India. Together with cities like Bangalore, Hyderabad and the satellite town of Gurgaon in the metropolitan area of Delhi, it is one of these urban “*global centres of the future*”²¹³. Due to the large population of students and young professionals, the transition towards a multi-actor and liberalized urban planning regime and the growth of the new middle class come together in Pune and make the city a highly interesting field for the analysis of contemporary social processes in urban India.

²¹⁰ cf.: Ibid: 18

²¹¹ ibid: 18

²¹² cf. Fernandes 2008: 144

²¹³ Kundu 2000: 18

6.2. *The upcoming new middle class*

“Social identities in fact serve as an important source of symbolic resources that help to manage the uncertainties associated with policies of economic liberalization and the broader processes of globalization that such policies invoke.”²¹⁴

Such a drastic economic and political transition changes everyday life practices, consumption patterns, the labour system and the images that surround us when we pass through urban spaces. New groups of actors establish, old elites lose their social legitimization and new parameters for identity construction establish. That results from processes of routine, reproduction and transformation in shifting social structures and a specific socio-spatial order. These social elements are closely connected to self-conception of the Indian nation and possible conflicts that arise out of a growing instability. That doesn't mean that there are no traces left from earlier structures and organisational system of the Indian society, rather these transformation processes led to a complex intersection between traditional identities and social inequalities and the new possibilities and barriers that came along with liberalization. India is a country with a broad diversity of social organisation, language, religion and tradition and it is impossible to give a proper account on the shifting structures since 1991. Therefore I will analyse the situation of students and their social embedding in Pune in detail in the upcoming chapters. But it is still important to understand certain main thoughts and processes that can be witnessed in urban India. Similar to the term “urban” as spatial character of liberalizing India, in the social sphere started a discussion about the so called “*new middle class*” as leading force and main beneficiary of the opening of the Indian economy. Sadia Toor argues that this new middle class, who are mainly urban, young professionals “*are in the process of creating their collective identity as Indians within the context of a new world economic order.*”²¹⁵

Leela Fernandes says that “*Policies of economic liberalization initiated since the 1990s have been accompanied by an array of visual images and public discourses that have centered on a shifting role of the middle class and their attitudes, lifestyles, and*

²¹⁴ Fernandes 2008: 61

²¹⁵ Toor 2000:8

*consumption practices*²¹⁶ and they started being portrayed “*as the representative citizens of liberalizing India.*”²¹⁷

The “newness” of this middle class doesn’t refer to the emergence of a whole new group of people and a new structural character of middle class, but is connected to the relation between the traditional middle class and the economic reforms of the NEP and “*the expansion of the service sector of the economy and of professional, white-collar employment within the private sector, in particular within multinational corporations.*”²¹⁸ It refers to a transformation of identity, outlook and social position in the Indian liberalisation dispositive.²¹⁹

What might also be considered as “new” is the position of the middle class in the public discourse. Because of the relevance of this social group for consumption and restructuring of the labour market, the middle class became the main focus for proponents and critics of the liberalisation paradigm.²²⁰ According to statistics also the size of the middle class increased since the beginning the 1980ties. In 1985-86 6.9% of the overall population would be considered to belong to the Middle Class, 1.5% to the Upper Middle Class and 25.2% to the Lower Middle Class. In 1999-2000 the group belonging to the Middle Class increased to 15.44%, the Upper Middle Class to 7.1% and the Lower Middle Class to 34.2%. The group of the overall population that decreased since then was the Lower Class from 65.2% in 1985-86 to 36.37% in 1999-2000.²²¹

This new middle class obviously is not homogeneous and is not defined only by occupational status or family structure, but by consumption pattern, spatial practices and the way they convert economic capital into symbolic and cultural capital and the way round. This gives the impression of increasing social mobility and space of manoeuvre but it shouldn’t be forgotten that “*...class formation is substantively shaped by the reworking of inequalities of caste, language, religion, and gender. In other words, class as a category*

²¹⁶ Fernandes 2008: XV

²¹⁷ ibd.: XV

²¹⁸ Pandey 2009: 9

²¹⁹ cf. Fernandes 2008: XVIII and Pandey 2009: 9-10

²²⁰ cf. Pandey 2009: 12

²²¹ cf. Fernandes 2008: 82; The calculations are based on household incomes per year. Lower Class (<= 35,000 Rupees), Lower Middle Class (35,0001-70,000), Middle Class (70,001-105,000), Upper Middle Class (105,001-140,000), High Class (> 140,000); Reading this statistics it has to be taken into account that within this time period the number of double-income households increase significantly as well as the number of nuclear families, therefore the definition of household underwent a relevant change.

is constituted by these structures."²²² Traditional social inequalities as gender and caste are still effective and it is not true to say that economic liberalization naturally led to the possibility to overcome former caste hierarchy. There can be witnessed a certain degree of social mobility but there are also new intersection between class and caste²²³ that reinforce enduring hegemony.

The same holds true for gender inequalities as well as discrimination due to religion or language.

The social mobility that becomes possible through the restructuring of the economic system and labour market and the emergence of the new middle class is also closely connected to an increasing occupational instability and insecurity. This process is even reinforced by credit-based consumption patterns and financial and social policies of the Indian government concerning income tax or privatization of public goods. Therefore big parts of the new middle class are facing financial and economic distress.²²⁴

The emergence of the new middle class is not the only important dynamic that has to be taken into account while looking at urban societies after 1991. Simultaneously cast-based movements and the political instrumentalization of religion by Hindu-nationalist parties have gained political significance. 1996 the BJP, Bharatiya Janata Party²²⁵, even won the election and ended the political domination of the Congress party.

For the new middle class consumption practices, lifestyle and social as well as spatial practices are highly relevant as identity criterion. These spatial practices and lifestyle are highly visible in public space and media, also because of the increasing importance of the visual sphere, which Lefebvre criticized as sign of the growing alienation from one's own needs and desires²²⁶, and became the dominant representation of what a member of the new urban, cosmopolitan, middle class has to look and act like. This even had an increasing influence on the labour system and the possibilities of becoming part of the new economic sector.²²⁷ That means that the identity you represent in the constructed image of liberalizing

²²² *ibid*: 222

²²³ *cf.* Patel 2006: 18

²²⁴ *cf.* Pandey 2009: 204

²²⁵ The Bharatiya Janata Party is a Hindu nationalist party that is also accused to have been involved in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and the following riots 1993 and the riots in Gujarat 2002.

²²⁶ *cf.* Lefebvre 1991: 75

²²⁷ *cf.* Fernandes 2008: 93

India in combination with traditional social markers has a considerable impact on your socioeconomic reality. That also implies that there can be a gap between socioeconomic realities of this new middle class, which for example consist of high job insecurity and the image that is publicly projected and seems to be reachable for everyone.

Leela Fernandes' analysis of the new Indian middle class shows that the growing alienation and abstraction of life realities and representational space, which Lefebvre attached to the capitalist mode of production, got reinforced through the process of liberalization in India. This middle class lifestyle in its dominant representations is at the first sight not connected to boundaries of gender, caste, religion and regional language but to consumption practices and "the will to make something out of you", which includes education and hard work. Gurcharan Das highlights this liberal belief very clearly in his book "India unbound", when he says:

*"Given the right circumstances [Liberal market economy, author's note], the middle class invariably pulls itself up through hard work, self-reliance and education in a competitive economy. This did not happen in India because our earlier policies suppressed growth."*²²⁸

Therefore this dominant representation and the adjunctive spaces of representation in urban India can lead to two dynamics. First it can result in the ceaseless attempt of people to achieve this image, to attain to the connected expectations because this clearly defined, categorized identity can provide a certain security in a period of such unstable transformations of all aspects of life. Secondly this concept of the new middle class and the attempt to fulfil it, carry within the danger of de-politicization because it overshadows basic social inequalities and shifts the responsibility of a successful life into the hands of individuals. These images and concepts can result in the abstraction of social realities and an alienation of individuals and groups from their desires because they are directed towards one constructed identity.

The deeper understanding of the formation, political and economic reality and identity construction of this new middle class is crucial for the research project, since this group might have a great potential of transforming power relations within cities and become a leading actor in the production of space. If there is an actual potential and how actors from this group deal with their social position and relation to urban space will be analysed more

²²⁸ Das 2000: 225

in detail in the upcoming chapter. For this aim social realities and imagined concepts of students and space in Pune will be further examined.

Concluding we can say that the New Economic Policy in India has consisted of a liberalization of trade, industry and finance market, an increasing privatization and a changing role of the state. This led to a shifting role of cities in the Indian national economy as well as a change in their form of governance and internal system. Furthermore it created new images of India as a global player and a country of possibilities. The new middle class is portrayed as embodiment of these possibilities. This new middle class, which is characterized by consumption patterns, lifestyle and a strong visual presence in public spaces and the media, is embedded in the interplay of dominant representations and socioeconomic realities. In the next part of the work, I will analyse in depth part of this new middle class, which would be young students in Pune and their relationship to urban space. With this basic framework of the historic development of Pune and the national transformation process since 1991, it should be possible to understand spatial practices, representations of space and representational space in Pune in a more profound and differentiated way.

7. Structure and agency producing space in Pune

„I experience myself in the city, and the city exists through my embodied experience. The city and my body supplement and define each other. I dwell in the city and the city dwells in me.”²²⁹

My interview partners put one thought at the centre of their account on Pune at night, and this was the question of what they could do and what not. What they perceived as allowed doing and where they did encounter limits. Sometimes they called it limits, sometimes rules and sometimes only facts of their everyday life. All these things are part of the socio-spatial order they are embedded in and confronted with while passing physically or mentally through Pune’s nightscapes. They told me about what they do or what they would like to do and sometimes their tone was frustrated, sometimes sarcastic and from time to time even proud. By listening to them, I realized that the interaction between the socio-spatial structures, their wishes and their acting was crucial for their perception of urban space in Pune. My task was to figure out the conditions that influence this interaction and the conjunctive and disjunctive elements that lead to a bigger picture of society. The idea is to understand subjective life realities as mirrors of society; therefore one life story from whichever part of society is a representative of the social ensemble and provides us with the possibility to have a look inside broader social dynamics.²³⁰

In the upcoming chapter we will have a look at the bigger picture of socio-spatial order and possibilities for spatial practices in between reproduction and possible transformation through the eyes of my interview partners, their life stories and personal accounts. We will pass through Pune’s nightscapes looking for traces of historic development, the consequences of the New Economic Policy and hoping for little surprises that perhaps will show us that between all these concepts there is still place for the lived space of the Youth. We will focus on the more concrete and tangible manifestations of the production of space, structures and agency in Pune. We will look at economic, political and social structures, examples for reproductive agency and potentials for transformative agency. These chapters are the outcome of the analysis of my interviews, observations and other collected primary material as well as in depth literature research.

²²⁹ Pallasmaa in Zardini 2005

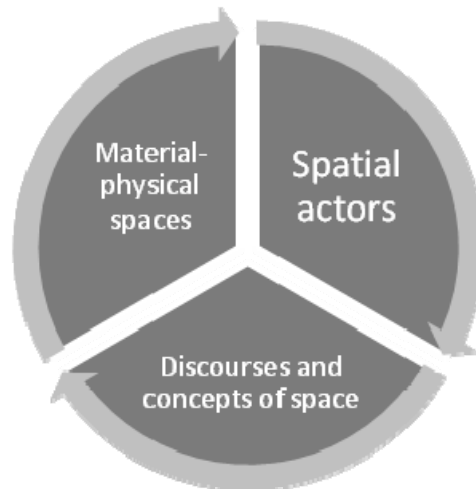
²³⁰ cf. Nandy 2004: 92

7.1. *An encounter with structural embeddings*

There can be distinguished three major spheres of structures and processes of restructuring that characterize the spatial production of Pune. These three dimensions, which are clearly not the only structures to be identified but in this case the most prominent ones, are interconnected and interdependent. On the one hand we have the economic sphere, which includes among other aspects the relations of production, the organization of the labour market, wage distribution and consumption patterns. It becomes quite clear that these elements of society are inextricably linked to political structures like the administrative system, mode of governing or political hierarchy, which would be the second sphere. The third dimension, which is no less important, is the socio-cultural one. It is perhaps the most difficult to grasp especially because the limits between social and cultural are not clear at all. I chose to include the term cultural because it was used throughout my interviews and conversations. Even if most of the users of the term were not aware of the complexity of definition and a lot of different associations were attached to it, it most certainly has certain significance. This sphere includes the organization of families, gender relations and relations between different generations. You might wonder how all this is connected to space and if I'm possibly getting too far away from my actual topic. But all of these structures are fed back with space and exist through their spatial existence. We can connect it to building activities, residential segregation or design of assembly halls for political meetings.

As I have analysed earlier the physical, spatial manifestation is only one aspect of socio-spatial structures and spatial actors are able to experience space and its organizational system in all its shades. Therefore it is important to include into the examination on the one hand the different structures in their material-physical manifestations. Furthermore discourses and concepts about these structures are a major concern because they reinforce certain processes through their impact on the imagination and collective associations of a society and at the same time they have the potential of inspiring counter dynamics. The third aspect which should be taken into account are dominant actors, which can be social groups, institutions and or institutionalized images of single authorities as "the father", "the landlord".

Figure 6: Graphic on the categories of analysis for socio-spatial structures²³¹



7.1.1. Economic restructuring

It is important to keep in mind that this is not a detailed research on economic processes in Pune, but an attempt to understand the way, in which economic structures and their production and reproduction in the course of the liberalization of the Indian economy, are influencing life realities of students. This means to take the construction of reality through the spatial subjects serious and connect their narratives with the available academic material on this topic. The choice and the emphasis on certain economic aspects follow the collected data during my field research.

Authorities in Pune claim the city to have a strongly booming industry and that it is becoming a serious competitor for cities like Bangalore and Hyderabad, and in certain aspects even for Delhi. The industrial growth of Pune started, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, in the 1960ties with the establishment of enterprises of the auto industry and the first steps towards becoming a centre for software technology.²³² Therefore it can be said that the economic boom since the beginning of the nineties and even more after 2000 is a process of continuity and is based on the groundwork that was laid during the 1960s and 1970s. But the liberalization of the Indian market and the change in the investment possibilities in urban centres brought up certain systemic shifts and economic restructuring. Due to a stronger emphasis on global orientation of economic development, a loosening of

²³¹ Graphic by author

²³² cf. Bapat 2004:8

investment restrictions²³³ in the city and amplifying educational possibilities through privatization of institutions, the IT sector could grow in a fast pace.

*“And then after that when that Panshed [referring to the break of the dam in 1961, author’s note] and other things and opening up of new educational institutions, manpower, trained manpower became available, as a result of which, then IT, then [...] the beginning of 2000, we started this IT boom also. And now everybody, if the trained manpower is available and opportunities are also available for the industries then it becomes easy for the industry also to put more money in Pune and surrounding area. And that is how the development took place.”*²³⁴

No doubt the IT sector is currently the driving force of Pune’s economic development, this sector and the Biotechnology sector have grown from 250 Rs crores to over Rs 6 500 crores²³⁵ since 2000, which would be 26 times higher than eight years ago.²³⁶ This goes together with a strong increase in the investment activities and the creation of more job opportunities. In the first half of 2004 10 000 new jobs were created and 60% of them were in the IT industry.²³⁷

The recent ESR – Environmental Status Report states that there has been a growth of investment of 66% from 2005-06 to 2007-08 and that 114 companies are likely to offer around 38 000 new jobs.²³⁸

This is also an indication for the kind of development that the labour market in Pune and other major cities in India have undergone. The city faced a major growth in the service sector, especially in outsourced sectors of multinational companies.

These developments are not only restricted to the IT or BT sectors but *“The growth of Pune is being driven by various industry segments. The sectors that are vibrant in Pune today are auto, auto components, forgings, mechanical components, food processing and service industries like IT and IT enabled services.”*²³⁹

²³³ cf. Ibid.: 26

²³⁴ Interview with Expert 6

²³⁵ 1 crore=10 000 000; Rs 250 crores are around €40 million; 6500 crores are around €1 billion

²³⁶ cf. Times of India: „Pune per capita income higher than India’s“; 05.08.2008

²³⁷ cf. Thakur: „Pune’s job scene is looking up“; In: Times of India, 31.3. 2004

²³⁸ cf. ibid

²³⁹ Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a: 29

To illustrate this development, there is a long list of companies with established centres in Pune as for example Bajaj Auto, Kinetic Engineering, Bajaj Tempo, Tata Motors and Daimler Chrysler in the auto industry and TCS, Infosys, Wipro, Cognizant, Consistent Systems, Sasken, Amdocs, Avaya, Veritas.²⁴⁰

Furthermore Pune reached a comparatively high per capita income, which is often taken as symbol for economic success and prosperity of the city in the media and the political representation.

Table 5: Per capita income of India and Pune²⁴¹

	Per capita income India	Per capita income Pune
2002-03	Rs. 21,257	Rs. 40,111
2003-04	Rs. 23,507	Rs. 46,313

These data, which comparability is problematic since they are only available from two different sources, are nurturing quite well the dominant political and public discourse on Pune as the booming economy and upcoming city. Constant comparisons with Hyderabad and Bangalore and sometimes with Delhi are quoted to show the uniqueness of Pune due to the combination of well educated, skilled labour, investment facilities and infrastructure.²⁴² ‘Pune Shining’ is the keyword of the campaign supported by the municipal and regional political authorities and the media, in the style of the ‘India Shining’ slogan, which was used in 2003 by the back then ruling BJP to express the economic optimism in India. The UK-India Business Council recently even ranked Pune as the “*most suitable place in India for British Investment*”.²⁴³ This discourse, which is designed and reproduced partly to attract investment, is not only a representative tool but implies political actions and regulations, which will be further explored in the chapter on political structures.

Obviously the shininess of the rapid development and the optimistic imagination that comes along with it, are not the only perspectives and realities of Pune’s economy and its influence on the production of space in the last twenty or fifty years. The global orientation

²⁴⁰ cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2004

²⁴¹ Roy/ Katoti 2008, Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a

²⁴² cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a:33

²⁴³ Business Standard: UK survey ranks Pune most suitable place in India for British investments. 10.06.2009

and the liberalisation of the market have had major consequences for the socio-spatial order in the city.

We will have a critical look at these dynamics with the examples of the real estate market, the emergence of the entertainment industry and the changes in the higher education system.

The economic growth, which has been focused on certain sectors, has been connected to a building boom, which is quite polarized in certain areas of the city. The building boom not only includes IT parks and construction works for a solely economic purpose, but also residential areas and spaces for a certain type of leisure time activities. It can be said that there is happening a literal production of space in its material-physical dimension that is inextricably linked to the economic development. The leading actors in this process are private developers with direct and indirect support from the Pune Municipal Corporation, who perceive Pune as reasonable choice for investment.²⁴⁴ It is nearly impossible to find any coherent data on these issues and this is also a very clear sign for the type of development that is taking place. It is not planned with a holistic vision for the city but rather polarized and market oriented. This leads to a growth of the city without adequate growth of the infrastructure, because these services are still expected to be provided by the state. In certain areas of the city, especially the areas close to the different IT-parks and industry zones, the demand of land and investment possibilities is growing in such a fast pace and therefore the land value is increasing.²⁴⁵ This development is supported by the lack of efficient control and regulation of land distribution and real estate market.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ cf.: IBEF 2008: 20

²⁴⁵ cf.: Van Kampen/Van Naerssen 2008: 945

²⁴⁶ cf. Bapat 2004

Table 6: Real estate prices in 5 areas in Pune²⁴⁷

Pune	(in Rs. Per Sq. Ft.)				
	Mar-04	Mar-05	Mar-06	Mar-07	Mar-08
Karegaon Park	3000	3500	4000	5800	7250
Aungh	2000	2500	3200	5500	7000
Banger	1600	2000	2500	4500	6200
Wakad	1300	1800	2000	3500	5800
Kalyani Nagar	1800	2500	3500	5400	7500

This increase also holds true for rental prices, as the town planning expert shows with the example of Aundh. “As a result of which [he refers to the demand of land exceeding the supply, author’s note] you will find that land values are going up. In Aundh till last year, the flat which was available for 1200 Rupees or 1500 Rupees suddenly now, they are quoting three thousand, 3500 and so on. So whosoever is having little land development they are claiming monopoly value.”²⁴⁸

This increasing real estate prices are especially affecting students that migrated to Pune for educational purpose because there is a lack of designated and subsidized housing possibilities for students that actually meet the needs of this group.

Private investors in economic development and building activities and private developers in the real estate sector became important actors, which started producing material spaces through their financial decisions. These spaces are not part of an integrated perspective of the city but still exercise a big influence on the spatial order of the whole entity. The reason for that is that the IT-park or the residential apartment complex is limited to a certain area, but the connected services, needs for infrastructure, inhabitants and employees, and new images, that get created, are affecting more than this designated area. The image of ‘Pune shining’ and Pune as young, upcoming economic centre is constantly reproduced by the municipal authorities²⁴⁹ and mainstream media to attract exactly this type of investment and to lure these investors and developers. The question if this image and concept of urban space in Pune relates to the actual diversity of needs and perspectives of all social actors in the city is rarely posed. This shows quite clearly what Henri Lefebvre meant when he was

²⁴⁷ Singh/Komal 2009

²⁴⁸ Interview with Expert 6

²⁴⁹ cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a: 21

talking about homogenisation that comes together with fragmentation of spaces through capitalist mode of production. The image and concept of the city as economically successful, young, cosmopolitan and prosperous is omnipresent in the public sphere and the requirements of a liberalized labour market, globalized economic system and lifestyle and consumption patterns of the new middle class is made first priority by public authorities, private investors and private consumers and overshadowing other realities in the city. Simultaneously this concept and the adjunctive spatial practices are not inclusive and leave out big parts of the population, which lead to fragmented spaces in a homogeneously conceptualized city. One of the experts gave a good example from an everyday life situation, which illustrates this dynamic quite well.

“If a poor man construct a small hut and starts doing some business on the street, he is considered as unauthorized and his hut or whatever structure he is constructing. He is removed by the encroachment remover van. But if I put a five lakh rupee, say ten lakh rupee Mercedes, there nobody will touch. They will say he has parked his vehicle and I consider that, that is my right, to park my vehicle on the road.”²⁵⁰

One landscape architect working in Pune gives the example of the role of public space, which is often considered as one of the main concepts and instruments creating inclusive and democratic cities. She argues that in private, enclosed residential areas the concept of an open space for “public” use is becoming more and more important, but for the whole city the creation of such collective spaces is disregarded.

“There are these residential clusters and they have their own highly developed, maintained public, maintained open space. But when you come out of this cluster, there is hardly any development, proper development of public spaces.”²⁵¹

Another example for this fragmentation and polarization is the argumentation and liberal belief of private developers and advocates of the liberalization of the real estate market. They argue that the huge investments in high standard living in areas like Aundh or Baner and the demand for this kind of living shows

²⁵⁰ Interview with Expert 6

²⁵¹ Interview with Expert 2

“...the economic growth has trickled down to the large Indian middle class increasing affordability and affluence. Improving living standards are driving the demand for better quality housing and urban infrastructure. In fact, housing in India is today moving from being viewed as a purely basic need to an aspirational purchase.”²⁵²

At the same time the percentage of people living in slums in Pune is constantly increasing and it amounts to nearly half the population in the city.

Table 7: Statistics on percentage of slum population in Pune²⁵³

Year	Total population ²⁵⁴	Slum population	Percentage of slum population (%)
1981	1 703 351	377 000	31
1991	1 691 430	569 000	34
2001	2 540 069	1 025 000	40
2005	3 006 036	1 297 000	43

7.1.1.1. Entertainment and leisure industry

As I’ve explained in the last section it’s important to see that this economic boom and the connected building activities and changes in the economic structure of the city are not limited to these areas, which are designated for the IT-, BT- or automobile industry.

The sector, which has witnessed a constant growth in the last twenty years, is the so called entertainment and leisure industry. It’s a development that goes together with the increasing investment into the above mentioned sectors and was discovered as the upcoming business of the urban economy. It combined the possibility of quick profit and had a high representative value for urban development in India.

“The leisure and entertainment industry witnessed significant growth in the 1990s. Entertainment enterprises – ranging from bowling alleys, ice skating rinks, and video parlours to restaurants, malls and amusement parks – are promoted as the icons of the new India of the liberalizing middle class.”²⁵⁵ As Leela Fernandes already indicated this emergence of the entertainment and leisure industry is strongly connected to the new dominant actors in urban space, which would be among others the new Indian middle class.

²⁵² IBEF 2008: 2

²⁵³ Pune Municipal Corporation 2005

²⁵⁴ Total population of the area under the PMC administration

²⁵⁵ Fernandes 2008: 73

They are the main consumers and this sphere makes a considerable contribution to the process of identity formation of groups belonging to this umbrella term of new middle class.

In Pune the main actors in this concern would probably be young professionals, which are directly integrated in the IT sector, some parts of the student's community and affluent families. Especially the group of young professionals is growing constantly and receives globally compatible salaries, which are comparably high for the average income in Pune or other Indian cities. So they are able through their consumption pattern to support this leisure industry boom.²⁵⁶

This entertainment and leisure industry, which also includes night clubs, bars and multiplexes, is also related to the change of urban nightscapes, because these places are together with restaurants and malls, the only "*hang-out*"-spaces after ten o'clock p.m. Therefore there is a certain correlation between liberalisation, entertainment industry, consumption and new possibilities for certain actors at night. This will be further explored in the upcoming chapters, which will be concerned with spatial practices.

This development changes the physical appearance of Pune through its material manifestation to a very large extent. The above mentioned spaces of entertainment industry are very often produced as representative buildings supported by advertisement in public spaces. They can be understood as newly emerging landmarks of the city and they also start becoming crucial for the orientation in and relation with space. Due to their high visibility in public space, they are becoming the symbols of transformation of the city and of its fast pace. In my interviews, my conversation partners nearly all referred to these material changes in the landscape of Pune with words like "mushrooming" and "plopping up buildings". The way and the pace in which those spaces are designed, financed and built and other spaces like inclusive and accessible public spaces are not, shows the high polarization of development of urban space in Pune and the lack of supervision of urban development and the reregulation of this process through newly emerging spatial actors. This development is also stressing the infrastructure in Pune as much as the upcoming

²⁵⁶ Jetley: E=Entertainment": In: Outlook India 16.11.1998

industrial zones.²⁵⁷ The municipal authorities, in order to attract international and local investors and to keep up to the discourse of Pune as an upcoming metropolitan centre, rather enforce than regulate this process.²⁵⁸

We can witness that entertainment, in the sense of consumption of leisure time activities, became a crucial concept and the consumers of it important actors in the production of urban space. Simultaneously the materialized entertainment spaces like multiplexes, malls and nightclubs carry within a projection screen for identity forming processes for the city and its inhabitants and concepts about new spatial practices.

In this part, I don't want to focus further on spatial practices but it's important to understand the newly arising position and role of spatial practices connected to entertainment industry in urban space. Due to the increasing presence and visibility of these industries, the question of "lifestyle" and connected agency became on the one hand more important as distinctive aspect in social hierarchy. On the other hand "*The proliferation of leisure and other service-sector-related industries has contributed to the growing public and social focus on questions of lifestyle.*"²⁵⁹

All these spatial practices are largely based on consumption.

7.1.1.2. Consumption culture?

Consumption is not a structure of society but a practice that symbolizes and embodies a certain process of restructuring. It should not only be understood as an individual act to express one's taste but as a collective activity, which has a social significance. A certain type of consumption and the choice of products are closely connected to social representation, hierarchical standing and habitus.²⁶⁰ Leela Fernandes analysed the upcoming consumption patterns quite well by saying "...*emerging consumption practices represent an important set of everyday signs and symbols through which people make sense of the more abstract term "economic reforms."*"²⁶¹ These consumption patterns are not so much object of analysis when we talk about economic restructuring in Pune because they

²⁵⁷ cf. Interview with Expert 6

²⁵⁸ cf. *ibid.*

²⁵⁹ Fernandes 2008: 142

²⁶⁰ cf. Toor 2000: 7/8

²⁶¹ Fernandes 2008: XXII

would rather be part of spatial practices, which reproduce a certain system of production and consumption. The significance of consumption after liberalization in India for the economic structuring of a city is the role it started playing in the socio-spatial order. Consumption, especially conspicuous one, started becoming in Pune an important tool of taking part in the production of spaces. Spatial preferences can be voiced through consumption, privacy can be achieved through consumption and in some cases even social legitimization for moving around at night can be achieved through consumption. Therefore the increasing significance of it in connection with the growing investment into entertainment and leisure industry create a new spatial environment, in which students encounter freedom and limits alternative to the ones in Pune after independence. This shift represents one part of economic restructuring in Pune. The night is conquered through this economic complex and new spaces are opening especially for young people in Pune, but all this development is intrinsically tied to a certain degree of economic affluence. To express it in the words of one of my interview partners:

“If you want to have fun, that people who have that much money, who can have fun.”²⁶²

7.1.1.3. Higher education in Pune

There is one more essential sphere for this research, which has been closely connected to the liberalization process on the national level as well as to the economic restructuring in Pune. This sphere is the higher education system and can't be entirely understood as part of economic structures, but rather it is a very good example for the interaction between politics and economics. Generally speaking, none of the mentioned structures are purely economic; they are always part of a political-economic complex of restructuring urban space in Pune.

Nevertheless I think that the transition in higher education stands at the right place in this analysis because one major aspect of it has been the increasing integration of higher education into market logic and decentralized and liberalized accumulation.

Obviously the system of higher education and the organisational process of its institutions are quite crucial to understand the life realities of my research partners, as all of them were students. Even if my focus was on nocturnal spaces, which means that it didn't include

²⁶² IP 17 in Groupinterview with IP 5, IP 15, IP 16 and IP 17

directly colleges and universities because they are confined to daytime, the embedding into these institutional structures is in constant interplay with the production of urban space at night.

Privatization of higher education in India as in many other countries is discussed quite a lot without further specification, which would be important to understand the dynamics properly. In India the reforms and political-economic practices in higher education since the New Economic Policy consisted mostly of a decentralization of institutions and an upcoming of private institutes in the field of training and professional education. The traditional educational institutions like the University of Pune and the affiliated colleges were not so much object of privatizing strategies and the government of India is still the main actor in this field. The state until now plays the role of a regulating monopoly at least for the institutions, which are part of the centralized system.²⁶³

Decentralization relates to the fact that after the national policy on education in 1986, modified in 1992, there was a strong emphasis on promoting colleges and universities apart from the centralized University of Pune and its affiliated colleges.²⁶⁴ That means that to some institutes the status of deemed universities was granted and they could independently grant degrees and decide about their tuition fees without following the rules and regulation of the centralized institution. They are still accountable to the UGC – University Grants Commission²⁶⁵, but they were more autonomous than before.²⁶⁶

The short overview on deemed universities in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad shows that all of them have been receiving the status since the end of the 1980s.

²⁶³ cf. Kapur/Mehta 2004

²⁶⁴ cf. Government of India 1998: 18

²⁶⁵ The UGC is the only grant-giving agency for universities in India. It has the mandate to coordinate and develop regulations on quality, finances and system of higher education. It links the Indian central government with the respective state governments. cf.: www.ugc.ac.in, 03.04.2009

²⁶⁶ cf. University Grant Commission 1956

Table 8: List of deemed university²⁶⁷

Name of deemed university	Date of becoming a deemed university
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth	28.04.1987
Deccan College Postgraduate & Research Institute	05.03.1990
Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics	07.05.1993
Bharati Vidyapeeth	26.04.1996
Institute of Armament Technology	10.09.1999
SYMBIOSIS International University	06.05.2002
Dr. D.Y. Patil Vidyapeeth	11.01.2003

These privately owned, deemed universities are concentrating either on postgraduate research or more important they focus on education in the field of management and engineering. Both these fields are much demanded because people expect considerably high salaries and good job opportunities. The investment in such institutions and the support from the government authorities is also linked to the emphasis on the location factor “skilled labour” in Pune.

“Actually we have got good management institutions, [...] if you are student of a management you are getting good salary, that is the present state of affairs, and if you come from good institutions like Symbiosis [Symbiosis International University, author’s note] then you get more valued also, more salary also. So everybody is rushing to Pune for getting admission to these institutions.”²⁶⁸

The critique of these newly established autonomous universities, especially in the field of management and engineering, is that there is a lack of accountability concerning the fee structures. Higher education, or rather degrees and certificate for that become more of a product that can be purchased than a social, sustainable investment.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ <http://www.ugc.ac.in/inside/deemeduniv.html#maharashtra>, 03.04.2009

²⁶⁸ Interview with Expert 6

²⁶⁹ cf. Interview with Expert 7

The director of the CDSA – Centre for development studies and activities, an institution for Master degrees affiliated to the University of Pune, identifies this transition with an increasing commodification of education.

*“...when Symbiosis [Symbiosis International University; author’s note] was under the university there was no problem. But when they were able to fix their own fees, ok, and they started demanding things like fifty lakhs, 25 lakhs, 30 lakhs, etc [...] that the entire competition thing started where a huge amount of money could be paid and they would get admitted to a medical college, an engineering college. You didn't need the marks. [...] It's a prostituting education. It's not really a bazaar, it's gone beyond that also.”*²⁷⁰

In some cases, that also refers to the other institutions I’ve mentioned above, the private centres for training and professional education.

*“Such institutes, which have mushroomed in both metropolitan areas and small towns, provide a wide array of services including the provision of computer training, English classes, various managerial diplomas, and public speaking training.”*²⁷¹ These institutes are a product of the opening up of the sphere of higher education for more autonomous and liberalized actors.

Many of these institutes offer certificates and degrees as an asset for the liberalized labour market and the monitoring and accountability often fails in its implementation. These educational, private actors can be rather seen as part of an unplanned privatization, which was a result of a severe crisis of the state-system, upcoming entrepreneurs and aspirations of the new Indian middle class than an ideological strategy of the economic transformation in India.²⁷²

These institutes *“grant diplomas and certificates to provide credentials in an attempt to gain a foothold in the new middle class dream of liberalization.”*²⁷³

It can be said that these new dynamics, I’ve just discussed, consists of a diversification of actors and organisational systems in the educational field and the inclination of the higher education system towards the liberal market logic.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Expert 7

²⁷¹ Fernandes 2008: 96

²⁷² cf. Kapur/ Mehta 2004:2 and Fernandes 2008: 99

²⁷³ Fernandes 2008: 95

This shift influenced and moulded the socio-spatial order in Pune. First of all the development towards a commodification of education has led to a new inner differentiation of the student's community increasingly based on economic resources. The upcoming of new institutions put furthermore pressure on students in traditional institutions like the University of Pune concerning the labour market because of the enrolment of new forces in the arena of future employment. That's also because these new educational spaces carry within a discourse of prestige and the concept of an academic degree as market advantage. Another major consequence of this opening of new institutions, especially in the careers of business administration and engineering, is the increase of students' migration mainly from Northern India and countries like Iran. These students are mostly from affluent families, that want to take the chance of these private universities, that not only provide education but also prestige in the discursive field and placement promises for the student's start in working life.²⁷⁴ There is a huge lack of data and analysis on the student's community in Pune and the interconnections between student's migration and the production of space, which would be really important to focus on in future research. These social actors, which emerge from the above mentioned dynamics, limit their presence not only to the institutionalized spaces as college campuses and cafeterias. That reconnects to the growing entertainment and leisure industry and the role of consumption in the production of space in Pune. Therefore it is important to keep this development of universities and colleges in mind when we focus later on spatial practices, social structures and discourses and concepts of space in Pune.

After looking at the different elements of economic structures in Pune, which are all connected to political and social structures, it's possible to integrate it into a bigger picture about the social production of space in its diverse dimensions.

First of all we have a restructuring of the system of accumulation and the labour market, which is called the economic boom in Pune. On the other hand we have a restructuring of the educational field, wherein new institutions establish and others get autonomous and academic degrees and careers get integrated more and more into market logic. These developments create and get created by the production of new material space in the city. Landmarks of liberalization are built and campuses or industry parks become spaces of

²⁷⁴ cf. Interview with Expert 7

representation for the upcoming, cosmopolitan, successful Pune. These building activities, that reinforce polarization and fragmentation, yield stress on the infrastructure as well as on the real estate market.

Secondly, new dominant actors turn up in the production of space, which are inextricably linked to the above mentioned dynamics. Through migration of affluent students and young professionals as well as comparably high salaries in the upcoming economic sectors in Pune, groups of people with relatively high purchasing power influence discourses, built environment and collective imaginaries about the city through their consumption pattern. That doesn't mean that all young professionals or students with the possibility to consume would indulge into conspicuous consumption and have one common taste. But it is definitely possible to say consumption, as collective social activity, became more important as projection screen for identity formation and has a high influence on spaces of representation.

The increasing dominant visibility of these dynamics in public space and the importance of representation for the reproduction of these economic structures is the third interconnecting aspect with the production of space. The image of Pune as economically booming city and centre of education with a high market value has become dominant in all discourses about the city. It gets constantly reinforced in order to attract investors and to keep up to the hegemonically produced idea of what Pune "should be". I'm using hegemonically because even the counter discourses and the attempt to create different spaces and alternative processes of identity formation are inextricably linked to this idea of Pune, at least when I look at the different conversations, interviews and experiences I had with students and experts. Hegemonically also because it is not only a political strategy of a certain political party but it is a shared imaginary and practices between public authorities, who use it for city marketing, entrepreneurs and economic actors, who base their business plans on it, advertisement, media and actors and their everyday life routine. Institution like the Pune Municipal Corporation in their City Development Plan²⁷⁵ and the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation and the India Brand Equity Foundation in their self-

²⁷⁵ cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a

representation and studies on Indian cities²⁷⁶ illustrate this dynamic very well. In the last chapter of this thesis we will furthermore have a closer look at spatial practice of students in Pune and how this is connected to this dominant discourse.

²⁷⁶ cf. Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation; www.midcindia.org, 6.4.2010 and India Brand Equity Foundation; www.ibef.org, 6.4.2010

7.1.2. The role of political-administrative structures in the production of space

The political and administrative sphere in a city plays a major role in planning, categorising and defining space. Policy makers are important actors in the production of representations of space and form together with politicians a decisive factor in urban power relations.

There are two aspects of the political-administrative sphere, which are of crucial importance to understanding the production and reproduction of space in Pune and the life realities of my interview partners.

On the one hand there are the politics of urban planning in Pune, which are embedded in questions of scale, rescaling and economic liberalisation. On the other hand Pune and Maharashtra have been facing a political parties' landscape with a strong presence of communal discourses and the politicization of ethnicity and religion.

Therefore this chapter will focus first on the significant transformations in the planning system in Pune and secondly on the influence of right-wing party politics on the struggle in the appropriation of space.

7.1.2.1. Rescaling of the urban planning system

The discussions about economic liberalisation and opening of the market are always closely connected to role of the (nation)-state in this process. Deregulation, like the abolition of license raj in India, and privatization of economic sectors and social services led to the assumption that the state is declining and its role has been becoming less important. To reduce the dynamics to this statement would not draw an appropriate picture of the urban planning system in Pune city. As we have seen in the last chapter, developments like the establishment of IT-parks, the construction of landmarks for entertainment industry or the opening of private educational institutes wouldn't have been possible without decisions and strategies of national, regional or local political authorities. But it can be said that there has been taking place a shift in the role of the (nation)-state in urban development in Pune, which consisted of decentralization and increasing involvement of private partners.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁷ cf. Kulkarni 2008: 9

Therefore the interesting analytical interest and one of the biggest challenges of contemporary urban Pune is the process of rescaling of urban planning.

Rescaling *“bezeichnet eine komplexe und stark umkämpfte Rekonfigurierung der interskalaren Anordnungen, einschließlich der Herausbildung neuer Ebenen von Praxis und Emanzipation.”*²⁷⁸

The tasks of planning, financing and administrating urban development have been increasingly handed over to Urban Local Bodies (ULB) like the Pune Municipal Corporation and there has been a very strong focus on private-public-partnerships for infrastructural projects.²⁷⁹ These changes in the system were mostly a reaction to the impact of population growth and the connected insufficiency of urban infrastructure.²⁸⁰ Therefore many conflictive situations and points of critique of political elites and urban planning and its implementation in Pune are also a consequence of the highly bureaucratic and clientelistic system since the Indian Independence²⁸¹ and not necessarily linked to the current changes.

The relation between those continuing influences of this traditional political system, the shifting scales in the political landscape of urban planning in Pune and pressure from a liberalising economy, are crucial for the understanding of contemporary urban planning.

Generally the metropolitan agglomeration of Pune is divided in 5 civic bodies, which is an outcome of historical developments and makes holistic planning for the region quite difficult. Apart from the main municipal authority, the Pune Municipal Corporation, which will be the focus of the analysis, there are the Pune Cantonment Board²⁸², the Khadki Cantonment Board, the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation²⁸³ and the Dehu Road Cantonment Board.²⁸⁴

²⁷⁸ Mahon/Keil 2008: 35; „Rescaling denominates a complex and highly contested reconfiguration of the interscalar order, including the development of new levels of practice and emancipation; translation by author

²⁷⁹ cf. Bapat 2004: 26; Kulkarni 2008

²⁸⁰ cf. Ibid: 29

²⁸¹ cf. Kulabkar 2002

²⁸² The Pune Cantonment Board and the Khadki Cantonment Board are relicts of the dual city system under British rule

²⁸³ The Pimpri Chinchwad Corporation is in charge of the industrial township, which was established in the 1970s close Pune city

²⁸⁴ cf.: <http://www.punepages.com/civic-administration-of-pune>, 05.07.2009

The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), which was founded in 1950, is in charge of urban planning, infrastructural amenities and civic services.²⁸⁵

The head of the Corporation is an officer from the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and is appointed by the government of Maharashtra. His position is called Municipal Commissioner and he obtains the executive power in the city. The corporation itself is elected and consists of 151 corporators, headed by the Mayor of Pune city, which has mostly a representative role. Furthermore the territory under the responsibility of the PMC is organised in 48 administrative units, called wards. These municipal wards, which do not necessarily correspond to the area differentiation the residents of Pune would make, are headed by Assistant Municipal Commissioners.²⁸⁶

The Pune city development plan (CDP) is the main planning instrument of the PMC, which can be considered as Urban Local Body (ULB). The city development plan can traditionally be understood as a land-use map. This highlights the importance of urban planning in the production of space because political authorities, with increasing participation of certain actors of the civil society, decide about the use of material-physical spaces. They lay the groundwork for any further spatial development.

Since the beginning of the 1990s planning policy was refocused towards a decentralisation and increase of the rights and duties of these urban local bodies. The relationship between different scales, as space of a specific mode of production, political as well as collective social action and organizing factor²⁸⁷, shifted towards a process of glocalization, which means the increasing importance of the local scale for the global accumulation regime²⁸⁸. The idea, which started with the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and was reinforced in the Tenth Five Year Plan of the government of India (2002-07)²⁸⁹, who advocated this decentralisation and privatization, was to strengthen the urban local bodies, to be able to improve the urban service sector and the provision of infrastructure. This political strategy also includes financial autonomy, which means that the local, political authorities have to approach investment funds and private capital to be able to cope with

²⁸⁵ cf.: *ibid*; Diddee/Gupta 2000:248

²⁸⁶ cf.: <http://www.puneonline.in/Administration/>, 05.07.2009
<http://www.punepages.com/civic-administration-of-pune>, 05.07.2009

²⁸⁷ cf. Smith 1995 in Brenner 2000: 367

²⁸⁸ cf. Brenner 2000: 366

²⁸⁹ cf. Kulkarni 2008: 5; Bapat 2004: 25

the challenges of maintaining, improving and expanding the city infrastructure.²⁹⁰ Even if this political move opens up new possibilities and could empower local agents to carry out their own urban development, it shouldn't be overlooked that it also means an increasing pressure because the national and state political level gives up part of their accountability and their financial contribution to urban development. This can also lead to a lack of holistic, political strategies on a national level.

The interesting point of this development is that it is not a direct shift from the national to the urban scale but rather a rearrangement of the interplay between different scales and simultaneously a change in the concept of these scales themselves. For Pune there was not only an increase of responsibility and power for the PMC but also increase of influence of the global scale through the liberalizing mode of production and growing significance of economic factors like foreign direct investment. Furthermore the Indian nation state still exercises political influence on the Pune Municipal Corporation but the type of relationship has changed. In 2005 the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) was launched by the Ministry of Urban Development of the Government of India. This national programme, which is financed partly by the national, state and local authorities²⁹¹, is supporting and fostering the Urban Local Bodies in their newly developed position in the planning process. Urban Local Bodies, like the PMC, can apply for this programme and the city development plan is the main document for this process. The mission, who is limited to a period of seven years, seeks to professionalize urban planning, emphasize new forms of urban governance and foster the economic strength of Pune. This manifests in the requirement of mandatory reforms²⁹² for applying for this funds and in a newly designed process of the city development plan. In this process it is compulsory to include professional consultations and feedback from stakeholders from civil society (NGOs, Mohalla committees, informal sector, etc.) and industry.²⁹³ Through this process the actors in the urban planning process diversify – parts of civil society and Private-Public-

²⁹⁰ cf. Bapat 2004: 26; 29

²⁹¹ The funding pattern for Pune is 50% Government of India, 20% Government of Maharashtra, 30% PMC; cf. Kulkarni 2008: 22

²⁹² Among others these mandatory reforms are: Accounting reforms, E-governance, Property tax reform, basic services for the urban poor, etc. There are also optional reforms, which include property title certification, administrative reforms and encouraging Private-Public-Partnerships among others. For more information see Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a and <http://jnnurm.nic.in/nurmudweb/toolkit/Overview.pdf>, 10.11.2009

²⁹³ A detailed list of participant can be found in the Pune Municipal Corporation 2006ab: 44

Partnerships should become integral part – and the role and responsibilities of the traditional actors, like national, state and urban government, are changing.

This is relevant for the understanding of the production of urban space in Pune and for my interview partners because these actors reproduce or transform concepts and categories of space, decide about the use of urban land and have an influence on the economic development of the city. At the time of this research it was still not possible to evaluate and analyze in depth these dynamics of change because they only started in 2006 but it is one of the most interesting developments that should be further examined in upcoming research projects.

Interesting enough the planning system and public authorities were not a topic at all in the interview with my research partners, except the expert interviews. They mentioned aspects like infrastructural shortcomings, but nobody connected it to political actors or the planning system. The only public authority, who was referred to and connect the own life reality was the police. But in these cases the police was not integrated into a broader context of legislation and policy making.

This could lead to the assumption that students, I've interviewed don't recognise different actors in the production of urban space or that they don't perceive themselves as political actors in this process. This probable lack of awareness of urban space being a social product and urban planning and development being highly political poses a big challenge to any attempt of civic participation.²⁹⁴

Another reason could be that my group of interview partners and their needs are not really focus of the Pune City Development Plan, which mainly is concerned with housing provision for low-income groups and basic infrastructure. Therefore there are direct and explicit connections between the planning system, local, political authorities and students. The issues in the development plan that are of interest for students in Pune, which would be the improvement of the public transport system, the beautification and enlargement of garden areas or the provision of housing facilities for migrant students²⁹⁵, are more or less elaborated in the plan but the implementation fails in most cases.

²⁹⁴ In his research on the JNNURM in Pune, Tanvi Kulkarni shows the lack of awareness of the JNNURM and therefore the lack of civic participation in the process. cf.: Kulkarni 2008: 29/30

²⁹⁵ cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a

Even if the students didn't consider the system of urban governance and planning decisions worth mentioning they are still part of their life reality and we should take a closer look at the contemporary situation of urban planning considering the development process and the interconnections with economic liberalisation.

Since the steps towards decentralization and programmes such as the JNNURM were only recently established the contemporary situation is rather marked by the consequences of earlier planning processes and furthermore by the concomitance of new governance processes, economic liberalisation, persistent bureaucracy and continuous clientelistic political culture.

Even before the establishment of the JNNURM the City Development Plan was the main instrument of planning in Pune. Therefore it is not so much a lack of planning but the highly bureaucratic and incredibly long procedure of finalising and approving the plan²⁹⁶, which is the point of critique. The last City Development Plan was supposed to be implemented in the period from 1987 until 2007 but the preparation of this plan began in 1976.²⁹⁷

Besides the state government could still modify the plan even after becoming a statutory document, even after the first steps towards decentralization of urban governance were taken. *“Subsequently, after 1987, even after the Draft Plan was finalized and it became a statutory document, the state government made several changes in the Plan. For example, area earmarked for a garden, school or housing for the poor (termed ‘economically weaker section’ in government documents) was changed to residential – read real estate – development. Between 1987 to 2001 reservation of 29 sites to be used for public purposes was deleted as ‘minor modifications’.”*²⁹⁸ But not only the state government is modifying the plan, the local authorities have been often adapting it to the needs of the market or political calculus in its implementation. The expert from the Yashada Institute²⁹⁹, who was working many years in the municipal authorities and is still involved in the formulation of

²⁹⁶ cf. Bapat 2004: 36; Kulabkar 2002: 7

²⁹⁷ cf.: Kulabkar 2002: 7

²⁹⁸ Interview with Expert 6

²⁹⁹ Yashada – Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration; This academy is for future civil servants in India

the CDP, explains the two dimensions of the problem of the plan. On the one hand the long time period enlarges the gap between aims of the plan and actual needs of the citizens, also due to the fast pace of development. On the other hand the “*certain*” concessions, which are useful tools for “*modifying*” the plan to new upcoming needs and the missing regulation, make the process obscure and arbitrary.

“... *twenty years [ago] when the plan of Pune DP [development plan, author’s note] was prepared in 1982 we were not contemplating after some time we will get multiplexes where we will, mind well not only we are allowing this development, we are encouraging this development by giving them certain concessions.*”³⁰⁰

This already leads us to the second aspects of the problematic political structures of urban planning in Pune, the implementation. There is a major lack of control, transparency and supervision of the implementation of proposals in the development plans.

The city development plans have been revised, planning processes have been monitored and this supervision even increased with the JNNURM “*But the level at which the work is undertaken – local/city level – does not have any mandated monitoring authority. The PMC monitors its own works in Pune.*”³⁰¹

Attempts like the implementation of participatory tools for civil society or TDR - transferable development rights³⁰², which are an alternative form of payment to private owners for land that is need for the construction of public amenities, are reasonable in the planning process but get misused by political parties and real estate developers.³⁰³

This misuse and lack of control is not only due to political calculus but it is rather connected to the quite surprising high speed of the economic boom and population growth

³⁰⁰ Interview with Expert 6

³⁰¹ Kulkarni 2008: 29

³⁰² Meera Bapat on transferable land rights in Pune: “*One of the reasons for not implementing many of the proposals in the Development Plan is the financial inability of the local authority to acquire the required land. Since 1997, therefore, PMC has adopted a new strategy of giving transferable development rights (TDR) in lieu of monetary compensation. (Bombay started using this strategy much earlier.) Thus when land needed for roads or public amenities such as schools, gardens, hospitals is acquired the owner is given Transferable Development Right. TDR can be sold in the market. For the purpose of TDR the city has been divided in 3 concentric zones. TDR can be used only outwards from the centre. It is not permitted to transfer development right into the inner city since it already has a higher Floor Space Index (FSI - ratio of the built area to that of land) of two while the surrounding area has FSI of one. In the surrounding area, it is possible to increase the permitted FSI of one by further 0.4 by using TDR.*” Bapat 2004: 42

³⁰³ cf. *ibid.*: 33, 42

in the city.³⁰⁴ Even if such a development was supported and wished for, the urban local bodies are totally overstrained with the demand of the economic sector and the challenges of a growing social inequality in the city.

The field of traffic management is one area of urban planning in Pune that shows the consequences of bureaucratic planning, lack of coherent and sustainable implementation and accelerated growth very clearly. It is a highly contested field of struggle between different political and economic scales and the next years of traffic management will be very interesting to understand dynamics of governance and liberalisation that are taking place in Pune. Furthermore congestion, public transport and road development are substantial for students in Pune because they influence not only physical but also social mobility and the access to spaces in the city.

Due to the upcoming employment possibilities in Pune and the adjunctive increasing purchasing power combined with credit-based consumption and cheaper production of cars and motorcycles, there has been a tremendous rise of private vehicles.³⁰⁵

Table 9: Total No. of vehicles on road (as on 1st January 1995 to 31st March 2001)³⁰⁶

Type of Vehicle	1995	2001	Percentage growth
Motor Cycles	161414	387176	139,86%
Scooters	200589	298634	48,88%
Mopeds	112712	165936	47,22%
Total of 2-wheelers	474715	851746	79,42%
Motor Cars	41228	90468	119,43%
Jeeps	19684	34531	75,43%
Station Wagons	614	1018	65,80%
Total of 4-wheelers	61526	126017	104,82%
Auto rikshaws	32795	56610	72,62%
School buses	72	77	6,94%

The market logic comes into play as well as the increasing integration of bigger parts of the population in the global consumer market. Equally important has been the lack of assertiveness of the PMC in the implementation of earlier plans for sustainable traffic

³⁰⁴ cf. Interview with Expert 6 and Interview with Expert 2

³⁰⁵ Of course other factors as the symbolic value of possessing a bike or a car, as well as deterioration of public transport and growth of the city have to be taken into account as well.

³⁰⁶ Maratta Chamber of Commerce 2002: G43

management. Public transport and the improvement of possibilities of cycling have been part of the Pune city development plan already in 1987, but even the authors of the plan admitted that the projects were sparsely implemented.³⁰⁷

One very good example for lack of monitoring in the implementation phase and priorities of political strategies concerning traffic management was the construction of the fly-over bridge at the University chowk³⁰⁸, in front of the main gate of the University of Pune.

The fly-over bridge, which means a bridge, which overpasses congested crossroads, on Ganeshkind road was inaugurated on July 14, 2007³⁰⁹, three years after the project was started³¹⁰. This bridge, which was budgeted with Rs. 2026 lakh³¹¹ is on one of the arterial roads of the city that passes by the main gate of the University of Pune. It connects the central parts of the city with the upcoming suburbs, as Aundh, Pashan and Bhavdan, where many of newly established industrial parks are located. Furthermore it is the road that leads to the Mumbai-Pune expressway, which shows the strategic importance and the reason for the increasing congestion of this road. This bridge is exclusively meant for private, motorized two-wheeler or four-wheeler vehicles, as cars, bikes, rickshaws and lorries which now have the possibility to get through a former congested chowk on a qualitatively better road and faster than ever before. It could be argued that this is a good strategy and would also result in advantages for public buses, cycles and pedestrians that are still using the chowk below the bridge. What happened in this construction work is that the space below, which is used by all students that are coming by public transport or cycles to the university, street sellers and people that live in the residential areas around the University, was not planned.³¹² The fly-over was inaugurated and the project was finished, but there weren't made any provisions as proper bus stations, pedestrian crossing or parking spaces.

³⁰⁷ Pune Municipal Corporation 2006a: 70

³⁰⁸ Chowk (Hindi) = square, main street, central area of the city, crossroads

³⁰⁹ cf.: Times of India: 'Fly' to Aundh from today, 11.07.2007

³¹⁰ Official start of work was 18.08.2004; cf.: http://www.msrdc.org/Projects/Irdp_pune_table.aspx, 03.07.2007

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Information from an informal interview with a landscape architect in Pune, who was offered the project of designing the space underneath the bridge after the completion and inauguration of the fly-over bridge.

Figure 7: Photograph of the fly-over bridge at the Pune University chowk³¹³



To blame it all on planning decisions and the inclination of the government towards the liberalization the market wouldn't be correct either because what happened in Pune was, that the fast pace and the large extent of the changes in the city weren't expected. The establishment of industrial parks did entail many more consequences as for example, the increase of migration, large investments into the urban entertainment sector and the growing demand for real estate.

*"...the pace of development is so rapid, our provision of infrastructure is not keeping pace with that, the demand of industry is more for the service lack. And we are unable to cope up with the demand."*³¹⁴

*"I told you the pace is very very high, but the development is not really, I wouldn't say highly planned but that doesn't really take care of all issues, you know. In many areas the development is really hazard. Especially the infrastructure, the infrastructure doesn't really support the development."*³¹⁵

³¹³ <http://www.punerealestate.com/flyovernearpuneuniversity/puneuniversityflyover.htm>, 09.10.2008

³¹⁴ Interview with Expert 6

³¹⁵ Interview with Expert 2

For students in Pune the limited mobility due to the lack of public transport and the adjunctive importance of economic affluence is a major topic especially when it comes to their spare time and activities in the evening. The transportation to the Colleges and Universities is in most cases resolved because for this matter there is public transport or the students that aren't originally from Pune are normally staying in hostels and flat around the College area. But in the evenings mobility becomes more crucial because of the polarized distribution of so-called "hang-out" spaces and shrinking possibilities to move.

*"...as I said no vehicles so it's like helpless to go out very far. Maximum you can walk up and down the road. Otherwise there is nothing there. Just get some fresh air, get some juice. Otherwise I can walk from there couple of kilometres to get a bus and from there. Autos are very expensive [...] so with vehicle you can roam around, you can hang around outside."*³¹⁶

An auto, which is another name for motorized rickshaws, increases its fare by 50% after 11 p.m. and the public buses stop their service around 10 p.m. So without economic means, either to afford a private vehicle or the rickshaw fares, there is no possibility to move except from getting a ride from friends.³¹⁷ As we can see, political decisions in conjunction with planning structures and market logic exercise direct influence on the production of space and life realities of students. Therefore functioning public transport is not only an important instrument to overcome spatial mobility but is also to promote social cohesion and inclusion.

Within the JNNURM a comprehensive Mobility plan has been formulated including the participation of the most influential personalities and groups from civil society. The further proceedings with this plan and the implementation of it will be crucial not only for taking the chance of establishing a system of participatory governance but also for the social, spatial and ecological future of the city.

The structures of urban planning in Pune are witnessing certain changes mainly influenced by strategies of decentralization towards increasing the significance of the local level designed and advocated by the national level. This process is connected to Pune entering

³¹⁶ IP 17 in Groupinterview with IP 5, IP 15, IP 16 and IP 17

³¹⁷ A practice that provides a mean of transportation for quite a large group of young people, especially for girls, in Pune.

and prioritising the global market and the integration of more actors from civil society and private enterprises in the system of planning and implementation. Urban space in Pune is facing a process of rescaling.

This opens up chance for a more democratic form of governance and perhaps even of the production of representations of space. But in the case of Pune we have identified certain conflictive situations, which would be interesting to follow in further research.

First of all participation, also within the JNNURM, is mostly limited to the planning process. There is no proper structure of monitoring implementation by civil society. Planning and implementation, representations of space and spatial practices are inextricably linked and processes of overcoming power relations cannot be reduced to only one sphere.

Secondly it has to be further analysed which parts of civil society are integrated in the first steps of participatory planning in Pune. The continuous influence of traditional patron-client relations was identified by different authors³¹⁸. Furthermore civil society is not a power-vacuum and consists of hierarchical relations and struggle about social and economic capital in Pune. Another important question is the involvement of non-organised urban citizens, like my interview partners, and their awareness about planning processes and the political dimension of the production of space they are embedded in. Sustainable urban development in Pune does not only depend on the city development plan and its implementation, it depends on collective of urban citizens, in their role as workers, consumers, users of public services, etc.

This leads to the last and most important point of analyses, the fragmentation of the city supported and reinforced by the political-administrative structures. Representations of space and spatial practices are always embedded in and dependent on a specific mode of production. According to national policy making, the PMC, the urban local body, is supposed to integrate private investments and partnerships to achieve financial soundness and for being able to take over tasks that came with decentralization.³¹⁹ Pune is highly integrated in the global market and the political economic strategy for the city has been relying on this dependency.³²⁰

³¹⁸ cf. Kulkarni 2008; cf. Van Kampen/van Naerssen 2008; cf. Bapat 2004

³¹⁹ cf. Kulkarni 2008

³²⁰ cf. Van Kampen/van Naerssen 2008

So the pressure of complying with the global, liberalized regulation regime is high and leaves little space for active policy in the field of investment, labour market and industrial development. But these fields are crucial for any kind of sustainable urban development and the integration of the broader collective of urban citizens into this process.

7.1.2.2. Right wing politics in Pune

Urban planning system and its actors is just one aspect of politics in the production of urban space in Pune. Another topic we should consider in this project is the role of right wing politics in the political landscape of Pune. The right wing political institutions, their dominant actors and their use and production of space are important elements in life realities of students in Pune.

Right wing politics in India are closely connected to the ideology of Hindutva and the Sangh Parivar (The family of associations)³²¹.

Hindutva can be understood as a particular type of nationalism that is based on the assumption of Hindu supremacy. The 1990s in India were not just characterized by the liberalisation of the Indian market but also by the strong upcoming of the BJP – Bharatiya Janata Party and Hindunationalism on the national political scene.³²² This development has also been taking place in Maharashtra, where the BJP together with Shiv Sena ruled the state from 1995-1999.³²³ The Shiv Sena represents another dimension of right wing politics in Maharashtra, which still follows religiously motivated nationalism but adds to its ideology the assumption of regional supremacy of Marathi people. The Shiv Sena was launched 1966 in Mumbai, which is still their stronghold, by Bal Thackeray and was stirring up fear of migrants from South and North India by arguing that they have too much influence in Mumbai and take away the economic opportunities from Mumbaikars.³²⁴ They

³²¹ The Sangh Parivar is a compound of different organizations from extreme right wing to moderate that are working for the Hindutva ideology. RSS - Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is the central organisation of the Sangh Parivar, but also the political party BJP forms part of it.

³²² For further reading please see Bose, Sumantra (1999): 'Hindu nationalism' and the crisis of the Indian state: A theoretical perspective. In: Bose, Sugata/ Jala, Ayesha (ed.) (1999): Nationalism, democracy and development. State and politics in India, Delhi. P. 104-164 and Corbridge, Stuart/ Harriss, John (2000): The Guilty Men? Militant Hinduism and the politics of anti-secularism. In: Corbridge, Stuart/ Harriss, John (2000): Reinventing India. Liberalization, Hindu nationalism and popular democracy. Polity, Delhi. P.173-199

³²³ cf. Sahi: Brink politics in maximum city. In: Tehelka, 16.02.2008

³²⁴ cf. Gupta 1982

reinvented the image of Shivaji not only in the name of the organisation but also in their political discourse, as Bal Thakeray stated in an interview: “*Whenever I am undecided I think of how Shivaji would have looked at the problem, what would be his opinion and how he would act. Only then I am able to come out with a clear decision.*”³²⁵ Even if Mumbai is the stronghold of the Shiv Sena and most political conflicts are taking place there, the discourse of Hindu nationalism and role of migrants and Marathi people is quite prevalent in Pune as well. The Shiv Sena runs six municipalities in Maharashtra and is also in the municipal government of Pune in a coalition together with the National Congress Party.³²⁶

One interesting aspect of these political actors, BJP and Shiv Sena in Pune and in India generally is the strategic political use of space. They are consciously appropriating material-physical spaces as well as spaces of representations for their political convenience. Satish Desphande points out in his work on nation-space and Hindu communalism in India that “*The socio-spatial dimensions of communalism as a process of “competitive de-secularization” involve an effort to re-sacralize the nation-space.*”³²⁷ These political actors produce concepts of space and classify them following their ideology and political strategy. They create a particular scene they need to manifest their public representation and dominance in the city and to have a direct influence on everyday life routines of citizens. The most prominent examples for particular spaces would be the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya or the Ram Setu issue but I would like to concentrate more on broader spatial practices that are based on these political institutions combined with social structures and influence the production of space in a very intense way.

One of the leading actors concerning dominant spatial strategies in favour of right wing politics in Pune is the BJYM – Bharatiya Janta Yuva Morcha. It is the Youth Wing of the BJP – Bharatiya Janata Party and concentrates their work mostly on students in Pune and is furthermore the cradle for future BJP leaders.

The BJYM tries through their discourse and spatial actions to reinvent Pune, to produce a spatial identity, which would function as fruitful ground for the reproduction and expansion of their political power. Pune is portrayed as stronghold of Marathi respectively Indian

³²⁵ Interview with Bal Thakeray Sept. 1974 in Gupta 1982: 121

³²⁶ cf. Sahi: Brink politics in maximum city. In: Tehelka, 16.02.2008

³²⁷ Desphande 1998: 263

culture with a rich historic heritage like Shivaji or the social reformer Bal Gandaghar Tilak³²⁸. This not only represents a reinvention and distortion of history and strategic instrumentalisation of symbols but also a homogenisation with an integrated hierarchical categorization of spatial practices and actors. The diversity of traditions and lifestyles is neglected or seen as something that should be changed because it is a threat to the purity of the one, dominantly defined Pune. This definition is based on the produced image of Indian and Marathi culture, which is situated around male dominated, Hindu, upper cast, joint family system. A very good example that illustrates this argument would be the initiative taken by the leader of the BJYM together with the former mayor of Pune, Vandana Chavan. They created a programme called TANDEM, which should show students from abroad and other parts of India the culture of Pune and teach them how they should behave. One of the main activities was to invite them to the Hindu ritual Makar Sankranti in a temple in Pune.³²⁹ Furthermore they planned to distribute to all out of station students little booklets, explaining the *Do's* and *Don'ts* in Pune.

*“Yerawadekar [Deputy Director of Symbiosis Institute in 2004, author’s note] said a booklet listing dos and don'ts, acceptable behaviour and what Puneites expect from outside students will be distributed along with admission forms from the new academic year.”*³³⁰

Interesting enough that this organisation claims to know what Puneites expect, because actually there is already a booklet that shows the acceptable behaviour in a city and a country, which is called Civil Code.

In my interview with the leader of the BJYM, he constantly pointed out what Indian culture according to him and his political party is and what it is not. This discourse follows a very clear strategy of creating “the other” to define the own cultural identity. In this case the other would be the “West”, which mainly works as a projection screen for all the aspects that are part of everyday life in Pune and don’t fit the political strategy.

“In fact I would love to say ki [that] I would like the world to understand the dangers of the western culture. I would as the world to give it a rethought after the alarms which the nature has given us in various ways. [According to the expert one of these alarms is Aids,

³²⁸ cf. Lane 2000: 69

³²⁹ cf. Interview with Expert 5 and Times of India: Code of conduct for outstation students; 14.01.2004

³³⁰ Times of India: Code of conduct for outstation students; 14.01.2004

which he argues is a punishment from nature and god for having sexual relations without being married; author's note] *And they should do now come towards India for the family culture. To have the family, the strong family life they should come to have towards the more and more they should relate to god.*"³³¹

*"The youngsters these days are more westernized, they have an influence of the western culture on them and that the youth are not using their capacity for the good of the society, for the country or for the state or for the family. But they are spending more and more time to get easy money, they are being in a way, youth, are not a part of social reforms."*³³²

The Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha perceives their work not only as political but also as social work. This argument is very useful to legitimize their spatial actions, which are constantly interfering with the privacy of people in public space. The group leader claims that it is their broader project is to transform the Youth into the "Indian culture"

*"So I believe ki the work of any political youth leader nowadays is more a social touch or is more than being political.[...] A diversification which I feel ki every youth leader should have in his mind very clearly. And now first fight is for transforming the youth into the Indian Culture."*³³³

For this project, the BJYM uses strategically spaces in the city, which have a symbolic value for so called "Westernisation" like bars and discotheques and public spaces like streets, chowks or bridges, where young people tend to hang out. One of the favourite dates for such demonstrations and public agitations is February 14, Valentine's day. With these actions, which sometimes go along with physical fights, groups like the BJYM want to claim dominance about public space and the rules and regulations, which should be followed by residents of the city. They physically capture places, harass shop owners of gift shops, disturb young people and want to display their dominance by making rallies and screaming slogans in favour of Hindu unity and Hindu nationalism.

Shortly after I left Pune in June 2007, the BJYM started raiding different nightclubs and college parties and kicked out young people, especially young couples and closed down the

³³¹ Interview with Expert 5

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

place. Young guys, who are part of the BJYM, went into different nightclubs, waving saffron flags³³⁴, chanting slogans, going on the dance floor and forcing people to leave.³³⁵ They were claiming to have to right to act in this way, because many of the party-goers were minor and the official closing hour in Pune for bars and discotheques is 11.30 p.m. This organisation aims at playing the part of a moral police and taking matters in their hands, which are actually part of the responsibilities of public authorities and executive organs. When we look a little bit under the surface of this official reason for their spatial actions and connect it with the underlying ideology it becomes quite clear that the question is not about legality of spatial practices, but concepts of culture and space.

“I went to that place, I raided it, I had my boys with me and we intervened and we stopped that party, we banned that party, because as you rightly said they want to have fun so that is what I want to say ki [that] we should define what is fun. Is free sex fun?” Is having drugs fun? Is it that the students who have just now passed their tenth³³⁶ and gone their eleventh and are still in their teens should smoke, they should wear skimpish clothes, they should go for dancing in a way which is vulgar, is this fun?”³³⁷

In my interview with the group leader, he emphasised the importance of the right definition of fun and leisure time activities. This definition again is related to their concept of Indian culture and related material space and spatial practices. Following the idea of family and marriage as main pillars of the Indian society, he argues that *“Those people who want to go to the Pubs and enjoy for themselves, with their partner or wife or family members, they are free to do it. I'll never come. I'll never go for it. Those who want to have a drink and enjoy and dance and come back and sleep in their houses. They are welcomed to do it, the bars are for that. But even if you do it at your house, no need to go even to the bar, they can do it.”³³⁸*

Another important ideological projection screen, which becomes very clear in these spatial actions, as well as in their discourse, is the female body. The female sexuality is space of conflict because their idea of Indian culture and urban space is based on the purity of the

³³⁴ Saffron is the symbolic colour for right wing, Hindu nationalist parties in India.

³³⁵ cf. Times of India: Where's the party; 27.07.07 and Inamdar: Moral brigade barges into Pune pub, shuts it down. In: Indian Express, 09.07.07

³³⁶ Students that passed tenth standard would be between 15 and 17 years old.

³³⁷ Interview with Expert 5

³³⁸ Ibid.

woman. Spatial practices that question and challenge the reproduction of this system and that endanger female purity needs to be banned and that's part of their social work.

“As I earlier said, ki what we found when I raided a ...few places for the last three, four years whatever was happening in the name of fun in the late nights was not at. It was disgusting. It was disgusting. And that is something which we should all come together and stop. We should tell them that love is not what you feel, love is not physical. Whatever free sex they want to have can satisfy them for a minute, it's not everlasting. That's not culture. And we want these children to learn this which they are going away from our, whatever we have, our cast. It is [...] not only disgusting, it's alarming [...] So even they if they wear small skirts, I would rather make a daring statement on this, ...as a male ---my psyche is such, being a male, I would always love to watch a woman who is in a very, wearing short dresses, or who is exploiting her body. But when I look at it from this angle that my daughter, my sister is going to be a part of the same society when she grows up, she has to be in the society in this fashion, then I believe ki every male will think, not this is wrong. Who will love his daughter to go in this way and have free sex. I believe nobody.”³³⁹

This is a crucial aspect for this work, because it shows one more important social structure that constitutes the socio-spatial order in Pune, which are concepts of gender and gender relations. I will discuss this further in the upcoming chapters.

What I wanted to show on the last pages is how dominant actors, that are embedded in and empowered by certain political structures, can strategically use urban space to reproduce their basis of power and ideology. It shows the interaction between representations of space and spatial practices and how such dominant concepts can figuratively take away your space to express yourself. Raiding bars and discotheques in Pune is taking away spaces, which provide certain privacy to young people, where they have the possibility to explore and make experiences hidden from the public gaze.

In this situation a similar problem as with the urban planning system can be identified, the lack of control and supervision. These political organisations can play the moral police and harass young people and there is very often not an assertive and clear reaction from political authorities. This shows that the BJYM is not some extremist group without political embedding; rather it relies on certain social structures and broader social

³³⁹ Ibid.

discourses, which we will explore later on. To use public space to voice opinions and to take a stand in social and political issues is a reasonable practice but it is alarming to witness, that first of all mainly right wing, Hindu nationalist actors consider space to be a political instrument. Furthermore the BJYM crosses during such activities physical and legal boundaries with their actions, which they should more often held accountable for.

Following the result of my field research it can be said that due to the lack of organized opposition and the social structures that lie behind and violent, sexist and discriminatory mode of spatial actions of these political actors leads to the result that such action have a certain an impact in the society and put students in the position of experiencing new dominated spaces.

But I guess one of my interview partners, a Muslim girl, studying at Fergusson College finds better words for this situation:

“IP: Students should be even more opportunity to party and if they want to should be a later deadline. And we shouldn't have so much problem from the local political parties who come and try and spoil our fun. They come and think they are being the moral policing and stuff like that. Yeah the moral policing should stop that much. I mean I think there are some, it had come on TV; one interview had come on TV about this one club in Pune that was shut down.[...] Ah so it's like the TV correspondent had asked one the BJP leader or whatever he was said that you know why did you do that? [...] So he was like my, the youth, I mean my boys, the BJP, you know "their experience of the club, of the clubs that they have been to, they have decided to take into their own hand to shut it down and be the moral police because they didn't like the ways it was, they don't like the whole party scene. So the TV correspondent had asked him you know that "how exactly did your boys get this experience?" [...] It is double standard. I mean they just think they can do anything and they don't. The whole moral policing, doing "good" for the students which, which is practical total crap. I mean it's just total crap. Ya we should be given more freedom in that way, not be harassed by all this shit you know, I mean it's, and it's getting more and more you know, It's getting worse

R³⁴⁰: *You have the feeling that it is getting worse?*

³⁴⁰ R will from now on be used as abbreviation for „Researcher“ and indicate my questions in quotations from my interviews.

IP: Yeah. I do. I mean definitely the government and ah BJP and some of the political parties, I'm not saying names and everything but yes it's getting worse. They are taking it upon themselves to be the Police. Taking matters into their hands and stupid, stupid issues are being brought into the limelight and all the important stuff is being thrown in the background you know. About they are not much on taking on the poor or you know facilities for uneducated and all that population and things like that, it's not coming into the forefront. It's all just bardancing, and all that should be shut down and all that whole moral policing and shit. And keeping the culture and tradition of our "sacred society" and me being a muslim I definitely do feel a little bit I mean, a little apprehensive about you know the situation, the political situation that may come upon, you know."³⁴¹

³⁴¹ Interview with IP 7

7.1.3. Social Structures

“When you don't get space in your home, in your house, you get space nowhere.”³⁴²

In the last two chapters we were figuring out which role the economic and political sphere play in the production and reproduction of material spatial structures, concepts of space and who are the dominant actors, that have to be taken into consideration. The aim of this exploration was to understand the political and economic forces students encounter in Pune in their everyday life. But it is not a one-sided relation and students do not represent solely passive receivers of these dynamics. Through their perception and action, they reproduce material and discursive spatial structures or they even question them and cross limits to explore alternative spaces. This exploration will be topic of the later chapters, for now there are still social dimensions of these spatial structures we have to analyse to be able to comprehend the interplay between the production of space and my interview partner's life realities in a better way.

These social dimensions can be called social structures, which constitute a particular socio-spatial order of the city. This socio-spatial order gives a framework of unconscious and conscious orientation for different actors and is based on rules, resources, institutions and actors that are hierarchically interconnected. To speak with Lefebvre's vocabulary the analysed processes are the social relations of reproduction and constitute together with the relations of production, the mode of production of space.³⁴³

For the concrete situation it means that my life circumstances, my aspects of identity and my form of relationships are not purely individual and product of my conscious will but they are embedded in a collective production process. The different layers of identity are inextricably linked with social structures. When I'm a daughter, I'm part of family structures, which have major part in defining my role in society, creating my access to different spaces and putting a code of conduct. When I'm a woman, I'm part of gender relations and when I'm an Austrian living in Vienna, I'm, among other things, part of a

³⁴² Interview IP 18

³⁴³ Lefebvre 1991: 32

structural divide between migrants and majority society, which most certainly produces urban space in a very particular way.

My interview partners are embedded in a variety of social structures that are relevant in Pune, and these structures were one of the major topics, they talked about while describing and narrating their experiences of urban space in Pune. Perhaps because they are so closely linked to their identity and representations and they encounter them with every step they make, in every space they use. The discussion on social restructuring change due to the impact of liberalization in India created a vast amount of literature. Topics like the transformation from joint family to nuclear family and the increasing emancipation of women have been object of analysis in popular and scientific contexts and these discussions have often remained in the limited scope between tradition and modernity.³⁴⁴ I don't want to focus too much on these discussions but rather listen to my interview partners and analyse critically the emphasis they have put on different aspects of social structures they encounter in urban space in Pune.

This also includes taking a closer look at the social roles my interview partners play with their various identities. Certainly all the different aspects starting from the role of the Youth, family structures, gender relations and the role of migrants are obviously closely interconnected because they are united in each person. For the analytical purpose and a better understanding I will aim at structuring the discussion to provide a guiding light through the diversity of social structure in the production of space in Pune.

Therefore the first part will be on the socio-spatial role of Youth in Pune, which is closely connected to the relation between the generations. Being part of Youth that is involved in higher education, is the one feature all of my interview partners share thus it gives an adequate starting point to understand the upcoming aspects properly.

7.1.3.1. Youth in Pune

A definition of Youth, which is not solely based on age, depends on the socio-cultural context and therefore a general definition of what youth is can't be given. Even in Pune

³⁴⁴ For a more critical discussion of the Indian family and the process of transition see: Patel, Tulsi 2005, Shah, A.M. 1998 and Dasgupta, Sanjukta/ Lal, Malashri 2008

there is a high diversity within the group of people, which according to the age could be considered as Youth. Youth is defined to be everybody between 15 and 35³⁴⁵ by the Government of India and the whole youth policy on the national level is designed according to this groups. The UN definition differs from that and set the age span from 15-15.³⁴⁶ According to the expert from the Youth organisation in Pune, the Indian Youth policy aims at such a large age group to be able to include more young people into the programmes. This would give young girls and boys after an early marriage the change to take up the education again or students suffering from the high competition about working place time for more years of higher education.³⁴⁷ Concerning the legal status of youth, majority in India is attained at the age of 18, which includes the right of acquiring property, entering into contracts and getting a driving licence. The minimum age of marriage is 18 for girls and 21 for boys. The right to vote is equally attained at 21.³⁴⁸

My interview partners were all between 18 and 26, therefore they are included into this group, but perhaps they could rather be considered as young adults. But that are just definitions and terms, that don't give us a better understanding of the social role of this group.

To achieve a better understanding of the role of Youth in the case of my interview partners, it would be important to take some more aspects into account. First of all, my interview partners are all students and thus they haven't started to be financially independent from their parents. Second of all, they all are unmarried, they haven't started their own family, and hence they are still rather daughter or son than mother and father.

Furthermore all of them belong per self-definition to the middle class or upper middle class, which is an important aspect as public discourse as well as academic scholars argue that the role of youth in middle class or upper class families is quite different from lower class families. They state that young people from middle class families have more freedom due

³⁴⁵ In the Draft 1997 Youth Policy it was even proposed to enlarge the definition to 10-35. cf. Subramanian 1998: 11;

³⁴⁶ Subramanian 1998: 9

³⁴⁷ Interview with Expert 9

³⁴⁸ Saraswathi 1988: 92

to economic affluence, which makes it possible to engage in leisure time activities away from the family and they have more time resources because economic pressure is less.³⁴⁹

Generally it can be said that in the Indian context the term youth as social construction of a time period of exploration, search for one's identity and questioning one's upbringing is not always adequate. Even in my research with partners, who are students and economically stable, which means that they have been spared of phenomena like child marriage and child labour, they encounter many restrictions on the possibility to explore due to various reasons.

One explanatory argument for this lack of opportunity is located in the role of young adults, the relationships and the process of decision making within the family. It can be argued that until a young adult forms his or her own family the major decisions are highly dependent on the opinion of the parents.

*“See as far as Youth are concerned, there are major three decision they have to take. The decision number 1 is their education; they have to take their education. Second their career, third their partner. All these three things in India, the elders are more influencing rather than the Youth. The elders tell them what education they should go for. The elders demand what career they should take. The elders demand what, which partner they should choose. There are a lot of constraints in that regard. So that includes your identity is lost.”*³⁵⁰

Nearly all of my interview partners that are actually staying in the same house with their parents showed that most of their limits or possibilities of spatial use, as for example going out and hanging out with friends, are inextricably linked to their parent's decision. It was not necessarily described as something disturbing but rather as something natural and self-evident. I had an interview with one girl about going out in the evening and she told me that she wouldn't do that. When I asked her why she wouldn't go out in the evening, she

³⁴⁹ cf. Verma/Saraswathi 2002: 113

³⁵⁰ Interview with Expert 9

answered: “अगर [...] घरवाले को पसंद नहीं मेरे तो मैं क्यों करूँ यह चीज। इन्को यह पसंद नहीं। बस यह नहीं करती।”³⁵¹

(If my family doesn't like, so why should I do that. They don't like it. So I don't do that; translation by author)

Another interview partner, a girl originally from Pune, told me about the rules of going out in the evening in her house and it becomes quite clear that even if she says that she decides on her deadline, the decision lies with the parents.

*“I especially decide the deadline for myself, like ten thirty, parents definitely want us to be back by nine thirty, ten but they give us little bit freedom like half an hour, one hour more then when it is someone's birthday party or my own birthday party then my parents don't say anything if I hang out like till around eleven or something but then we have to constantly keep in touch with them, you give them a call around nine or nine thirty saying that I'm gonna be this much, I'm gonna be that much late. You have to keep them in touch. That you know I'm gonna take so much time it's not like if I leave the house at six in the evening and I return at twelve in the night if I go back home my mother is gonna question that why don't you call once if you gonna get so late and of course that, that is kind of my responsibility to call up at home and inform my parents...I'm still dependent on them.”*³⁵²

The same interview partner gave a definition of spatial experience, which illustrates my argument quite well. We were talking about places she hasn't been to but she wouldn't go there either because she wouldn't feel comfortable there. So she explained to me that “...*We have knowledge from experiences, experiences in a sense 'our parents have told us'.*”³⁵³

What we can understand is that there is a constant need of legitimation for spatial practices in front of the family. S.T. Saraswathi explains the interplay between family structures and youth from a psychological perspective as follows: “*The emotional hold of the family, the prescribed expectations and anticipated obligations, act as deterrants to exploration and experimentation, leading to what is described by psychoanalysts and therapists as delayed adolescence and identity confusion in young adults.*”³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ IP 5 in Groupinterview with IP 5, IP 15, IP 16 and IP 17

³⁵² Interview with IP 2

³⁵³ Ibid.

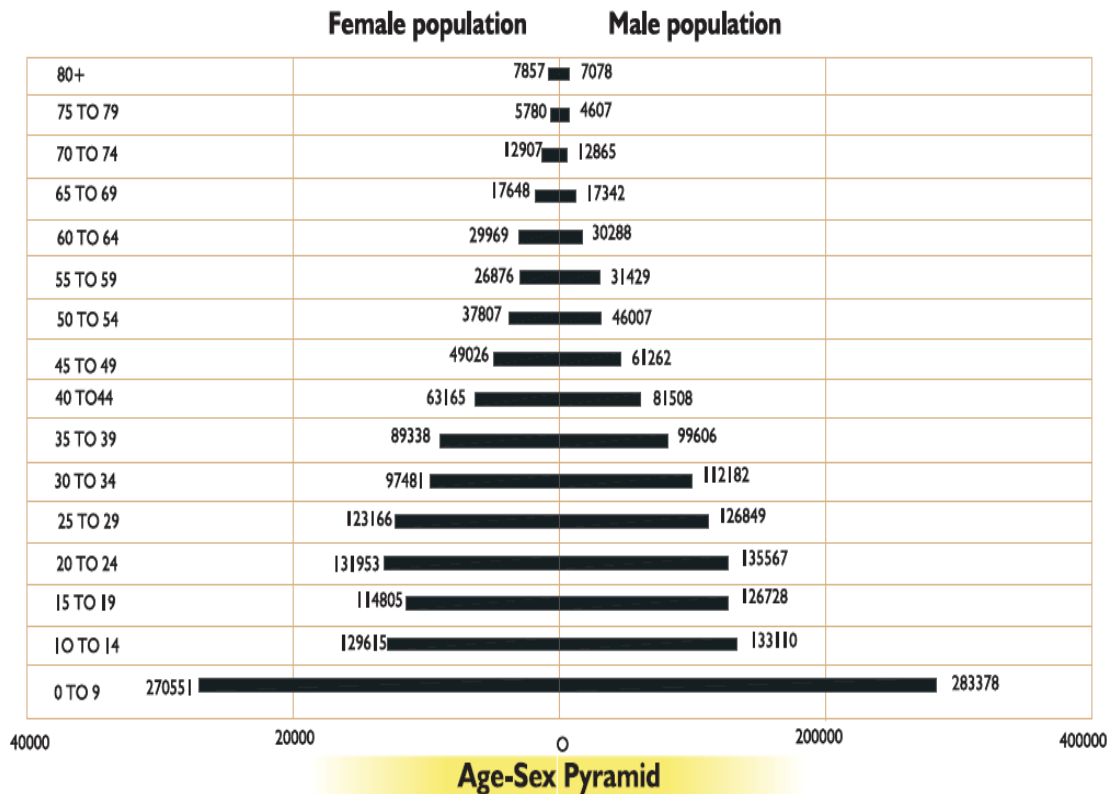
³⁵⁴ Saraswathi 1999: 221

Dependency on the family, material and emotional, is not only in India one of the main characteristics of youth and especially adolescents. One aspect that makes the situation of youth in India particular is the time span of such dependencies. Even my interview partners that were between 18 and 26 were highly depending in their decision making and lifestyle on their parents, family and sometimes even community. That leads to a concomitance of dependencies and process of self-reliant development due to influences like education and sexual exploration. This encounter of different life realities within young people is a potential source for conflicts. The aim of this argument is not a regional comparison or even qualifying the different systems but should enhance our understanding of the different structures young people encounter in their spatial being.

Apart from the role of the family for the social position of young people in Pune, there is another important aspect, which is quite prominent in the public and political discourses.

As we can see in the following figure, Youth is a large group of Pune's population, which holds also true for all India, and it is seen as one of the major forces for the development of India to become a global player and a developed nation.³⁵⁵

³⁵⁵ cf. Kalam 2003

Figure 8: Age-Sex Pyramid of Pune³⁵⁶

Especially students and well-educated young people are the great hope of many different political actors as well as the public in general. The representative of the Youth organisation in Pune criticized this very functional approach towards young people and in his critique of the nation Youth Policy of 2003 he argues:

*“When we think of Young People, we always think of utilizing their time and energy for the development. Even today no effort is taken to develop young people so that they can be productive, healthy and concerned citizens in future [...] The focus has been youth for development rather than youth development.”*³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶ Pune Municipal Corporation: 2005

³⁵⁷ Mattam/Panda/Sharma/Mallya 2004: 1

In a PhD thesis about student culture in Pune from 1980 this role of the Youth was already a prominent topic, which shows certain continuity in the discourse on Youth in India.

*“The future of the Indian Nation would be expected to be shaped by its educated youth, who would provide intellectual, social and political leadership to the country.”*³⁵⁸

One very prominent example that represents the political as well as public discourse on Youth in India is the book and associated publicity “Ignited minds” by APJ Abdul Kalam. APJ Abdul Kalam was Indian president from 2002 until 2007 and was leading campaigns for fostering the role of India as global player such as “India 2020”.³⁵⁹ In his book “Ignited minds” he wants to inspire young people to use their potential for the nation development of India. Interpreting his argumentation from the above mentioned point of view and connecting it to the results of my field research, it shows quite clear how much pressure and expectations young people are confronted with.

The final statement of the book “The song of youth”, which can also be found in the library of one of the leading educational institutions in Pune, shows his modernist and nationalist perception of development with a strong belief in progress and the leading role the youth should play in this.

SONG OF YOUTH

ME and My Nation-India

As a young citizen of India

armed with technology, knowledge

and love for my nation,

I realize, small aim is a crime

I will work and sweat for a great vision

the vision of transforming India

into a developed nation

powered by economic strength with value system

I am one of the citizens of a billion,

³⁵⁸ cf. Thambidorai 1980: 5

³⁵⁹ For a good illustration of his campaigns see: www.abdulkalam.com, 13.12.2009

only the vision will ignite the billions souls.

It has entered into me,
 the ignited soul compared to
 any resource,
 is the most powerful resource
 on the earth, above the earth
 and under the earth

I will keep the lamp of knowledge burning
 To achieve the vision- Developed India³⁶⁰

The problematic issue I want to raise with this point is that youth is portrayed as leading force of the Indian development, which is inextricably linked with the production of space and at the same time we have seen that in most aspects of this production process they are users and not producers of space. Therefore it can be said that they should carry out a development without having the ownership to decide about this process or create their spaces. This reconnects with the subordinate position of young people in the family and I would argue that youth is only conceptualized as a functional period to collect the necessary qualification to get a proper job, carry on national development and found a family.

This pressure manifests itself mostly in the concept of education as tool to get a good job and become a “productive” member of society, a person, who contributes to and reproduces the dominant mode of production, rather than as a learning process. Together with a certain economic pressure even for members of the upcoming new middle class and the expectation of some parents that they children should have a better life than they had, it leaves little space and time for the above mentioned exploration. This exploration is to my mind crucial for creating the opportunity to become a critical citizen with the ability of self-reflection.

This argumentation may seem not to cover the whole spatial reality of youth in Pune especially when we think of the discourse on the city to be young, cosmopolitan and

³⁶⁰ Kalam 2003: 196

modern. It is indeed true that the economic transformation we have discussed earlier opens up spaces mainly aimed at young people. What has to be added to the characteristics of the target group for these upcoming spaces is that they not only have to be young but also economically affluent. This interplay of structures makes me doubt if the conceptualization of Pune as young, modern and “hip” does really contribute to the possibilities of exploration, which carries within a potential of critical engagement of citizens with their environment. This kind of exploration is important for creating the potential of appropriation of spaces and ownership of development, dynamics, which will be further explored in the last chapter of this thesis.

7.1.3.2. Family structures

The Indian family has been playing a major role in the constitution of society and this relation is still relevant for contemporary India but we have to examine this interplay between continuity and change a little bit closer to understand the current situation in urban Pune.

The family in India, which traditionally meant the joint family mostly including parents, their sons with spouses and their children, unmarried children, aunts and uncles and cousins, was by the majority based on patriarchal structures. That covers rights of inheritance, residential patterns and the fact that “*all male members, that is, husband, elder brother and father, perform duties like decision making for the rest of the family, and their physical and moral protection.*”³⁶¹ Obviously the life realities were diverse all over India and there is a big difference between descriptions of the joint family system in literature and the actual situation over centuries in the country.³⁶² Even if a detailed discussion about the diversity of family patterns would lead too far, it is important to consider one common structural aspect, which is that “*...roles, responsibility, control, and distribution of resources within the family are strictly determined by age, gender and generation.*”³⁶³

This distribution within the family has been traditionally hierarchical and was based on a strong interdependency between the different family members.³⁶⁴ Unmarried, young adults

³⁶¹ Sonawat 2001: 179

³⁶² cf. Patel 2005: 24

³⁶³ Sonawat 2001: 180

³⁶⁴ cf. Patel 2005: 21

engaged in education, like my interview partners, experienced a quite subordinated role in the family, confronted with high expectations but with little influence on decision-making processes.³⁶⁵ Families did certainly not exist in a social vacuum but have been always integrated in broader social, economic and political structures. The interrelated social institutions caste, kinship and community provide the family a larger framework of organisation and social differentiation. Especially the concept of community plays a major role in contemporary urban Pune. The production of communities in India has been based on distinctions due to religion, language, region and caste and their interconnections.

Community is a relational and dynamic concept of the collective and a product of historical processes in India.³⁶⁶ It should not be misunderstood as fixed category even if the British rule and the political Elites of the modern Indian nation state did their best at establishing such an understanding through measures like enumeration or affirmative action.³⁶⁷ Unfortunately I cannot further engage in the discussion on the production of communities and their politicization in urban Pune but it is important to understand them as larger framework of organisation in the Indian society, which regulated reproduction, residential patterns, labour division and imaginaries about society. The identification with communities of my interview partners, which can be also more than one because of the obvious complexity of selfhood³⁶⁸, is important for their experience of urban space and their life-realities.

Families and communities have traditionally been influencing the production of urban space through constituting the social relations of reproduction, as we have discussed in the chapter on the historical development of Pune. A clear segregation due to politically produced community boundaries could be witnessed in Pune and the socio-spatial differentiation in the city was rather based on outside and inside than on public and private. Inside could be understood as sheltered space like the house and its front lawn or courtyard, where you could meet with neighbours, where the family and community structures dominated the production of space. The rules and regulations, the concepts of functions and use of spaces and the distribution of work were embedded in a patriarchal set-up. The

³⁶⁵ Saraswathi 1988: 407

³⁶⁶ cf.: Hardgrove 2002: 5

³⁶⁷ cf.: Chakrabarty 1998: 100

³⁶⁸ cf. Kaviraj 1989 in Chakrabarty 1998: 100

outside was symbol of the unknown, unexpected encounters, danger of crossing structural boundaries and lack of regulation.³⁶⁹ The concept of public space in its universal, official and common character did emerge in a translated form during the British colonial rule and established during the nationalist struggle for independence.³⁷⁰ The expert of urban planning in Pune and principal of a College explained the influence of social structures on urban space as such:

*“In India the culture is not a congregative, it's not a culture of congregation. We don't have congregation. [...] We have cast and we have families. We have clans. So our congregations spaces are within the household inside. So if you look at the urban spaces you will find that the old style urban spaces, you will find that there are inside. You will have a huge courtyard within the vada you know and where you can have your weddings and things like that. So there are certain times, so we don't, we are not into public spaces as such for congregation.”*³⁷¹

The lack of public spaces as spaces with official rules and instruments of control and supervision, which are located in the sphere of the state and not the family³⁷², indicates that a person moving around in the city has been primarily a daughter, son, brother or sister and secondly a citizen.

Until now we have explored the traditional interrelations between family, community and space, which certainly have been object of change in the last decades. Social change in India, which is mainly portrayed as result from industrialization, urbanization and later on from liberalization, is always located around the relationship between family, individual, society and space.

All my interview partners live in contemporary urban India, which already witnessed a strong liberalization of the market and is rather moving from industrial labour to the service sector. So keeping this above mentioned structures in mind, what can be said about the influence of families in their spatial perception and agency and is it possible to speak of interplay between continuity and change.

³⁶⁹ cf. Kaviraj 1997: 99

³⁷⁰ cf.: Ibid.

³⁷¹ Interview with Expert 7

³⁷² cf. Kaviraj 1997: 89

Obviously the family is no static entity but an institution in the constant dialectical process of reproduction and transformation. Urbanization influenced especially the residential patterns of families, which meant a development from the joint family system towards the nuclear family. Only two of my interview partners are living in a form of joint family. The other seven, who lived with their family, shared their flat or house only with parents and siblings. Being from middle class or upper middle class families, living in Pune also included good educational and labour opportunities for young people. The options to choose from have increased, at least per amount and diversity, since the reforms and dynamics of the New Economic Policy. Consequently this opens different spaces apart from the family, even if community structures still exercise a certain influence at colleges and working places as well.³⁷³ Educational opportunities and liberalization of the system increased the mobility of students, like my interview partners, which leads to a physical separation from their family and their spatial possibilities change substantially. This shows on the one hand that certain structures have changed and made this movement possible. On the other hand it highlights the continual hierarchical pattern within families and the dominance in the control of spatial agency because the distance from home is in most cases necessary for the opening up of new spaces.

I argue that the institution family still plays the dominant role in the constitution of society and space in Pune, because most other social structures lead us always back to the family. The family is the “...*platform from which most of the structural principles of sexuality and relations of reciprocity, hierarchy and exchange are enacted, regulated and reproduced.*”³⁷⁴

That means that there is space for changes in the roles and responsibilities attached to gender, age and generation noticeable, but the need of social legitimation for acting and decisions from the family and its dominant actors still remains crucial for these transformations.

In an interview with a Marathi girl from a middle class family, who has grown up in Pune and is currently doing her Master in Social work, she explained this dynamic quite well.

³⁷³ cf. Fernandes 2008: XXXI

³⁷⁴ Patel 2005: 21

She told me that there have been significant changes in Pune, especially concerning the possibilities of girls moving around in the city.

“पुणे में *change first* यह एक लडकी, बहुत सारी लडकियाँ पहले घर के बाहर नहीं निकलती थीं। अभी निकलती हैं, रात के दस बजे रह सकती हैं...।”³⁷⁵

(Change in Pune was first that a girl, many girls could not go out of the house earlier. Now they can go out, they can stay out till ten o'clock in the evening. *Translation by author*)

The fact that my interviewpartner uses the word “can” concerning the activities of girls leads to the interpretation that this change implied that the parents would extend the deadline for girls to come home in the evening and not that the girls can take this decision. Therefore the structure of decision making and producing concepts of space remains the same but there has been a change in the attitude towards spatial practices. My interview partner perceived herself as a young girl with quite a lot of freedom and opportunities for exploration and related that again to the child-parents relationship. She told me that she had a very close relationship to her father, which gave her the space for open communication and discussion about her needs and perceptions. Therefore she said that “*I'm very lucky की मेरे पीताजी ऐसे हैं की* [में; author's note] *दस, बरह बजे तक तो घर के बहर रह सकती हूँ।*”³⁷⁶

(*I'm very lucky that my father is like that. That he, that I stay out of the house till ten, twelve o'clock p.m.* Translation by author)

The deadline for young adults in Pune has to be understood as symbol for freedom, opportunities and concepts of space. Like inside and outside, public and private are dominantly produced categories of space, space in Pune for young adults is also classified as legitimate and illegitimate following social, economic and political structures. Abstract, socio-political boundaries are established that have actual and material consequence for life realities of young people in Pune. The complex layers of spatial practices and their embedding in these social structures will be further explored in the chapter about spatial agency.

³⁷⁵ Interview with IP 1

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

Let us now have a quick look at the contemporary processes of the relationship between family, community and urban space, we have already discussed in its historical development.

As mentioned in the chapter on economic structures, due to the liberalization of the Indian market and the adjunctive emergence of the leisure and entertainment industry, new spaces in the city were built. These spaces, like malls, bars, restaurants and entertainment parks, are based on consumption patterns and characteristics like class, so-called lifestyle and fashion become more important for the texture of these spaces. Therefore it can be argued that these spaces elude traditional dominant forces like family and community and are mainly based on a liberalized and market driven mode of production. The main users of these spaces are young adults characterised by style, which can be understood as a form of self-representation and performative culture, economic affluence and shared interests. Different affiliations with groups emerge and friends' circles, romantic relationships and peer relations become more important. To put it into the word of most of my interview partners, the important thing in the concept of a space is the crowd.

*"...sometimes you have to be aware of the, the crowd. Getting caught in the wrong crowd, [...], that's it."*³⁷⁷

The concept of crowd is based on the above mentioned markers of group affiliations, which are basically limited to dominantly produced representations of being economically well-off, fashionable and well behaved. Therefore it could be said that in certain spaces in Pune the crowd adopts the structural function of the community.

This doesn't mean that the community or the family doesn't play a role anymore but that these social structures and processes exist simultaneously, overlap and interact with each other. While moving through the city from your house, on the road, in a shopping mall and on a bridge, which is considered to be public space, the structural constitution and its dialectical relation with your acting and multilayered identity changes. One of my partners, a young guy from a Rajput³⁷⁸ family studying at Fergusson College, which lives in Pune for generations, explained the importance of caste, community and family in his perception of

³⁷⁷ Interview with IP 7

³⁷⁸ He defined him and his family as such, when I asked him about his religion. Rajput is a cast, originally located in Rajasthan belonging to the Kshatriya cast (Warriors).

urban space. We were talking about the restrictions of spatial use from his parents for him and his siblings and he told me:

“इतना भी *restrictions अच्छा नहीं है लेकिन* [...] *बाद में कुछ हो जाए तो* *it's sort of इज्जत तो family के पूरे उनकी हाथ* [लडकी की हाथ; author's note] *में रहती है। ... क्योंकि बाकी लोग* [को; author's note] *तो मतलब नहीं क्या है। Ready नहीं रहते है कि कब शाम को खबर मिल जाए कि इनकी family से इधर। तो फिर they just go gossiping here and there and then our family image comes down. It's of that sort I mean we are the Rajputs we are the warriors, we have to keep all those on our minds.*”³⁷⁹

(So many restrictions are not good but then something happens, so...It's sort of that the reputation of family only lies in her hand because the other people, means, they are not ready yet when they meet a girl in the evening from a family from here. So they just go gossiping here and there and then our family image comes down. It's of that sort, I mean we are the Rajputs we are the warriors, we have to keep all those on our minds; *translation by author*)

The belonging to his family and his caste plays therefore a major role for him even if he is outside the house and he is quite aware of the fact that in this structural setting he is a constant representative of his family and his actions are embedded in this broader framework.

7.1.3.3. Migrants in Pune

After exploring the importance of family and the interplay with the economic transformation, it is time to concentrate on another structural feature in Pune, which was quite polemically discussed in my interviews and in public discourses. Pune is a city, which has faced a constant increase of population and migration since the beginning of the 1960s³⁸⁰. Even if the majority of migrants came from other parts of Maharashtra³⁸¹, the

³⁷⁹ Interview with IP 12

³⁸⁰ cf.: Khairkar 2008: 156

³⁸¹ cf.: Khairkar 2007: 29

presence of new groups³⁸² of different people according to language, regional background, ethnicity and religion, from many parts of India and abroad became an everyday life reality in the city. The main reason for migration to the city continues to be employment by far with 71.10%³⁸³ but this is not the group of migrants, we want to focus on in this chapter. Even if quite negligible³⁸⁴ according to statistical data, migration for educational reasons from other parts of Maharashtra, different regions of India and abroad plays an important role in the production of space in Pune, especially from the perspective of my interview partners. The aim is not to explore reasons or dynamics of migration for education but to understand the structural implications for the constitution of society in Pune. Despite the prominence of this topic in all my interviews and public discussions in the media, there is barely any scientific literature on this issue; therefore the analysis of the processes here has to be understood as an exploration of new territory.

Migrants that come to Pune in search of education are a very diverse group, concerning their place of origin, mother tongue and economic background and it would be superficial to make general statements about their relation to space. At this moment of the thesis it is rather interesting and crucial to understand the structural significance of migration and Pune's population's experience of being a hosting society.

A general statement in all my interviews and informal conversations was, that there is a big difference between students that migrated to the city and students, who are originally from Pune. One of my interview partners, a Marathi girl originally from Pune, put it very bluntly by saying that *“there is this thing the partition between students of Pune also. So there are students which are native from Pune studying all the way since their birth. And people coming from all over India to study in Pune. There is a big cultural difference.”*³⁸⁵

The term partition in the Indian context³⁸⁶ shows how strong she perceives the difference between students originally from Pune, which are also called *“localites”* and migrating

³⁸² Migration to Pune is not only a contemporary phenomenon but has been always part of the city. But the amount and origin of the different groups have changed. For the historical development of migration to Pune, please see Khaikar 2007

³⁸³ cf.: Khaikar 2008: 157

³⁸⁴ The percentage of migration because of education between 1991 and 2001 in Maharashtra (there are no data for Pune itself) is 2.3%. cf.: Maharashtra Key Data 2007:2008

³⁸⁵ Interview with IP 2

³⁸⁶ The term partition has a strong connotation due to the historical event of the partition between Indian and Pakistan, which represents a caesura in the history of modern India.

students, which are often called “*out of station students*”. Based on my field research another conclusion was that the difference between localites and out of station students doesn’t concern all the students that migrated to the city. It mainly concentrates on students from North and Northeast India and abroad.

This experience of difference of my interview partner is based on the one hand on the interaction they have with each other, which is quite limited, and on the other hand on spatial practices and representations of space. These images and discourses are in many cases politically nurtured and instrumentalized as the interview with the leader of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha demonstrated. This process, which consists of new community affiliation in the centre of socio-political debates and shifting identifications, supports the argument of Dipesh Chakrabarty and Sudipta Kaviraj about the production of communities in India.

Certain practices and concepts of space get linked with “*being migrant*” or “*being localite*” and create images and concepts of these constructed identities at the same time.

A young guy from Bangalore, who came to Pune for studies, puts this dynamic in quite simple words by expressing his experience of localite students:

IP: Over here people are different completely.

R: How different?

IP: Generally what they think about places, what they think about life, normally what they do.”

Especially activities in the evening in the city, which include a certain presence in public space, get linked to the idea of migrant students and create a certain difference to the idea of localite students. My interview partner from the Rajput family, whom we already met earlier said:

“Outsiders का lifestyle अलग ही है hai. They are always, each and every time they are, they want to party. They want to do anything.”³⁸⁷

(The lifestyle of Outsiders is different. They are always, each and every time they are, they want to party. They want to do anything, translation by author)

³⁸⁷ Interview with IP 12

I argue that these mentioned differences based on spatial experiences, discourses and images are in this particular case not a cultural difference between different regions of India but a product of structural embedding that change due to migration. The movement of young people away from their home to study in Pune sets up a life situation, which creates new limits and opportunities. Most of the students from other parts of India that come to Pune for studies are economically well-off because without a certain economic background this particular type of migration wouldn't have been affordable. That is a big difference to student migration within Maharashtra. Students that migrate from other parts of Maharashtra are also from different strata of society. Migrating is often the only possibility for higher education and different scholarships and support schemes from the state government, universities and hostels make it possible also for children from lower-income families.³⁸⁸

Apart from the economic possibilities that enable a big part of students to use consumption spaces in Pune, one of the main differing aspects in their life reality is the absence of family. These young people mostly migrate alone, or sometimes like one of my interview partners, who comes from Nagaland, with their siblings or cousins. That means that they live away from the elders of the family, which normally dominate the process of decision making and the setting of obligations and rights. One of my interview partners, a girl from Rajasthan, who lives with friends in a flat and studies in Pune puts the situation in a very simple sentence by saying: "*Localites have parents.*"³⁸⁹

The living arrangements of out of station students still show that even if the family is physically absent, the structures and especially the role of the youth in those persist. Out of station students have different options for housing, which in most cases are chosen by the elders of the family. Either they live in a hostel, in a paying guest (PG) accommodation³⁹⁰, with relatives, in a flat with friends or alone. In the first three options, a clear set of rules, which can include curfew hour and permits for visitors, regulate the everyday life of students. During my field research, I stayed for some time in a PG accommodation. It was

³⁸⁸ Unfortunately there are no data on these particular issues; therefore the statements should be understood as framework for orientation based on the empirical field research.

³⁸⁹ Interview with IP 4

³⁹⁰ PG accommodation is normally a room in a flat or a house of a local family. The students pay a monthly rent, which also could include food.

the flat of a woman from Pune, who lived alone and rented a room to girls, studying in Pune. I shared the room with four girls and the lady, called typically “*auntie*”, told us when we had to be back home and when we had to study. She was in constant contact with the parents of the other girls in order to report and discuss their behaviour thus the dominant social structures still persisted in this space as well. Therefore hostels and PG accommodation often provide a good option for parents of out of station students. The girls from Rajasthan, who is now living in a flat, used to live in a hostel because her parents wanted her to. She explained the motivation of the parents as such: “*Our parents were like [...] they felt it is safe to have me somewhere where I cannot go out after 8. They felt very relieved to know, nothing can happen.*”³⁹¹

The students, who live in a flat or in a more liberal hostel, don’t have this need of legitimization of actions within their family that can also be represented by PG accommodation aunties and hostel employees. A girl from Pune, who studies social work living with her parents, puts it like that:

“*वह तो पूरे free रहते हैं, क्योंकि उन्हें कोई पू पूछनेवाला नहीं होता है। तो वह उनका कुछ भी कर रहे किसीको कुछ पता नहीं चलता।*”³⁹²

(They are totally free, because there is nobody to ask them questions. So they can do whatever and nobody will find out, translation by author)

It is important to understand that the ownership of decisions on spatial actions these students have does not mean that they exist beyond social structures. The dimension of embedding and confrontation rather transfers to public spaces, discourses and the society at a larger level. Therefore migrant students and the images about them, which can be explained with a different structural embedding on their personal level, carry within the potential for confrontations concerning spatial practices and concepts of space. Alternative practices become possible and dominant reproduction may be questioned by the existence of migrant communities in Pune. The potential of this dynamic will be further explored in the upcoming chapters.

³⁹¹ Interview with IP 4

³⁹² Interview with IP 1

To sum up it is safe to say that student migration to Pune has an impact on different levels of the production of space and contribute to the potential of reflective agency and transformation of effective spatial structures. First this movement from one place to another due to reasons of education and personal development meant for my interviewpartners a change of their life situation. Within this process they are confronted with life realities and perceptions that might differ from their own upbringing or which they perceive differently because of their new position as a migrant. One student, who migrated from Rajasthan to Pune, explained the impact of her journey as such:

*“...when you are out so you look around and things would be different as in you know the way people handle each other is totally different so your mindset changes and all that.”*³⁹³

This personal journey of questioning one’s perspective is integrated in a broader and more pragmatic shift of relations to socio-spatial structures-

Through a different structural embedding like living situation, relation to the family and economic ownership that becomes possible due to the movement away from home, their scope of actions changes.

New practices, like going out at night, sexual exploration among others, arises that become visible and socially relevant by their spatial manifestation, especially by using public spaces. This questions dominant existing spatial practices and concepts of space and can create new images and categories of space. A dark corner in the city suddenly could be perceived as space for exploration, romance, fun and privacy instead of danger and fear.

Finally student migration to Pune is also a process with substantial significance for the hosting society. Negatively it can be witnessed political discourses and strategies nurturing the culturalistic concept of static communities out of a political power play. Apart from political calculations the arrival of new groups in the city can also be interpreted as potential because this process can add new perspectives on space, amplifies diversity and offers possibility to question the dominant mode of production of space. It is obviously not the only source of diversity and spatial practice can’t be generally, linearly linked to *being a migrant* or *being a localite* but there are the above mentioned structural particularities, which configure urban space and society in Pune.

³⁹³ Interview with IP 4

7.1.3.4. Gender relations

Gender is one structural principle in the constitution of society and the production of space. In any society it is crucial for the social relations of reproduction, and gender and the body become arena for socio-spatial conflicts. Unsurprisingly it was one of the central topics in my interviews and my empirical research.

Gender and especially the female body are significant in any discussion about tradition and modernity, social change and westernization. *“The body has emerged as the signifier of both traditional and modern social norms.”*³⁹⁴

It is impossible to understand any other dynamic of urban Pune, without taking a closer look at gender relations, the interplay with the different dimensions of space, other structures and agency. It is furthermore important to focus on gender relations because space is a social product based on interaction between different actors, structures and discourses.

For this purpose first of all we have to look at the relations between gender and family structures, because these two constitutive elements of society are inextricably linked to each other. The patriarchal character of the family system also reflects the way rights and obligations are distributed among girls and boys in a family³⁹⁵. There is a widely accepted double standard and the relations between male and female members of the family are highly asymmetric. This hierarchy and adjunctive social control is particularly visible with unmarried, young adults, like my interview partners are. They represent boys and girls that could be sexually active and are not yet involved in a normative and legitimized relationship, which would be marriage. Therefore the dominant discourse portrays their sexuality as dangerous and claims a need for social control.

Simultaneously this urban, College-going youth is exposed to very globalised and liberalised media images and discourses on sexuality and discussions on social change are attached to it.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ Abraham 2004:212

³⁹⁵ Gender relations include more the just the duality of being male and female but for this part of the thesis I will concentrate on the relations and roles of young men and women because they were central for my interview partners. There will be an upcoming chapter on the exploration of sexuality and the meaning of space in this dynamics.

³⁹⁶ cf: Savara 2006: 18

*“The youth are major consumers of the modern cultural expression of sexuality while being located within and circumscribed by the traditional familial, caste and community boundaries.”*³⁹⁷

Following the argumentation of different studies of recent times on the topic of gender³⁹⁸, despite of some more liberal images in the media, the female sexuality is still centred on the concept of purity and related to the reputation of the whole family.

*“...female sexuality in the Indian tradition is confined within the institution of marriage and is subordinated to male (the husband’s) sexuality through rigid norms that insist on the maintenance of virginity before marriage and chastity after marriage.”*³⁹⁹

So the concept of purity includes not only the actual virginity but also a broad range of behavioural norms that represent female decency in dominant discourses. These behavioural norms should be maintained so virginity is called into question. Thus this concept in practice and discourse has a major influence on being a woman in India. The structure and consequences of these roles and relations will become clearer when we connect it to spatial structures we encounter in Pune.

Urban space in Pune is deeply gendered⁴⁰⁰ and that means that the possibilities for spatial practices are asymmetrically distributed and spaces of representation work as source of reproduction of gender structures. Or as Leena Abraham puts it in her words by saying

*“The gender asymmetric sexual experience can be understood and explained only through an analysis of the societal arrangements that differentially allocate access to opportunities on the one hand, and the cultural and ideological constructs that legitimise such arrangements on the other hand.”*⁴⁰¹

Urban space is often conceptualized and perceived as dangerous and risky for women. Discourses on safety and fear are instrumentalised and connected to certain places at certain times of the day. This spatial categorization is produced mainly by male, heterosexual, upper cast and upper class dominated institutions and actors. These produced representations deny women the opportunity and the right to access public space. It can be

³⁹⁷ Abraham 2004: 213

³⁹⁸ cf. Phadke 2007, Abraham 2004, Infochange 2006, Mehta 1999

³⁹⁹ Abraham 2004: 212

⁴⁰⁰ cf. Viswanath/Mehrotra 2007: 1542

⁴⁰¹ Ibid: 219

argued that female sexuality is not only confined to marriage but also to the house, which is the sphere where the family and community can exercise control and set the rules, as we have earlier discussed. Shilpa Phadke analysed in her great work on gender and space in Mumbai that women need constant social legitimation to engage in urban/public space so their behaviour and decency isn't put into questions. *"This is true even when women access public space both respectably (defined in patriarchal terms through clothing, symbolic markers of good womanhood, and temporality) and purposefully (for specific reasons related to education, employment or consumption)."*⁴⁰² Respectability and purpose as the two entrance tickets to public space are concepts that I also encountered in my field research in Pune. One girl, she described this dynamic quite well by saying

*"अगर उनहोंने पता है की हम इस काम के लिए जा रही हैं। क्यों जा रही हूँ, उसको बता दिया तो उसके बाद कुछ नहीं कहते।"*⁴⁰³

(If they (parents) know that we go for this work and when they get to know why I go then they don't say anything, translation by author)

Especially the night symbolize a time and space continuum, which implies risks and lacks of generally accepted valid reason for exploring it. Therefore the access to nocturnal space in Pune is even more biased because purposes like college or work are missing. I was talking with one girl, who is a Gujarati from Pune and lives with her family, about the differences between rules for going out in the evening for boys and girls.

She said: *"A guy probably has more freedom, more freedom to go out and spend time with his friends or you know, but as a girl mostly you are pretty much subject to a cross-examination, "where are you going", "how are you going", "with whom are you going" that's what I think."*⁴⁰⁴

The young guy from the Rajput family also agreed on this statement:

"R: तुम्हारे खयाल से like for going out that there are different rules लड़कियाँ के लिए और different rules लड़के के लिए?"

⁴⁰² Phadke 2007: 1512

⁴⁰³ Interview with IP 1

⁴⁰⁴ Interview with IP 7

IP 12: *हाँ, बाहर जाते वक़्त / Not at least during the daytime but after ten it's that, for boys and for girls. लड़कियों को ज्यादा छुछ नहीं हैं मतलब safe नहीं हैं rather रात को घुमना।*⁴⁰⁵

(R: From your point of view are there different rules for going out for boys and different rules for girls?)

IP 12: Yes, when it comes to go outside. Not at least during the daytime but after ten it's that, for boys and for girls. They don't let girls out too much, it means going around at night it's not safe; translation by author)

It was interesting to encounter the safety argument in most of my interviews but when we were talking generally about safety in Pune, all of them highlighted Pune as a safe city. According to the low crime rates and in comparison with other metro cities in India, Pune is recognised as a very safe place.⁴⁰⁶ That leads to the assumption that I found confirmed in the different articles about gender and space, that the discourse of safety, risk and fear originates not only from the actual threat of physical harm and becoming a victim of crime. The risk mainly consists of the danger to harm a woman's and consequently her family's reputation because of engaging in urban space at a place and a time, which is conceptualized as inadequate and illegitimate. The reputation is not only crucial for the coexistence in a neighbourhood or a city but also for the actual future of a woman concerning marriage.⁴⁰⁷ After the guy I've already quoted above stated the different rules for girls and boys the conversation went ahead and showed how this safety discourse is connected to family and marriage.

“R: *तुम्हारे खयाल से like for going out that there are different rules लड़कियाँ के लिए और different rules लड़के के लिए?*

IP 12: *हाँ, बाहर जाते वक़्त / Not at least during the daytime but after ten it's that, for boys and for girls. लड़कियों को ज्यादा छुछ नहीं हैं मतलब safe नहीं हैं rather रात को घुमना।*

⁴⁰⁵ Interview with IP 12

⁴⁰⁶ cf. Interview with Expert 10

⁴⁰⁷ cf.: Phadke 2007: 1511/1512

R: क्यों?

IP 12: अभी तक तो इधर कुछ हुआ नहीं लेकिन parents are sort of very much मतलब है क्या उनको बहुत डर लगता है कि लड़कियाँ के लिए ऐसा [...] After marriage ya roam here and there but before marriage because the responsibility lies on the parents only.

R: लेकिन किस से डर है? क्या होगा?

IP 12: See I'm also having a sister. I'll also not allow my sister to roaming here and there after ten o'clock.

R: क्यों?

IP 12: Because other guys are not proper. See if I'm a good boy, it's not that first rule that all the other guys are also good. They may misbehave with other people also, other girls. So it's a risk, sort of risk.”

(R: From your point of view, are there different rules concerning going out for boys and girls?

IP: Yes, when it comes to going outside. Not during the daytime but after ten it's that, for boys and for girls. They don't let girls out too much, I mean going around at night. It's not safe;

R: Why?

IP: Till now nothing has happened but parents are sort of ah very much, means, they are afraid that for girls, like this, like that [...] After marriage ya roam here and there but before marriage because the responsibility lies on the parents only.

I: But what are they afraid of? What could be?

IP: See I'm also having a sister. I'll also not allow my sister to roaming here and there after ten o'clock.

I: Why?

A: Because other guys are not proper see if I'm a good boy it's not that first rule that all the other guys are also good. They may misbehave with other people also, other girls. So it's a risk, sort of risk; *translation by author*)

Even if the misbehaviour that creates the actual risk is located with the general male public, due to the above mentioned structures the consequences, which could be the harm of reputation, the doubt of purity or the loss of possibility to be part of public space, are only affecting the woman. In the worst cases, this leads to blaming the woman for not respecting the dominantly produced concepts of purpose and respectability of use of spaces and because of this disrespect she ended up in a dangerous situation. Shilpa Phadke names this dynamic as one of the risks for women in public space.

*“The risk of being blamed for being in public space at all if a woman is assaulted, particularly sexually assaulted, in public space. This includes the risk of the improbability of getting justice except in a few cases.”*⁴⁰⁸

It’s unfortunately undeniable that there is an actual risk of physical, psychological and sexual harassment of women in public space in Pune. I have experienced it, many of my female interview partners have told me about it and in India there is even a term for this kind of harassment, which is known as “eve-teasing”.⁴⁰⁹ The problem, which is embedded in family structures and gender relations, is that these experiences are attached to the above mentioned risks and therefore dominant actors react with overprotection and limitation to access public space for women instead of an open discussion or actual confrontation with gender dynamics and roots of the problem. Kalpana Viswanath and Surabhi Mehrotra see this situation as multilayered violence against women.

*“The violence of normal times includes these various forms of violence which structure daily lives of women in ways that go far beyond acts of violence. This kind of violence serves the purpose of controlling women's movement and behaviour through a constant and continuous sense of insecurity.”*⁴¹⁰

In an interview with two guys from Pune, they explained from their perspective the danger of the public gaze for women, for their future daughters, when they engage in public space at “inadequate” hours and that their reaction would also be to restrict the women.

⁴⁰⁸ Phadke 2007: 1512

⁴⁰⁹ For more information and an interesting example of civic activism on eve-teasing please see the Blog of the blank noise project: <http://blog.blanknoise.org/>, 23.04.2009. It’s a space where women can share their experiences and talk openly about the experiences of being sexually harassed.

⁴¹⁰ Viswanath/Mehrotra 2007: 1542

“IP 16: अगर मैं अच्छा पिता हूँ मैं मेरे बच्चे को समझ सकता हूँ कि तू जा, मुझे मालूम है कुछ नहीं करेगी, enjoy करेगी। आ जाएगी तो ऐसे कुछ भी नहीं करेगी, गलत कुछ नहीं। लेकिन public को तो मैं जानता हूँ ना। अगर ठीक हैं वह इस घर के जा रही हैं, उसके मन में कुछ भी नहीं, उसका boyfriend है भी तो वह अभी physical attached नहीं, तुरानत कुछ गलत बात नहीं करेगी। लेकिन बाकी crowd बहुत गंदा है। मुझे मालूम है ना बाहर जाना कुछ भी हो सकता है उसके साथ। रात का late night, party से आते वक़्त भी। मुझे मेरी लड़की पे भरोसा, crowd, लोगों पे भरोसा नहीं। इसलिए भी थोड़ा बहुत ही होता है। मैं चहता हु की तु जा लेकिन मैं नहीं भेज सकता, sorry।

IP 19: Because of cultural background, यार बाकी क्या कहेगा, वे क्या कहेंगे, चाचा क्या बोलेगा। लड़की को दूसरे लड़के से शादी करना है। She wants to go out with him but thinking starts from the elder person's family, वे यह कहेंगे, वह कहेंगे। शादी किस लोग करना हैं, किसे करना हैं, सोचते हैं।”⁴¹¹

(IP 16: When I’m a good father, I would understand my children that ‘you go’, I know that you won’t do anything, you would enjoy. You would come back and you wouldn’t do anything like that, something wrong you wouldn’t do. But the public, which I know. Even if it is alright, she goes to this house, she has nothing wrong on her mind, there is no physical attachment to her boyfriend, they don’t do anything wrong. But the other crowd is very dirty. I know that, while going out everything can happen. Also at night, when you come back from the party. I trust my girl but I don’t trust the people. So I want to let her go but I can’t send her, sorry.

IP 19: Because of cultural background, man, what would the others say, what would he say, what would the uncle say. The girl has to marry another guy. She wants to go out with him but thinking starts from the elder person's family, they would say this, they would say that. With whom could she get married, with whom will we do it, that’s what they think; Translation by author)

⁴¹¹ IP 16 and IP 19 in group interview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

Ultimately this control disguised as protection to enable the reproduction of the dominant mode of socio-spatial relations, means to curtail the civic rights of women, to deny them an equal form of citizenship, which means to deny them the risk to engage in urban space.⁴¹²

This dynamic does not only affect women but also young people in general when it comes to romantic encounters and the first sexual experiences. The discourse of safety connected to the purity of the woman does not only consider unwanted sexual harassments of men against women. It also controls and sanctions consensual sexual relationships between boys and girls before marriage⁴¹³. That doesn't only include actual intercourse, but all kind of physical closeness, especially in public space. This leads to a lack of space for any kind of sexual exploration and furthermore to a lack of knowledge and the possibility to ask questions. These predominantly produced categories of social spaces of sexuality reinforce the alienation of young people from their needs, desires and embodied experiences because their sexuality is constantly subject to value judgements.

By connecting gender relations to the other relevant social structures we have already discussed, we will realise that there is a certain diversity in the experience and living reality of gender relations according to economic background and living situation. Especially in Pune, with the growing entertainment and leisure industry, different semi-public spaces, like malls, coffee shops and restaurants emerged that provide new rules and limits for women and men.

Economic capital can function as key to public space and is supported by the spatial concept of Pune as young, global, cosmopolitan city, which includes the presence of "modern and fashionable" women.⁴¹⁴

A major difference of possibilities for women can also be found by comparing students that have migrated to Pune and students that are originally from the city. As I've analysed earlier migration leads to a transformation of structural embedding and opens up new opportunities because of the distance to the family and place of origin. A Gujarati girl that came from the Indian community in Tanzania to Pune for studies explained the meaning of migration for her womanhood as such:

⁴¹² cf.: Phadke 2007: 1510

⁴¹³ cf: ibid: 1512

⁴¹⁴ cf: ibid: 1513-1514

“... I have to go back to my family and I don't [know] what's in store for me later on. So I have not thought about actually I'm going to do after three years here. Three years, meanwhile I'm here I want to enjoy my life the fullest, because this is the only time I have my full freedom, to do whatever I want to do. Because after studies I mean before I came here it was my family, I always have to, and then after maybe I finish my studies then I'll get married and then it's always my husband I have to. So I have all the freedom over here so I like to enjoy the freedom over here.”⁴¹⁵

A good example for the interrelation between gender, migration and class gives a girl from Rajasthan, which came for studies to Pune. She would represent a “modern and fashionable” woman, who has the financial and social means to access newly established spaces, where her body and sexuality is represented in a different. We were talking about dress codes as part of experience of nightscapes and society in urban Pune. She goes out with friends to bars and discotheques quite often and experiences these places as appropriated by her and her friends.

“R: What do you wear when you go out?”

IP 4: Like you can wear stuff you can't wear in the day. You can wear skimpy stuff

R: Skimpy stuff?

IP 4: As in, skimpy stuff you can wear. Because you know as in whole over India even if you wear skimpy stuff in the day there'll be morons looking at you there will be the ladies and old people looking at you, thinking what of as in you know such a big.....But that's nice, because at night that point of time and those places, people who don't think like that come, so you don't feel awkward. It's not that I think it's wrong or something and that's why I don't do it in the day but you feel awkward.[...] They make you feel naked as it is even if you are wearing stuff but at night when you go to places where people don't feel like awkward. So that is a difference in the the way you dress up at night and dress up in day. Mostly at the night, obviously you can't say 100% of the people but yeah mostly they are special like all my friends and all these people also my roommates. There is special set of clothes we don't wear in the day.”⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁵ Interview with IP 6

⁴¹⁶ Interview with IP 4

I hope that this last chapter on the social structures that play a major part in constituting the social relations of production showed which dominant actors, spatial concepts and material-physical socio-spatial order take part in the production of space in Pune. It was important to illustrate that because even if the topic refers to the production of space it doesn't mean that the economic processes are the only ones that matter. It is interplay between dynamics of production and reproduction or to put it in other words, between the economic, political and social sphere of society. We have seen that the relevant structures like the institutionalized relations between gender, generation and migrants and localities are inextricably linked to and partly determined by family structures and economic transformation. Spaces get classified in categories like outside and inside, dangerous and safe, sexual and decent or fashionable/modern and traditional and find their manifestation in dominant representations. These categories that are, despite a different reality, portrayed as dualistic don't remain at the discursive and imaginary level. They become powerful through the interdependency with material-physical socio-spatial structures. Now that we have enough knowledge on the different institutions, rules and resources that constitute social, political and economic structures of urban space in Pune, it is time to analyse the other side of the coin, spatial agency. How do young people in Pune actually deal with the above mentioned embedding in family, gender roles and generation conflicts? Where can we witness spatial practices that support the reproduction of these structures and of what do they consist? Is there another side of spatial agency, which actually connects with representational space? Since the production of space and subjective life realities are not all about structure, we can identify potential for transformative practice but it is a highly complex dynamic located between representation, self-perception and acting.

7.2. *Spatial agency between reproduction and transformation*

In the last chapter we explored spatial structures and their interrelation with representations of space and built environment. This sphere is one important element of the dialectical constitution of society through structure and agency. The second element will be focus of the upcoming chapter. Space is a social product and therefore the result of a production process, which not only requires a framework of relations of production and social relations of reproduction but also spatial agency.

It was interesting to see that in my interviews, the stories and description mostly concentrated on the experience of certain limits and possibilities and their embedding in society. These accounts were centred on one question, which was if they can, want or do leave the house in the evening and the night or not. The detailed description of activities, which would take place outside were not as important as the fact if activities could take place or not. But when we analyse the situation, the ideas and images of what young people do outside the house at night and the actual activities play a major role in the above mentioned dialectic dynamic. For the aim of a holistic analysis, I conducted not only interviews but also different participant observations, which gave more insights on the actual activities and their social embedding that are taking place in Pune at night.

The concept of agency is not only a conglomeration of different acts but it is a constituting process of society, which includes the social meaning of acts and the adjunctive dialectical relationship with structures. Hence there is not just one dimensions of agency but it rather can be understood as a continuum between reproductive and transformative dynamics.

The terms reproductive and transformative relate to the role agency plays in the relationship with the socio-spatial order of society.⁴¹⁷

The dominant role of agency, which is connected to everyday life routine, is to reproduce social structures, and that's why institutions, regulations and social hierarchy are always dynamic processes and simultaneously provide continuity and stability. Lefebvre relates in his work this reproductive agency to spatial practices, which manifest themselves in built environment and sustain the dominance of representations of space.

⁴¹⁷ cf. Giddens 1988; Löw 2001

These practices are based on practical consciousness, which means to be aware of strategies for acting based on the knowledge of everyday routine without further questioning or critically reflecting on them.⁴¹⁸ The subject in this reproductive agency could be described in Lefebvre's words as alienated self, a subject alienated from its actual needs and desires. The other aspect of spatial agency, which I've been referring to as transformative agency, requires a lot more exploration in the field. In the analysis of Martina Löw and Anthony Giddens this acting is based on a discursive and reflective consciousness, which implies a critical approach towards life realities. It can be seen as self-reflective, creative and explorative agency and the subject would represent an appropriated self. The idea behind this type of agency is not an individualistic self-fulfilment but rather a critical self-discovery and –development that are inextricably linked to an exploration, awareness and appropriation of broader social relations.⁴¹⁹ Because only reflective agency based on exploration of the self and society carries transformative potential within. In this agency a certain connection with Lefebvre's approach towards social change and transformative spaces and his concept of representational space can be identified. He speaks of representational space as the space of users and inhabitants, which would be actors, who appropriated their needs and desires and their space.⁴²⁰ He argues that this appropriation of the self enables to create spaces that actually are deeply connected to the actors itself and eludes dominant concepts and structures. The problem in the analysis with his concept is that he locates these representational spaces in the field of non-verbal symbols, dreams and imaginaries.⁴²¹

With this line of argument two major problems arise. On the one hand it's nearly impossible to include such elements into a research work and on the other hand the connection with collective transformative agency, which would be necessary for social change, is not further clarified. Therefore his approach will be taken as inspirational source for the analysis but a traditional testing of his hypothesis through empirical research would not provide a deeper understanding of the process.

⁴¹⁸ cf. Löw 2001: 161/162

⁴¹⁹ cf.: Merkens 2006: 16/17

⁴²⁰ Lefebvre 1991: 166/167

⁴²¹ Ibid.: 38

The two aspects of agency are exercised simultaneously by each person and nobody can only carry out reflected, explorative and critical acts. Besides, these two approaches mostly concentrate on the subject and the motivation of certain acts. The motivation is not necessarily congruent with the actual content of this act, its representation and public perception. If possible it's important to distinguish in the analysis between these different locations of acts.⁴²²

It's important to understand that I don't want to take reproductive or transformative agency as normative concepts. Reproduction is not necessarily something negative and transformation not necessarily positive. Change of urban structures in Pune is a highly complex and contested field and the analysis of creative acts is not a guideline how to carry out this change. It was an explorative study and thus the task is rather to analyse processes and identify potential dynamics.

In this project I encountered situations of inequalities and processes of discrimination, where transformative practices and social innovations would be crucial but my task is not to categorize and judge youth and their agency. The aim of this project was rather to open up a space for the experiences, narratives and perception of students of their own subjective life realities and to connect it with scientific analysis and secondary literature to enable a critical discussion on social dynamics of the production of space in Pune.

Practically that means that we will now explore different spaces and activities in Pune at night, which were mentioned by my interview partners and included in my observations. I will look at the actual activities, where and how they take place and which structural dimensions and dominant concepts play a major role in the different settings. Furthermore I will try to detect which elements of this acting could be questioning or breaking dominant concepts and structures and if that could lead to the assumption of this act to be part of transformative agency. The connection between the individual and collective level in these different spaces and activities is crucial for the development from an individual self-reflection to a reflection of broader social relations and will therefore be another aspect that will be taken into consideration. Last but not least I will also try to connect this analysis to the concept of representational space to figure out if the inspiration from Lefebvre's theory yields fruit.

⁴²² cf. Löw 2001:191

For the purpose of analysing spatial agency in Pune's urban night and its dialectical relation to the already analysed social structures, I would like to invite you to spend a night in the city. We will explore different spaces and activities, look for reproduction or critical questioning of structures and meet my interview partners and their narratives. It won't be a linear account or a categorized list; it will rather be a mosaic of different critically analysed dynamics and an insight on experiences and their societal significance. We'll start at a place, which in the Western tradition seems to be symbolic for nightlife and which has been emerging in Pune in the last ten years. We'll go to the disco.

7.2.1. Going to the discotheque

Discotheques in Pune have been establishing since the beginning of 2000 and are a typical example for a space of the entertainment and leisure time industry. Discotheques are consumption spaces and only cater to a very small percentage of the population in Pune. The entrance fee can range between Rs.600 to Rs.2000⁴²³; prices that are equivalent to one month rent some of my interview partners pay for their room in a hostel or shared flat. Even if only a very small group of people can access this space it still plays a major role due to various reasons. First of all the discussion on "going for partying" as spatial practices is quite prominent in public discourses on youth culture and social change in Pune. Groups like the BJYM – Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha take these spaces as arenas for their political struggle and for making a statement against the "downfall of Indian culture".⁴²⁴ Furthermore discos are of the few places that are actually open late night⁴²⁵ and offer at least one possibility to hang out in the city after 10 p.m.

Going to the discotheque represents also a segregating practice, which can produce privacy, distance from other parts of society and freedom of exploration and expression. It is a space particularly designed for a young, urban, economically well off crowd and young students are not confronted with the traditional, community based, public gaze as soon as they are inside.

⁴²³ Rs.600= ca. € and Rs.2000= ca. €31; The prices are calculated for couple (1 man, 1 woman) or single man. A single girl pays little less.

⁴²⁴ cf. Interview with Expert 5

⁴²⁵ The official closing hour for bars, clubs and restaurants is 00:30 and this rule has been reinforced during summer 2007. But there are still some places that are open afterwards as well.

One of my interview partners, the only one, who regularly goes to discotheques, says that she feels comfortable at such places because *“at the night, obviously you can't say 100% of the people but yeah mostly they are special like all my friends and [...] my roommates.”*⁴²⁶

Therefore it could be argued that “going to the discotheque” questions certain dominant social structures and provides young students with a space for self expression. This new possibility includes girls and even fosters their presence through less access barriers, like cheaper entrance fee and regulations on the entrance of single guys.

Especially practices like drinking alcohol, smoking, wearing skimpy clothes and displaying affection between unmarried couples, provoke dominant concepts and social constructs like *“decent behaviour”* and Pune as stronghold of Marathi culture.

*“I think it [the fact that few people go out at night, author’s note] is also concerned with the whole idea about Indian culture as in you know they [Dominant actors like local families, author’s note] want Indian culture, which feels that alcohol and smoking is not moral. Right and that's also people, people think it's wrong to go out in the night because mostly what do people do when they go out. They don't just dance obviously they are making out. Yeah and the smoke is not good, drinking is not good.”*⁴²⁷

But this critical and explorative character of going to a discotheque, which is based on trying out new activities with little fear of social consequences, is only one side of the story. This privacy and segregation is not only empowering for new practices, it is also reproducing dominant economic and social structures. The kind of freedom that is supposed to be connected to this space is closely linked to the financial background of young people as well as their public image, which has to fit the dominant concept of young, hip, cosmopolitan Pune. A Gujarati girl originally from Pune, who studies at Fergusson college puts it in very clear words:

“I would say like Fergusson [one of the most prominent colleges in Pune, author’s note] mostly has a very, very hip crowd, like the very high class, like who party, and go to malls and spend like shit loads of money [...] That is one type of crowd, who have like, who have

⁴²⁶ Interview with IP 4

⁴²⁷ Interview with IP 4

total money to blow and can go anywhere and do anything and pretty much very free about the whole spending time out at night.”⁴²⁸

Not only the economic background is decisive, but also the family plays a major role in this concern. The consent of their parents was very important for my interviewpartners’ decision about going out, even if this consent was only obtained through a good lie. Especially for girls that live with their parents in Pune it seems nearly impossible to go out, not to mention to enter a discotheque. A guy from Pune uses some statistical information, he made up to illustrate his perception of the situation.

“90% girls without permission आती हैं और उस में से 80% girls hostelite होता है। उन्हें किसी के permission की जरूरत नहीं। जो 10% हैं वह झूठ बोलकर आती हैं। India इतना भी develop होगा hardly five percent parents allow करेंगे उसकी लड़की को कि ठीक है you go.”⁴²⁹

(90% girls come without permission and among them 80% are hostelite girls. They don’t need permission. The other 10% tell lies. It doesn’t matter how developed India would be, hardly five percent of parents would allow that their girls go. *Translation by author*)

This results in a dynamic, which has already been mentioned in the chapter on social structures, the relation between local and out of station students. Due to the relevance of the family in decisions on how to spend your night, in discotheques you will mostly find students, who don’t live with their family in Pune and some young male localites. The fact that the main actors in this situation are migrant students leads to a reproduction of the dominant concepts on migrants and Puneites, even if the motivation or actual content of the act cannot be connected to any supposed cultural difference in this constellation. At this point the representation and public perception and right wing political forces play a major role in producing the connection of spatial practices of migrants and the “*downfall of Marathi culture*” and other generalizing, culturalistic argumentation. A Marathi girl from Pune explains in an interview that she doesn’t like to go to discotheques because of her *being Marathi*:

⁴²⁸ Interview with IP 7

⁴²⁹ IP 16 in Groupinterview with IP 5, IP 15, IP 16 and IP 17

*“Actually, 90% of us [Marathi students] don't just like it [the parties and dancing in nightclubs] naturally. You know, instead we don't mind going into a Ganapati ceremony and dancing in that congested crowd we'd loved that rather than going and to a disco and dancing over there.”*⁴³⁰

The accessibility of these spaces is clearly structured along social and economic lines and therefore going there or not is not only based on individual taste or interest in critical behaviour. It is not a one sided relation but through the spatial practice of going out to the discotheque these social and economic structures and dominant spatial concepts are reproduced. The fact that the exploration of new practices is happening in an enclosed and segregated space among a highly selected group of people, it lacks societal significance and actual confrontation between the dominant order and questioning acts.

Another aspect which should be taken into account is that young people don't leave their socialisation outside of a discotheque only because they like to dance. During my observations in a discotheque and my interviews it became quite clear that economic hierarchy and gender relations are not that different inside of these “*walls of freedom*”. For example single guys will be barely let in because they represent a certain danger for the decency and purity of young girls inside. The main public in such clubs are couples and even if they are not married, in this particular environment they still represent a formalized and socially legitimated relation. This shows that there is a broader definition of socially accepted relations but they follow the same male dominated heterosexual structure. You won't find homosexual couples in discotheques displaying their affection or a single girl making advances to a guy. And at the end of the evening girls still have a male attendant to reach home safely. My interview partner, who goes out quite often and would represent a quite independent young woman explained in our interview:

*“People are scared. You know a lot of girls wanting to go out might be scared of going out alone because they don't have guy friends to pick them and drop them.”*⁴³¹

⁴³⁰ Interview with IP 2

⁴³¹ Interview with IP 4

7.2.2. Roaming around on the bike

One of the most common practices of everyday life routine is commuting with a motorbike. This includes going from one place to another and roaming around in the city without clear destination. A bike is an instrument to access and explore spaces and it is a space itself. Bikes and scooters⁴³² are the most prominent vehicles in the traffic landscape of Pune and 10 of my interview partners had their own bike or scooter. In most cases students that migrate to Pune for studies don't have their own vehicle because transferring a bike from other parts of India to Pune is legally and logistically quite a challenge.

Owning a bike or a scooter is a middle class phenomenon and there is an economic barrier for being able to buy and maintain a vehicle. Thus there is a clear limit to mobility and this space according to economic affluence. Bikes and scooters also became a symbol of the upcoming, modern India, supported by constant advertising as a marker of lifestyle. Images of the wild and strong man on his bike and the fashionable, modern and independent woman on her scooter became the leading figures of advertisement campaigns of different producers.⁴³³ Good examples for that provide the picture on the left side from the homepage of TVS Motors, the company, which produces the scooter called Scooty Pep+.

⁴³² Scooter is the common term for moped in Pune

⁴³³ See bike and scooter commercials on: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ww1Azvzy5ik>, 13.12.2009. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpZkbCwt02U>, 13.12.2009. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifdk_6-XdJA&feature=related, 13.12.2009. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_laT0a4CVM&feature=related, 13.12.2009

Figure 9: Photograph of bike advertisement⁴³⁴



Figure 10: Photograph of Pepsi advertisement⁴³⁵



On the right side you can see the Bollywood actor John Abraham in a Pepsi commercial. John Abraham based on most his commercial movies is the symbol for an adventurous, wild and unpredictable young man. In the background there is the silhouette of a nameless metropolitan city, which shows the importance of the urban character of this young, deeply gendered, fashionable lifestyle. On the right upper corner there is the line “*Yah hai youngistaan meri jaan*”, which means “*this is young-country, my dear*” and youngistaan uses the linguistic similarity to Hindustan, a term for India. Of course for a proper analysis of these commercials we would have to go more into deep but they should rather give short example for the concept of young, urban and cosmopolitan representation of spaces that is produced through consumption goods like a bike or a scooter.

For the larger part of society in Pune it is not so much a lifestyle marker but rather a necessity for everyday life because of the lack of adequate public transport. Especially at

⁴³⁴ <http://www.scootygirls.com/features.aspx>, 13.12.2010

⁴³⁵ <http://pics-4-u.blogspot.com/2008/07/youngistan-wallpapers-featuring.html>, 25.4.2010

night there is no other way of commuting, besides auto-rikshas. So it could be argued that the lack of infrastructure is instrumentalized and simultaneously concealed by commercial strategies to integrate this necessity to move in a city in a question of lifestyle and fashion and this system gets reproduced every time somebody uses a bike to access different spaces in the city.

When we look at another side of the story of moving around on a bike, we will soon realise that besides the infrastructural necessity and lifestyle factor there are other meanings and practices attached.

According to my interviewpartners bikes are inextricably linked to freedom at night. This freedom is based on two possibilities that the ownership of a bike opens up. First of all it gives mobility, which not only enables the access of different spaces in the city but also gives the feeling of being able to move. A young guy, who moved from Delhi to Pune, and spends most of his nights roaming around on his bike and meeting friends, told me: *“I'm in love with my bike. I love my bike because that gives me mobility. I think the most when I'm riding. Like an electric light wire, you can't catch it. I love that.”*⁴³⁶

This activity of roaming around in the city at night on their bikes also has a high representative value because young people mark their presence in public space and can demonstrate independency and power. This demonstration of power is closely connected to discourses and images of masculinity and roaming around on a bike especially at night is still strongly male dominated. The same guy, who earlier declared his love to his bike, shared his experiences of power and bikes at night with me.

*“It's all about power, right. It's all about power so when somebody fixes some rules. The night time is the time when most people, male, female, but [mostly, author's note] male because they are more powerful so to say, in lot of senses, so they want to experience that moment. I mean yes, in my case I have, I have my bike, I'm on my bike, I used to travel to bars and pubs and drink. I used to trash the empty bottles in the middle of the road. Drive wildly in the night. I have done that.”*⁴³⁷

The bike is not only a spatial instrument that enables mobility but should be also understood as space itself. This space offers privacy in public spaces and is appropriated

⁴³⁶ Interview with IP 18

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

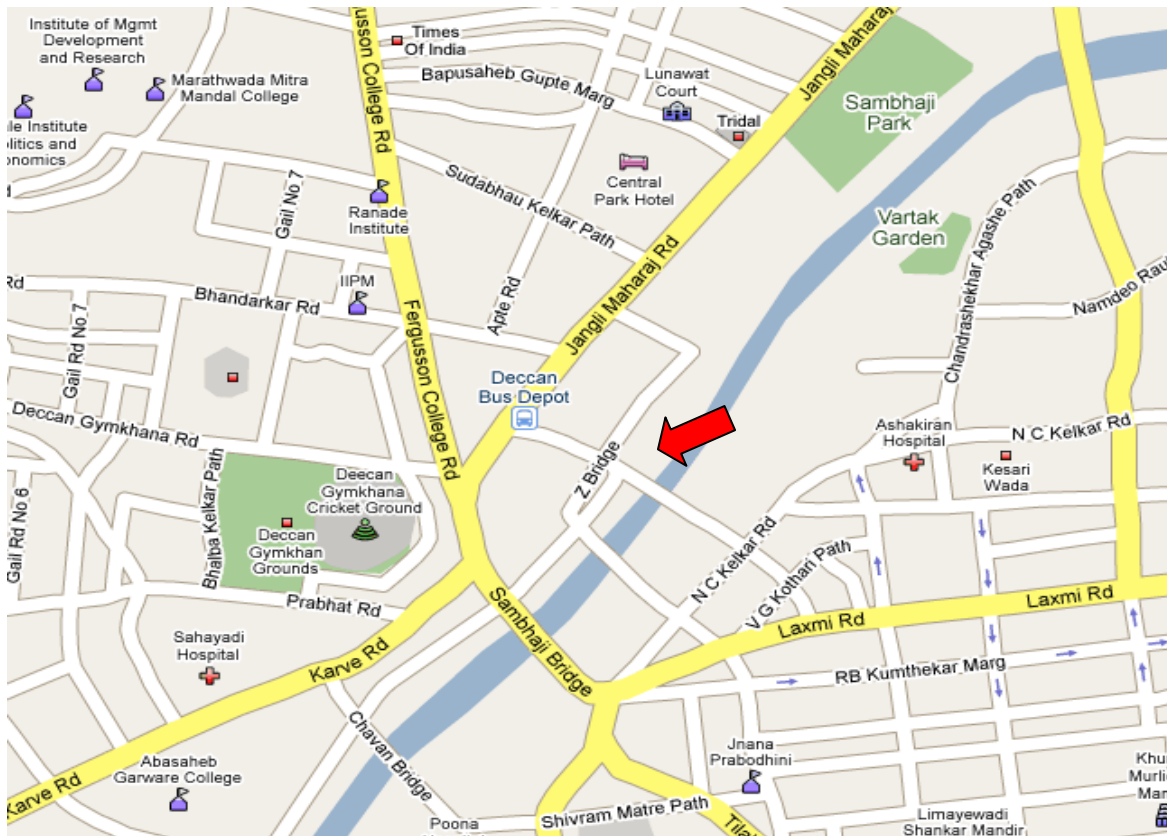
solely by its owner or user. A bike is used as a space for communication, for embodied experience and intimacy. Especially for young couples it provides the possibility for physical closeness that is legitimated by the functionality of a bike as instrument for mobility.

These two characteristics already show that this space is something unique in urban Pune and by most of my interview partners highly desired.

A very good example of how young people create and access spaces with their bikes would be the Kakasaheb Gadgil Bridge, which is also called Z-bridge. This bridge is located in the Deccan area and crosses the Mutha River. Originally it was planned in the development plan of Pune 1981-1991 as a bridge only for cyclists⁴³⁸, but after the construction and the opening, it was soon taken over by bikes and scooters. Cars and buses are still not allowed to cross the bridge.

⁴³⁸ cf. Pune Municipal Corporation 1981: Plan No.XII/5

Figure 11: Map of Deccan area in Pune including the Z-bridge⁴³⁹



This bridge is a prominent hang-out place for young people in Pune and is frequented by young couples. On the bridge there are footpaths on both sides of the road, where people park their bikes and sit a little hidden between the bikes. The bridge is mainly used by young people and only sometimes you would find one or two families with children. Young people are sitting in groups of boys and girls or in couples and enjoy the mutual respect for their private sphere, which you can experience in this space. The bike marks the boundary, which wouldn't be crossed by any other user of this bridge, because all of them share a similar motivation to spend their time there. Two of my interview partners, with whom I spend quite a lot of time on this bridge, told how unique this place is in Pune because of privacy that is not connected to consumption.

“IP 16: *वहां to Z bridge, you know. You know place हैं couples वहां पे बैठ जाओ आराम से।*

⁴³⁹ <http://maps.google.at/maps?hl=de&tab=wl>, 03.04.2009

*IP 19: You can do any damn thing over there. There are even couples, were sitting over there, behind the bikes and they are comfortably smooching each other. So that place is fine over there.*⁴⁴⁰

(IP 16: There is Z-bridge, you know. You know that's the place where couples can sit quietly; *translation by author*)

Figure 12: Photograph of Z-bridge 1⁴⁴¹



⁴⁴⁰ IP 16 and IP 19 in Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

⁴⁴¹ Photograph by author, 16.6.2007, Pune

Figure 13: Photograph of Z-bridge 2⁴⁴²



Figure 14: Photograph of Z-bridge 3⁴⁴³



⁴⁴² Photograph by author, 16.06.2007, Pune

⁴⁴³ Photograph by author, 16.06.2007, Pune

On the pictures you can see different parts of Z-bridge in the late afternoon, in the evening it gets more populated and even until 10 or 11 p.m. it is possible to find people over there. Unfortunately even this space, which is one of the few available public spaces in the evening and provides a certain degree of privacy that seems to be crucial for my interview partners, is object to restrictions from public authorities and dominant actors in the city. In November 2007 the Deccan police booked 12 young people on the Z-bridge and accused them of indecent behaviour.⁴⁴⁴ The police was “*receiving complaints from senior citizens and ladies groups regarding indecent behaviour from the couples on the bridge.*”⁴⁴⁵

This is another example for the more restrictive policy of the police and government authorities concerning activities of young people in Pune. This dynamic, strongly supported by right-wing political parties, could be witnessed in Pune since summer 2007, when police and the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha started raiding clubs and reinforcing closing hours. The further analysis of the background of these reinforcing activities and the adjunctive discourse shows them as a strategy of ensuring the reproduction of dominant social structures in a time when the city is experiencing a lot of change in the economic, political and social sphere.

This underlines the significance of bikes as a space in their everyday life for young people once more. The fact that roaming around on the bike is part of everyday life contributes to the transformative potential of this action. For young people it can provide a space of creativity with a limited influence of social sanctions and restrictions and the bike can combine two important aspects of personal development and critical engagement with the surrounding social relations.

In this particular setting of the research these two aspects would be privacy and exploration. By interpreting roaming around on a bike in this way, we could refer to Lefebvre’s representational space because through embodied experiences, the appropriation of non-verbal symbols and exploration of the unknown, young people could connect more with their needs and desires. But it is still something that is mostly reduced to the individual sphere and the connection with broader social dynamics was at least in my interview barely mentioned. The danger of integrating this personal journey into a bigger collective could be

⁴⁴⁴ cf.: Times of India: 12 booked for indecent behaviour 17.11.2007

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

that it only leads to the production of new dominant concepts as we have seen with the advertisements and the integration of vehicles into questions of lifestyle and conspicuous consumption.

Before we will integrate these journeys on a bike into the bigger picture of spatial agency in Pune at night, I'll invite you to some more places that could help in getting a better understanding of these social dynamics.

7.2.3. The significance of festivals

In the upcoming exploration of spatial agency, I will focus on festive moments that are connected to traditional and modern symbols and rituals and create very particular social dynamics in urban Pune at night. They are of great interest for this research because on the one hand Lefebvre connects his concept of representational space and potential for transformation to symbolisms.⁴⁴⁶ He also explored the complex and antagonistic character of festivals ranging between being a tool of capitalist representations of space⁴⁴⁷, temporary reappropriation of space⁴⁴⁸ and actual significance for alternative spatial practices.⁴⁴⁹ On the other hand the different festivals, I observed during my field research, were an important topic for my interview partners because in such moments exploration and freedom meet social legitimation, which normally isn't a common experience for young people in Pune. During my time in Pune, I had the possibility to observe and participate in three different festive moments, two religious-traditional ones, Krishna Janmashtami and Ganapati utsava, and one modern-sportive, the Twenty20 Cricket world cup final between India and Pakistan. Despite big differences between these festivals, they share common features that help illustrating a particular kind of spatial agency, which is enabled by these events.

Ganapati⁴⁵⁰ utsava, which could be translated as Ganapati festival, is one of the most important religious festivals in Pune. It is celebrated for ten days mostly in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa and consists of public celebrations in honour of the Hindu god Ganesh. For these ten days a vast amount of statues of Ganapati are put by housing societies,

⁴⁴⁶ cf: Lefebvre 1991: 41

⁴⁴⁷ cf: ibid: 59

⁴⁴⁸ cf: ibid: 167

⁴⁴⁹ cf.: ibid.: 223

⁴⁵⁰ Ganapati is a common term for the Hindu god Ganesha in Maharashtra.

neighbourhood associations and other political and social associations, and on the eleventh day, there is a festive procession to immerse the statues into the closest river, sea or other water.

Figure 15: Photograph of a Ganapati statue during Ganapati utsava⁴⁵¹



⁴⁵¹ Photograph by author, 15.09.2007, Pune

Figure 16: Photograph of street scene during Ganapati utsava⁴⁵²



This puja⁴⁵³, which used to be a private, family –based ritual, was created as a public festival by the Indian nationalist Bal Gangadhar Tilak at the end of the 19th century.⁴⁵⁴ There was a clearly identifiable nationalistic, political agenda behind the introduction of this Ganapati festival, which aimed at using this religious festivity as possibility for the creation of an Indian public sphere and public space.

*“It is notable that festive moments such as the Ganapati utsava as well as other collective gatherings have facilitated the process of carving out a public realm of debate, action and empowerment since colonial times.”*⁴⁵⁵

The event has certainly undergone changes in the last hundred years, and more recently the artistic competitions and thematization of social issues, which are part of the festival, have gotten more into the discourse of conserving the “Indian culture”.⁴⁵⁶ But the connection between public space and religious rituals that makes this festival a *public participative*

⁴⁵² Photograph by author, 15.09.2007, Pune

⁴⁵³ Puja (Hindi)=worship

⁴⁵⁴ cf.: Kaur 2004: 191ff.

⁴⁵⁵ Kaur 2001: 24

⁴⁵⁶ cf.: ibid: 25

*even*⁴⁵⁷ still plays a major role in the perception and agency of most people. This is also the common ground this festival shares with Krishna Janmashtami. This celebration of Krishna's birthday has a different historical embedding but is still a religious festivity located in public space with open access. In Maharashtra, and therefore also in Pune the main activity of this celebration is a ritual called Dahi Handi⁴⁵⁸. The rituals itself are not subject to our analyses but rather the social significance of this festivals in public space, that take mainly place in the evening and during the night. It's also important to note that even if these festivals are only taking place once a year, it could be argued that they are part of everyday life because of the frequency and regularity of such festivals happening in the city.

*“Religious events in the city do not represent a respite from the quotidian but have been, and continue to be, entangled in the skein of the city’s public culture.”*⁴⁵⁹

The pivotal aspect of these celebrations is that they open up public space for young people to engage in, invite for exploration of urban space at night and provide the necessary social legitimation. Nearly all of my interview partners indicated the Ganapati festival as special time of the year because it was the only possibility to spend the whole night outside without facing any restrictions.

*“Ganapati, यह सब रात को होता है तो रात को यह सब घर के बाहर रहते, निकलते हैं।”*⁴⁶⁰

(Ganapati, it's the whole night, so the whole night everybody stays out, goes out.
Translation by author)

*“अपना इधर Ganapati festival रहता है तो उधर रात बाहर रहते हैं मैं दोस्तों के साथ इधर सब मालूम है।”*⁴⁶¹

(Our Ganapati festival is here so that time I stay outside with my friends the whole night and everybody knows it; translation by author)

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.: 28

⁴⁵⁸ It's a competition in remembrance of Krishna's playfulness, where groups of people have to form a human tower and the person above has to break the dahi handi, the clay pot with yogurt inside.

⁴⁵⁹ Kaur 2001: 23

⁴⁶⁰ Interview with IP 1

⁴⁶¹ Interview with IP 12

This possibility was especially relevant for my interview partners that were living with their families or in a restrictive hostel because normally they would face quite strict rules and for the students originating from Maharashtra, because they and their families would have a closer connection to this regional festivity. Boys and girls enjoy the freedom of moving around in the evening by invoking the symbolic and religious value that is attached to Ganapati utsava. It would even be enough to make use of the representations of space in this time period, the actual motivation or activities wouldn't be questioned. One of my interview partners from a Marathi family in Pune would explain this strategy of strategically using dominant concepts of space and allocate a new meaning to it for realizing their own wishes.

“You know Ganesh festival? वहाँ late night तुम जाकर decoration देख सकते हो, रात भर। That time only you can go with your friends. [...] but हम जब जाते the Ganapati देखने नहीं चाहते थे, और वहीं नहीं चलो यह देखते, चलो इस ही बर अभी क्या करेंगे। जो दिमाग में था ना, यहाँ पे देखने जाते थे, बस वहीं तक. और हैं ना घर आकर, पूरा नहीं देखा, थोडा देखा कल वापस जा रहा, friends हैं और झूठ बोल, मेरे friends की mummy आ रही हैं हमारे साथ, so don't worry.”⁴⁶²

(You know Ganesh festival? There you can go out late night and see decorations the whole night. That time only you can go with your friends. [...] but when we go, we didn't want to see Ganapati, we don't go there to see it, “let's go, what are we going to do this time”. Whatever was on our mind, there we go, just that. And when we get back home, we didn't see the whole thing, only a little, so tomorrow we have to go back there, there are friends. And we lie “my friends' mother comes with us, so don't worry.” *Translation by author*)

The fact that these activities are possible and accepted by dominant actors during Ganapati festival shows how much the restrictions on spatial agency of the youth that are based on social structures, are connected to dominantly produced spatial categories and the reproduction of existing power relations. There is little difference in what young people do at 11:30 p.m. out in the city during Ganapati festival and at 11:30 p.m. at any random day of the year. They meet friends, communicate, roam around and enjoy a certain degree of

⁴⁶² IP 15 and IP 16 in the group interview with IP 5, IP 15, IP 16 and IP 17

privacy being apart from college and family. Perhaps they smoke, drink a beer, have dinner or couples hold hands and live their relationship.

During these festivals the urban night as social time-space continuum is integrated into the collective perception and categorization of legitimate and socially acceptable space. Mostly this is related to the availability of religious and cultural symbols to employ as functional justification. Apart from that it is also connected to the literal and metaphorical enlightenment of the night during this time. There are larger parts of the population on the streets strolling around, sometimes even dancing and celebrating and therefore the dark corners and lonesome streets lose their influence in the production of fear.

Two of my interview partners, two young guys from Pune, told me that the integration of the night into legitimate everyday life routine would be his wish.

“IP 15: ऐसा नहीं हना चाहिए night अलग, day अलग, night भी ऐसा यह की तरह, every time, every day, every night can be like that, and Ganapati ki time night is totally different.

IP 16: अगर protection ज्यादा मिलता है, Police से ठीक हर चौक में दो police हैं every night, full light है, enjoy, restaurants खुला रहता है।⁴⁶³

(IP 15: Day and night shouldn't be different. Night should also be like that, every time, every day, every night can be like that and in the time of Ganapati the night is totally different.

IP16: If there would be more protection, if from the Police there would be two policemen nicely at every chowk every night, full light, enjoy, the restaurants would stay open; *translation by author*)

The claim for more presence of police at night shows that even if the discourse of danger and fear at night is being largely produced by dominant actors it still represents an actual living reality of young people in Pune. To my mind these two aspects of fear are not alternative but as complimentary. It is important to work on revealing dynamics of reproduction of power relations and awareness-raising but for that it would be necessary to take feelings like fear and discomfort related to the urban night seriously.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

Concluding it could be argued that during these public participative events structures of the production of urban space at night enable exploration by young people, which normally is restricted by the same structures. By the employment and reinterpretation of social symbols that have collectively accepted values alternative activities become possible. On the one hand this agency is a clearly reproductive one, because this increase of the scope of actions is determined by already existing social, economic and political structures. By covering their actual motivation and interests with collective rituals, young people reproduce these structures and the possibilities remain limited to these festive moments. On the other hand these explorative moments could be seen as an inspiration for young people to dismantle the socially produced categories like “good day”, “bad and dangerous night” and perceive the strategy of using common symbols as opportunity for questioning and even reducing it to absurdity by using them for their own purposes. One example that would support this argumentation is if we have a look at another type of festive moments, which I have mentioned above as modern-sportive.

I was lucky to experience the victory of the Indian national Cricket team over Pakistan in the final of the Twenty 20 world cup in 2007. As many others I met up with a couple of friends in a restaurant in Deccan area in the evening to watch the game, since until now there are no big public screenings of sport events in Pune. I only saw some smaller televisions in public space located next to the statue of Ganesha, as the Ganapati festival and the Cricket world cup were overlapping. Thus this sports event was not planned as a public participative event. But after the victory of India, we went out on the street and saw that more and more young people started celebrating publicly. Young people all over the city occupied the bigger streets, started dancing, playing drums and waving the Indian flag. Within half an hour cars and bikes could barely pass and the whole streets were appropriated by a celebrating crowd mostly consisting of young people. Even if the group of people consisted mainly of young men, at least around a quarter of the celebrating people were young women. People were on the streets till around midnight and took over public space, even blocking the traffic, demonstrating what all is possible in urban space at night in Pune.

This sudden festive moment represents for me the potential of the creativity of young people in Pune.

**Figure 17: 2 photographs of street scene after
India-Pakistan final cricket match 1⁴⁶⁴**



7.2.4. Sexual exploration

“The city is a map of the hierarchy of desire, from the valorised to the stigmatised.”⁴⁶⁵

We have seen in the chapter of gender relations that the human sexuality and its social embedding in structures and institutions are crucial for the constitution of society and the production of space. These hierarchical and asymmetrical structures have a strong influence

⁴⁶⁴ <http://flickr.com/photos/draconianrain/1434113659/in/photostream/>, 23.4.2008

⁴⁶⁵ Calafia in Hubbard 2001: 250

on the possibilities of living and exploring one's sexuality and concepts like morality, desire, privacy and public spaces.

*"Notions of morality are thus branded onto the spaces of the body, the city, the region and the nation in constantly shifting and complex ways that, nonetheless, serve to order flows of desire."*⁴⁶⁶

By being of pivotal importance for the constitution of society, sexuality is also crucial for the understanding of spatial transformations and critical agency. Lefebvre argues that

*"Any revolutionary 'project' today, whether utopian or realistic, must, if it is to avoid hopeless banality, make the reappropriation of the body, in association with the reappropriation of space, into a non-negotiable part of its agenda."*⁴⁶⁷

Sexual exploration is not only important for enabling this reappropriation of space but also for young people's engagement with their identity formation. If you embed sexual exploration furthermore in a broader social context, it becomes also crucial for analyzing concepts like nation, citizenship and culture.⁴⁶⁸ I found these assumption confirmed in nearly all my interviews, where romantic relationships, intimacy, sexuality and adjunctive rules and regulations were an important topic. These issues were not only discussed as a confined subject but often connected to a broader socio-cultural context and used as illustrations for arguments about social, economic and political structures. Sometimes the interview situation was also used for asking questions about European experiences and clearing doubts about sexual practices following the assumption that I would be more open and informative about these topics because I am European.

When I use the term sexual exploration in the context of this research project, it shouldn't be understood as identical with practices of sexual intercourse. It is rather a term for the exploration of one's sexuality, which means all kind of embodied experiences and desires. This can include sexual intercourse but also diverse types of physical, mental and imaginary experiences, like dancing, dressing styles, dreams, using audiovisual media, reading etc.

⁴⁶⁶ Hubbard 2001: 59

⁴⁶⁷ Lefebvre 1991: 166/167

⁴⁶⁸ cf.: Hubbard 2001: 52/53

The crucial importance of the social construction of sexuality in discourses and production of political identities, social structures and power relations elucidates the centrality of sexual exploration for one's own identity. The engagement with the own sexuality can reproduce the above mentioned dynamics but simultaneously it carries within a great potential of questioning dominant orders, crossing boundaries and redefining broader social concepts.

In the chapter on gender relations we have already seen that sexuality is highly controlled and regulated sphere of life in Pune and relations are dominated by a heterosexual, monogamous and male dominated concept of sexuality. Therefore the spaces and opportunities of sexual exploration for young people in Pune are quite limited and sexual dissidents are highly controlled and sanctioned. Such limitations on sexual exploration and its spatial manifestations span from the illegal status of same-sex relations⁴⁶⁹, over the ban of sex education in schools that was decreed in April 2007 on behalf of the state of Maharashtra⁴⁷⁰, to the constant attempt to control and sanction "PDA – public display of affection" between young, unmarried couples from political parties, municipal authorities and the general public.

*"Like people, you know, couples and stuff like that, if you see a guy and a girl walking hand in hand on a main road, they probably will be looked down upon. You know so you need a kind of privacy or you know this place where you can be. This is the old culture, people just they don't like seeing girls and all being alone you know like that."*⁴⁷¹

The aim of this public gaze and political surveillance is to control any activity that could lead to dissident sexual activities and the loss of purity, which could consist of same-sex relationships or sexual intercourse of an unmarried couple.

If we follow Phil Hubbards argumentation and combine it with the articles of Shilpa Phadke, such activities are not limited to the individual but could furthermore question social structures and political agendas like nation and citizenship. Locating these arguments in the city and connecting it to the social production of space, sexual exploration beyond

⁴⁶⁹ Kulkarni/Kulkarni 2004: 196;

⁴⁷⁰ cf.: Kala: Sex education: how the world does it. In: Indian Express, 13.04.07; Chadha: Indian state bans sex education. In: BBC News Mumbai 03.04.2007

⁴⁷¹ Interview with IP 7

the social norms could endanger the dominant urban socio-spatial order.⁴⁷² Such activities and sexual spheres are therefore hidden and repelled into the dark corners and *clandestine or underground side of social life*⁴⁷³. These dark corners are closely connected to the socio-spatial continuum of the urban night and especially in the case of sexual exploration the night offers space for experiments and is highly suspicious at the same time. Public urban nightscapes in Pune become very important for sexual exploration because of the lack of private spaces and privacy for these often very intimate and subjective experiences.

One girl, who said she was lucky to live in her own flat so she could have some privacy with her boyfriend, gave me a good example for the creativity of young people in Pune at night.

“IP 4: I have seen people making out in the ATM and all, because nobody comes there at night. And it is AC!

R: Wow (all are laughing) but it's lighted or not. The ATM thing is with light or not?

IP 4: Yeah it is. But it's also like people are roaming at night obviously they are not very whatever as in. They won't be, they won't be looking out for curious things. They obviously know they happen.”⁴⁷⁴

Another interview partner, a young guy from Pune, gave me another example, where girls aware of the discursive construction of the night being the asylum for sexual exploration, use this images in their favour to escape the rules and regulations from their parents.

“IP 16: Tradition ऐसा है कि वह लड़की accept नहीं करती कि मैं रात भर, रात भर, दिन में सब कुछ करेगी लेकिन रात भर में रुकने के लिए तैयार नहीं। उसहे मास मालूम है जो रात। लेकिन दिन में she can agree, छले एक flat में हमें जाना, उस flat में कोई नहीं [...] लेकिन रात नहीं.”⁴⁷⁵

(The tradition is that the girl would accept to do anything the whole night, during the day she would do all but at night she wouldn't be ready to stay. She knows about night, but at day she can agree, 'let's go to the flat, in this flat there is nobody, she knows that, but not at night, translation by author)

⁴⁷² cf.:Hubbard 2001:58

⁴⁷³ Lefebvre 1991: 33

⁴⁷⁴ Interview with IP 4

⁴⁷⁵ IP 16 in Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

These accounts lead us to a connection that is quite important for this analysis, the interplay between exploration and privacy. The couple kissing in an ATM or the girl using the private flat during the day so her parents wouldn't suspect, were both looking for privacy for being able to explore.

7.2.4.1. Excursus: The importance of privacy

The claim for privacy from my interview partners was not only related to the search for opportunities for sexual exploration but more generally for exploration and retreat from dominant structures and dynamics in urban space. This privacy for young people did not necessarily connect to a wish for private space but also for privacy in public spaces, like two of my interview partners phrased it. Private spaces are available and provide a certain privacy, which is linked to economic affluence, as we have seen in our excursion to night clubs but it also stands for coffee shops and certain restaurants. The other important private space, the house, doesn't provide the required privacy for young people because of the constitution of this space based on the already analysed family structures. Thus public space in Pune becomes important for the interaction between young people and for the possibility to explore desires, interests and broader social contexts. In the last chapters we have already discuss the possibilities and restrictions of accessing these spaces but the question of ownership of the production of space doesn't end here but goes further to the alleged paradoxical idea of privacy in public spaces. My interview partners expressed this feeling of privacy and the lack of it as such:

“Privacy not exactly to you know do stuff as in not to make out and all no, but then you know you can sit on the roads and nobody will bother you.”⁴⁷⁶

Another girl put it in more spatial words:

“A place where you can actually relax and nobody bothers you, like a garden but different type you know, like wooden huts around as in you can just like go, stay there like a land where orchards are there whatever like that.”⁴⁷⁷

These wishes already show that privacy doesn't necessarily mean that they want to have a private space but rather it is a necessary feeling for exploring their own individuality, which

⁴⁷⁶ Interview with IP 4

⁴⁷⁷ Interview with IP 3

could be the basis for reflective agency. This connects well to the definition of privacy that Judith Squires chose in her work, "*Privacy is viewed as the means of achieving individualism by providing the barriers necessary to enable the individual to make uncoerced choices in life. Privacy could therefore be viewed as a mechanism for the realization of pluralism and tolerance.*"⁴⁷⁸

This possibility of making uncoerced choices for young people in Pune is curtailed by the dominant production of space and relations of reproduction. More precise that would mean the implementation of representations of space through the public gaze and controlling spatial practices of the police. Even if some of my interview partners mentioned the right to give them this required privacy, it is also the time when the public gaze and the policing activities that rather resemble a moral policing than actual implementation of laws, become more intense. This is also connected to the already discussed images of the night and constructed relation to sexual exploration. Two girls I've talked with about their experience of curtailing their privacy and actually also their citizenship, explain the situation like that:

"IP 3: Yeah so see private spaces there is nothing called private space, you mean to say like private places where you can go and you know...the couples can relax or whatever like youth can go, nothing like that not really as far as I know basically they all go partying... Or something so if you...there is couple like going in the night...it's very difficult; you cannot just go like because, basically this because of the Police and you know it's their job..."

R: Yes

IP 3: So they don't really help you

R: But so would you like to be that there, would you like to have more places like...where young people can meet or?

IP 3: Yeah I wouldn't mind like if you know like there shouldn't be any restrictions on this. You know Police like patrouilling in the night and they won't let you be...so that shouldn't happen and may be yeah they should be...around where we can just go and relax in the night because that's the only time when you are actually free, I mean now you don't do...in the night."⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁸ Squires in Hubbard 2001: 65

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with IP 3

“IP: Sometimes even police people are scary if you are roaming as in alone, like one day I was standing right across the street here with my boyfriend and this police person came ok, it was twelve, one in the night ok he came and he stopped and five minutes none of us said anything. We were looking at him, he is looking at us and then finally he is like "क्या कर रहे हैं यहाँ पर (What are you doing here?; translation by author)" and we were like what will he do, will he put us in jail just because we are standing there. Ok cause not like that, we didn't do anything wrong but to start they might do anything and later on ok we are sorry ok go and all. Ok so we were scared and then he goes like "क्या कर रहे हैं यहाँ पर? (What are you doing here?; translation by author)" and then we are like "sorry I live here" and then he is like "जलदी घर जाओ (Go home fast; translation by author)" and we are like "नहीं जाना (We don't go; translation by author)" and he is like "जलदी जाओ ऐसे अच्छा नहीं होता (Go fast, like this [being outside the house; author's note] nothing good will ever happen; translation by author)" and then he went.”⁴⁸⁰

Now we have explored the particular intersections between privacy, public space, urban night and implications for (sexual) exploration. Before we analyse a little more the role of reproduction and transformation in this context, I would like to look at one more example for sexual exploration my interview partners brought up.

The social structures not only limit the interaction and sexual exploration between young, unmarried couples and control the female sexuality to maintain the concept of purity; they also represent a purely heterosexual concept of legitimate sexuality.

“The social and cultural pressures against same-sex relationships, and the insistence on the norm of heterosexual marriage, is particularly strong in India, with a corresponding stigmatizing of MSM [Men having sex with men; author's note] activities. The negative attitude toward same-sex relations and acts is to some extent codified in the Indian Penal Code, in terms of which sodomy is punishable with fines and imprisonment. This old legal enactment (a carry-over from the colonial, British legal framework dating from 1861), does

⁴⁸⁰ Interview with IP 4

not name 'heterosexual acts' as such, but right activists in India argue that the existence of the anti-sodomy law leads to harassment of MSMs by the police and others."⁴⁸¹

So any kind of exploration of same-sex relations and homosexuality is not only socially but also legally condemned, which makes this sphere of urban life discursively and materially hidden in the dark corners of the city. Even if there is no public sphere accepted by dominant forces in the city for homosexual activities, public space plays a major role for it. In the case of homosexual exploration there are not even the private spaces like nightclubs, certain coffee shops and restaurants or shared flats available.

A young guy from a rural part of Maharashtra, who came to Pune for his studies and lives in a shared flat with his friends from college, told me about his experiences of homosexual exploration and what this meant for him and his life. Every once in a while he would go out in the evening to particular places in the city, mostly around train or bus stations, and go for cruising.⁴⁸² My interview partner told me that he was quite aware of the fact that he belongs to a very small minority of people, who explore the night in such a way and that this activity doesn't relate to any dominant representation of space or spatial practice in Pune.

*"Mine is like, Pune is like, change into something, something ---like---something else, not like Pune. Like general Pune, like religious Pune, it's not like that. It converts into something like what. Rubbish you can say, rubbish [...] Here in Pune after a certain time, like after eleven or twelve everything is closed maximum people like 80%, 85% people they go to their bed, to sleep, take rest, they prepare for next day and 20% or 30% they people do come out, they want to enjoy the nightlife. You see, they are in parties, they are in Pubs and few like me they are like cruising somewhere."*⁴⁸³

It was interesting to see that he judged his own experience of this exploration as rubbish, because it wouldn't fit in the dominant social structures in India and he didn't want to be and perceive himself as sexual dissident.

⁴⁸¹ Kulkarni/Kulkarni 2004: 196

⁴⁸² Cruising is a term commonly used describing male homosexual encounters in public spaces in a city. In Pune men meet at public toilets or around train and bus stations and try to find a partner for sexual intercourse. It is a practice that is strongly based on dissident and underground representations of space, which are necessary for a subtle understanding without explicit public display of intentions and interests.

⁴⁸³ Interview with IP 14

“IP 14: Rubbish means---is this life? No actually this is not a good thing to explore but I feel, even I feel bad that's why I don't want to enter in this---actually I entered but no, I want to come out.

R: You said that---it's not good, you know, like it's rubbish so it's, you feel that it's a bad thing what is going on like that?

IP 14: in the Indian view

R: I want your view, I don't want Indian view, your personal view.

IP: I enjoy, I enjoy that sex--I enjoy it, but---there is something in my heart that which makes me out from them, who tells me "No [...], don't go".⁴⁸⁴

This conflictive encounter of his sexual desire encountering his socialization is crucial for understanding the role this exploration and the implications this has for reproduction of socio-spatial structures and the potential transformation. Following his desire, crossing boundaries and engaging in dissident activities in public space could create the possibility for a critical questioning of social structures in Pune but it also could remain only an individual, temporary and self-sanctioned act. In the case of my interview partner his self-perception was rather to be a productive member of society following the rules of social code of conduct and fulfil the system of reproduction.

“For example, like as you know that I'm now running 27, 26 is over, I stand to marry. People are worried about me. If I continue with this relation [a sexual relation with his male flatmate, author's note], which right now from one and a half years I've followed this relation. Continue with this like the taste and the feel of body or skin, it might change. It might happen that if a girl sleeping with me, I don't like, that should not be happen. [...] We are Indian, we have certain rules and regulations that we have to follow in the society that we cannot go beyond this. We have to go between the margins, which are to not cross.”⁴⁸⁵

Nine months after our interview he got married with a girl from his home town, finished his studies and now they live together in a flat in the outskirts of Pune. He has given up on all

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ Interview with IP 14

his cruising activities and stopped seeing his flat mate he had an intimate relationship with for nearly two years.

I think this story of my interview partner is crucial for our understanding of the role of sexual exploration of reproductive and transformative agency and the relevant dimensions of space in various ways. On the one hand it shows that desire, as authors like Henri Lefebvre and Steve Pile stated, can be a driving force in crossing boundaries of spatial practices and representations of space. New meanings are attached to certain spaces based on alternative symbols and non-verbalized rituals that exist beyond the dominantly produced categories of space. In these categories spaces for sexual exploration would be defined as dark, dangerous or ostracized but through their agency, people like my interview partner change the representation of these spaces and could find the fulfilment of certain needs and desires.

On the other hand it is also an example for the complexity of acts and their motivations. Even if this homosexual exploration carries within the potential for critique of the dominant production of space, it does not necessarily have this result. An actor like my interview partner can undertake explorative spatial acts and still stick to dominant categories and representations of space. Considering our very intense interview I wouldn't argue that this means that there was no kind of personal development or reflective agency through these new experiences. In his stories I could see that his perception of sexuality changed because he experimented with his own limits, but at the end of the day he decided to follow a different path.

Sexual exploration, especially in conjunction with public space like in Pune, is a very complex dimension of agency because it interlinks intimacy and individual experience with social significance and power relations.

In most of my interviews and observation sexual exploration stayed at a very individual level and was barely connected in an explicit way with collective action or broader engagement with the social meaning of sexual exploration and the structural limits they encounter. Especially the second aspect was not so much part of my sample, but it is becoming more and more important in public discourses in India. Stimulated by incidents of moral policing by different right-wing political actors, like the raiding of nightclubs we have already analysed in the chapter on political structure, the discussions on gender roles,

possibilities of exploration and right to privacy became a central topic in Indian media and for Indian civil society. A very recent example for this development would be the Pink Chaddi⁴⁸⁶ campaign⁴⁸⁷ that started February 2009 in Bangalore and other big cities in India. It can be seen as a reaction from civil society to recent attacks against women in public space and nightclubs mostly by right wing extremists claiming that a certain dressing style or going to nightclubs were against Indian culture and the decency and purity of women. Especially one incident in a nightclub in Mangalore, Karnataka in January 2009 made waves among civil society in India. Activists from the Sri Ram Sena⁴⁸⁸ were entering a pub and assaulting women, who were drinking alcohol and supposedly indecently dressed.⁴⁸⁹ The Pink Chaddi campaign started by “A Consortium of Pub-Going, Loose and Forward Women” is mostly organized through digital medias with Blogs and Facebook groups. One of the activities was to call people all over the country to send pink underpants to the Sri Ram Sena office per post as a Valentine’s Day present.

Figure 18: Illustration used by the Pink-Chaddi Campaign in January 2009⁴⁹⁰



⁴⁸⁶ Chaddi (Hindi)= underpants

⁴⁸⁷ <http://thepinkchaddicampaign.blogspot.com/>, 23.05.2009

⁴⁸⁹ cf.: Times of India 26.01.2009: Women assaulted at Mangalore pub.

⁴⁹⁰ <http://thepinkchaddicampaign.blogspot.com/>, 23.05.2009

More activities using public space as a possibility for open debate and protest against dominant forces of the production of space were held on the weekend of March 7-8, 2009 in Bangalore. These activities consisted of awareness campaigns against moral policing and the event “*Take Back the Night, Take Back Our Streets*” where public space was used for gathering, public performances and video projections after 9 p.m.⁴⁹¹

I won't go more into detail of these activities, but I just wanted to show current developments in urban India that are closely related to this research project. It would be very interesting to conduct further research on the intersection of gender relations, sexual exploration, public space and political activism.

Until now we have witnessed very little critical engagement with social and sexual exploration and most experiences that were discussed during my field research remained very individual and temporary. Before we jump to conclusions I would like to include one very interesting example for explorative and reflective agency, which uses art in a fruitful way for crossing boundaries and appropriating spaces.

7.2.5. After 12 – A short film exploring Pune at night

During my field research I had the luck to meet a group of students of Digital Arts, who were producing a short film called “After 12”. This group, who were only guys, became my interview- and research partners and I explored with them the idea, production and reception of this short film. All of them were Marathis and the two, who wrote the script, directed and produced the movie, have grown up and always lived in Pune. With this short film they wanted to explore and display a different side of Pune - Pune after midnight.

This film, its inspiration, production and perception, offered a great opportunity for my research because it is an example for a creative and questioning approach towards urban space by its inhabitants. Therefore in this chapter we will analyse the individual and collective significance of this movie for reproduction and possible transformation of dominant socio-spatial structures.

Since a movie is a medium of communication and artistic product, they are two important layers of analysis. On the one hand the film itself, its story and composition and picture language. On the other hand the production process, which includes the idea, the

⁴⁹¹ cf.: <http://thepinkchaddicampaign.blogspot.com/>, 23.05.2009

motivation, the challenges and finally also the reception of the movie. Since we want to understand this film as example for agency of Youth in Pune our main focus will lie on the second layer. The film itself is important in so far as to understand the realities these young people engage with and why the reception was crucial for the potential of transformation. So let's start with a short synopsis of the movie and then proceed with the analysis of the "making of".

In the movie a young software engineer from Hyderabad misses his train on his way to Mumbai and has to stay in Pune till the next train leaves in the morning. He decides to use this spare time to get to know the city he has already heard plenty of good things about like "*City of religion*" and "*Oxford of the East*". During this journey he has an insinuating encounter with a gay guy in the public toilet, gets an offer from a foreign prostitute, sees gay people engaged in sexual activities and gets a sexual offer from his riksha driver. These sexual encounters are new to him and he is shocked and surprised to find them so open and barefaced in urban space. The city turns out to be different from what he expected. These experiences inspire him to think about his own role in this journey, his perception and desires that might be connected to the actual situation he finds himself involved. The pictures of the film are accompanied by the voice of the leading actor narrating his experiences and in this he says "*Does this journey have a destination or is this an unconscious dream coming true? [...] No, it seems to be true, these are my unconscious dreams, suppressed feelings, lured desires, restless identities.*"⁴⁹²

After the 9.25 minutes of the movie and the journey of this young men he gets back to the train station and concludes his night in Pune with following words: "*This is truly a journey, from the unknown to the know, from sleep to awakening, from dark to light [...] Farewell to Pune and farewell to my missed chances to losing my only virginity.*"⁴⁹³

The idea to produce this movie emerged among my research partner after an evening of roaming around, inspired by new encounters and discoveries of sexual realities.

The two guys that mainly carried out this idea told me about the situation as follows:

„JP 19: It was fantastic. It was a good coincidence. I don't know what to say, it was luck or we don't know what to say [...] We had gone out at night and we were just roaming, so we

⁴⁹² Daware 2007

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

had some food. We were just coming back, we were just talking about this [about the topic of gays in Pune; author's note]. [...]

IP 16: You know, that period I'm working with some gays for the drama. So this was hot topic that time.

IP19: So we started thinking about something so since we are from this field so we thought that let's make a movie. That was just a fluc. Ok that, we had just thrown some ball in the air. So we are thinking that ऐसे बनाते हैं (we do it like that; translation by author). So we started thinking about the title for the [movie], so this must be the viewpoint. यह ऐसा होना चाहिए (This we want like that; translation by author). This scene we will take, that scene we will take so all the imagination started.

IP 16: कुछ catchy फिर दिमाग में कि यार "After 12", रात के बारह बजे क्या होता है पुणे में. पुणे वैसा आप सोच रहा हैं, ऐसा नहीं है. ⁴⁹⁴

(We had something catchy in mind, like 'man' "After 12", what is happening in Pune after twelve o'clock. Pune is different from what you think; *translation by author*)

This last sentence "Pune is not like you think it would be" summarizes their motivation quite well. They wanted to play with discourses about space in Pune, with sexual norms and bring the clandestine side of social life to light.

They were very much aware of the dominant structures that limit possibilities and sanction attempts of sexual exploration when they decided to shoot this movie. The mockery of and rebellion against these structures were most certainly one of their major aims. Partly it was also an attempt to show that they can move beyond, that they actually are inhabitants and producers of this city.

The movie is about a heterosexual, middle class man that explores spaces that are most certainly not part of his everyday life and spatial routines. They are socially sanctioned and have the symbolic meaning of spaces that should stay in the dark. He experiences that space at night is differently constituted than during the day and discourses and concepts change.

⁴⁹⁴IP 16 and IP 19 in Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

That puts a question mark on his perception and spatial socialisation. The light goes off and terms of fear, danger and moral corruption are closely linked to certain areas. The protagonist explores these spaces driven by “*unconscious dreams*” and unknown desires, which means that he slowly starts to overcome the limits of dominant representations of space.

It could be criticized that my interview partners were also reproducing dominant concepts of spaces at night and the interconnection with sexuality. They showed a very one-sided perspective, which led to overemphasizing the night as space for sexual dissidents.

The actors of the dark corners of Pune at night are portrayed rather as objects to be explored than as subjects with their own perspective and ability to voice opinions. This exaggeration and social voyeurism is connected to their motivation of making this movie. The own exploration of unknown spaces and the wish to shake up their narrow-minded environment has strongly influenced their choice of scenes and storyline.

“... we were so excited to know all the new things, new things we got to know every time, कि ऐसा भी होता है, वैसा भी होता है। [...] so कल अगर बोले कि आरे यह हो गया, वह pub खुल गया, यह हो गया that pub you know about that disco, that यार सब पता रहते. But at such point of stage when you are staying in Pune and you don't know anything. Maybe one of your neighbours is very big terrorist and you got to know that after 50 years. [...] He was a very big terrorist so what, what kind of excitement, what kind of shock you will get. ऐसा हमारे मन में कि इतना time हो गया, we had spent our, all childhood, teenager year and we had no idea about this all. And we all got to know this during this film. So we were really very excited and we were really eager, more eager to search more about facts, do more”⁴⁹⁵ (...we were so excited to know all the new things, new things we got to know every time, that it can also be like this and that [...] so tomorrow if somebody says ‘hey man’ this happened, this pub open, this happened. That pub you know about that disco, that ‘man’ we know everything. But at such point of stage when you are staying in Pune and you don't know anything. Maybe one of your neighbours is very big terrorist and you got to know that after 50 years. [...] He was a very big terrorist so what, what kind of excitement, what

⁴⁹⁵ IP 19 in group interview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

kind of shock you will get. That was in our mind, how much time has gone. We had spent our, all childhood, teenager year and we had no idea about this all. And we all got to know this during this film. So we were really very excited and we were really eager, more eager to search more about facts, do more. *Translation by author*)

The main focus is on the personal development of the protagonist of the movie because it is the artistic figure of the students, who underwent a similar process while making this movie. They also followed curiosity, imagination and desire to explore the “dark” side of Pune, to experience spaces they have never seen or felt before.

„Actually the thing is that we were very unknown to this thing. So we were, we got attracted over here. Our curiosity, it craved a lot that we wanted this thing to happen. We were really unknown to this thing and we got to know many things, many facts about this. पहले हमें भी गैस-वैस कुछ पता नहीं था। (Before that we also didn’t know anything about gays and stuff; translation by author) All things we used to.“⁴⁹⁶

“IP 16: Means मालूम था gays लेकिन मन में चिढ़ाता, ay gays यार shit, क्या interest यार, एक लड़के को लड़के में क्या interest है यार.

(It means we knew that gays exist but in our mind we were mocking them, like ay gays ‘man’ shit, what interest would there be ‘man’, what interest would there be in a guy, in any guy, ‘man’”; translation by author)

IP 19: But when we got to know the facts that you are really comfortable with it, we were staying with those people.

IP 16: ya, it's not

IP 19: now it's very common

R: so actually also you changed

IP 16: ya lots of

R: during the movie

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

*IP 19: we changed a lot, we changed completely*⁴⁹⁷

A very important aspect in this personal process was that they didn't just claim cognitive space by making a movie, but they also connected to the material-physical part and became visible, because every space that is represented artistically in the movie was experienced in reality.

They entered a sphere that was not part of their daily routines and repetitive acting. They left their structured space with well known patterns of action and positioned themselves in new relations to the socio-spatial order and spatial actors. This process was creative agency for them because they met with alternatively structured spaces with own routines like the "cruising space" of Men who have Sex with Men, or the red light area, that could even be termed as institutionalized space.

Doing that and putting the movie to the public domain - it was accessible on *Orkut*, the internet community and *YouTube*, a digital public domain as well - they included even a broader public than themselves and the people that saw them shooting it.

Media of communication are therefore a valuable tool of reflective agency because they provide easily the connection between the individual and collective sphere, which is often missing.

One important step in this process was that they confronted their friends and family with this movie and took once more a stand towards the social order they are embedded in and even dependent on. Especially the circumstances that they are students and part of the Youth, not yet married and economically dependent limits their scope of action and they did lay themselves open to attack with this movie.

"IP19: Ah my friends were shocked. I'm really telling you that they were shocked so much and they tease so much [...] They have not gone through, they don't know anything from this field and all. [...]"

IP 9: You are men, you are studying and all that things. तो तुमहे क्यों उनके साथ में रहना है? क्यों तुम ऐसा role किया? तुमहे. तु भी हिजडा है (So why do you have to stay with them? Why did you do such a role? You are also a hijra; translation by author) [...]"

⁴⁹⁷ Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

IP 19: And they are not from that field and they don't know all this. So they get shocked...’’⁴⁹⁸

In our interview and our interactions it seemed that these negative reactions and state of shock, they've caused were rather strengthening their position and conviction that addressing these topics openly is important.

“IP19: Right now we are very free and we don't have any problems expressing us, ourselves and our friends. That no we don't have any problem having gay friends. So what? My friend is gay, so 'big deal'.’’’⁴⁹⁹

Interesting to see was that these negative reactions did not necessarily stop dynamics of change even if perhaps it was not the change that would be understood as social innovation or transformation like as raising awareness or dismantling prejudices.

For example, for the parents of one of the students, the experience of watching this movie, their son produced, was motivation to cross long-established boundaries. Seeing their son engaging in the clandestine side of social life, interacting with gay men and prostitutes and the fear about the honour and reputation of her son, made it possible for them to make compromises and open up at a less extreme level.

“IP 19: But now, when now, at first they told me no eleven, eleven o'clock is too late. Not even eleven, you should be at home at nine thirty, nine also. But when, after I showed them the movie, I told them that I'm going to party, they said nothing. They just said, the only things, don't

IP 9: Don't get into this all

(Laughter, author's note)

R: Don't smoke

(Laughter)

IP 19: They said that

IP 16: Don't get any girls

IP 19: Don't drink and please don't smoke. They said so calmly.’’’⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁸ Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

⁴⁹⁹ Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

⁵⁰⁰ Groupinterview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

“This movie has lot of miracles for me at least. My mom has got so open. The next week, when I showed the movie, the next week she was talking with me about my marriage. I was saying ‘what’? (shocked voice, author’s note) I was pretty much shocked that शादी, शादी? (Wedding, wedding? Translation by author). ‘अभी तु इतना open हुए (now you became so open; translation by author), so what is the problem for us to get open’ (referring to his mother’s statement, author’s note).”⁵⁰¹

To my mind this situation shows very well the different dimensions of agency and the gap between motivation and perception of certain acts. It is very complex sphere moving dialectically between individuality and collectivism, reproduction and transformation and intention and reception. These processes are not linear causalities of each other but rather dynamic and relational processes on different scales and created and influenced by a variety of actors. The aim should be to take individual attempts of critical engagement with society seriously, support potential and try to bridge it with collective action.

⁵⁰¹ IP 19 in group interview with IP 9, IP 16 and IP 19

8. Concluding thoughts

Before starting with the concluding thoughts of this thesis, we have to recall the aim and design of this research project to realize which conclusions are possible to draw.

The project was an explorative research for understanding the relations between space, society and individuals within the production and reproduction of urban space in Pune with two special foci. Both foci consider a particular intersection of time and space, first we looked at socio-cultural, political and economic processes since the New Economic Policy 1991 and their historical embedding. Secondly the concrete analysis of the dialectic of socio-spatial structures and agency in Pune was located in the urban night.

In the first part of this thesis we started from the theoretical foundation for understanding that space is socially produced within a specific historic-geographic mode of production. That is why the focused analysis of the social, economic and political transformations in India since 1991 and the specific consequences for Pune were highly relevant for this research. In these last twenty years India went through major economic, political and social transformations, in which continuity of historically developed structures came together with dynamics of change. These transformations were not started but marked by the New Economic Policy in 1991. The political, economic and social regulation system and spatial practices developed towards a more liberal, globally interconnected regime of capital accumulation and this had major impact on Indian cities, particularly on the big metropolitan areas, including Pune. The liberalization process was deliberately urban and focused on cities as the centres for India becoming a global player. Furthermore the process of rescaling and reregulation of the political sphere increased the importance of the urban, local scale in cooperation with the global market and lead to a partial withdrawal of the national state. In this process the city of Pune became more and more conceptualized as young, cosmopolitan, economically booming urban space and spatial practices of actors in the city got connected or rather subordinated to this dominant representation of space.

In the first part of the empirical chapter the analysis of the restructuring of the labour market and the system of higher education concretized this argument. Investment activities are supporting the global integration of Pune and fostering this concept, which gets translated into marketing activities and political decisions as well. Despite the

omnipresence of this representation of Pune, it is not embedded in the collective realities of the bigger part of the population in the city, which is often marginalized by this fragmented and polarized development.

These processes are connected to the emergence of new spatial actors, like private developers and multinational companies, and a reorganisation of the political arena. The political and financial responsibility of the urban local authorities in Pune, the PMC, is increasing and the pressures from the globalized market as well. The analysis in this thesis gave some indications that there is a lack of holistic and sustainable planning for the city and the chances emerging from this rescaling of the political sphere for more participation and collective decision making are often sacrificed for sustaining the image and economic position of Pune in the global market. Unfortunately it seems that the most influential political oppositions, which also represents students and young people and actually engages consciously with urban space to influence the production and conceptualization of space, are organisations from the right end of the political sphere, like the BJYM - Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha.

The gaining of political strength of right wing actors is among other political dynamics connected to the emergence and the growth of other social actors like the new middle class. This leads to the point of analysis of this thesis that these transformation cannot be understood as purely economic or political but also social. In the Indian context the concept and the reality of the new middle class, which is nearly always understood as urban phenomenon, gained importance in the public discourse and academic writing and is a symbol for the social transformation. This social group is characterized by consumption pattern, aspirations and lifestyle and in Pune they are often perceived as the embodiment and spatial manifestation of the young, urban and cosmopolitan city through their spatial practices and presence in public and semi-public spaces.

Big part of my interview partners considered themselves to be part of the (new) middle class and the interest of this thesis was to go into their concrete life realities in Pune to critically examine if they are really the “winners of the game” of the liberalisation paradigm and to see if that means that they actually have any influence on the production of space or if they are merely reproducing the existing structures and fitting their aspirations, needs and ideas to this dominant mode.

During the exploration of relevant social structures for students in Pune, we could see that the representation and economic and political strategies of the young, cosmopolitan, globally oriented Pune is not necessarily connected to the life realities, needs and desires of these young people.

Despite the attribute of being a young city, the role of the Youth mostly consists of being the executives of the Indian development towards becoming a global player without getting the chance to actually engage with the production of space and actively shaping the process. This is also connected to the still very influential family structures, in which the role of students and young people is still located outside of the decision-making process. One example for the importance of family and community for the spatial agency of students in Pune was the clear differentiation among students according to their living situation. Students living with their family faced a much more limited space of manoeuvre concerning using urban space at night than young people living in a shared flat or hostels.

Despite the attribute of being a cosmopolitan city, we encountered in the analysis the relationship and difference between migrant and local students as highly conflictive, politically instrumentalized and decisive for the spatial practices in the city. In the case of Pune, cosmopolitan would rather connect to the idea of global orientation and manifest itself in consumption patterns, job opportunities and development of new leisure time and entertainment spaces. Very few people have access to this global orientation and experience of a particular kind of internationality and a majority of my interview partners, despite being part of the middle class, were only able to afford that very occasionally.

A more detailed analysis of this complex relationship between cultural diversity, cosmopolitan lifestyle and global orientation of the economic and political sphere would be very interesting for further research projects in Pune.

Last but not least, the analysis also showed that the contemporary mode of production of urban space in Pune and India and the role of young students in this process is highly gendered. Gender relations structure space and spatial practices and the body of the woman is arena of struggle and negotiation processes about social change in the city.

After summarizing once more the economic, political and social elements that structure the production of space in Pune and the spatial practice of students, we still have not figured

out where to find the reflective and transformative potential of young people's agency. Or to speak with the words of Henri Lefebvre, we haven't found the lived space of the Youth. The account of the historic-geographical setting and the socio-spatial structures was that detailed because the empirical analysis of this research showed that there are very few examples of actual political engagement, critical questioning or creation of alternatives by students in Pune within the social production of space. It seems that in urban India the capitalist mode of production serves its purpose very well in fragmenting society and space, reinforcing people's alienation from their needs and desires and fostering the superiority of everyday life routine, hegemonically produced concepts of space over the lived and appropriated spaces.

At this point I must highlight once more that this research project didn't focus on organized political opposition, social movements and social activism and I don't want to underestimate the role and relevance of these forces. But while looking at the everyday life and subjective life realities of average punter, or even more advantaged groups like my interview partners there are little traces of appropriation or ownership of space and its production process and few examples for the lived space of the Youth.

The closer look at these few examples led to two major concepts that are crucial for middle class students and youth in general concerning the possibility of ownership and appropriation of the production of space.

On the one hand there is exploration, which means leaving the predetermined paths of spatial practices and crossing material and conceptual boundaries. Both these types of boundaries are crucial for an explorative process to invoke transformative potential. Only crossing a material-physical boundary, which means to deviate from everyday life spatial practices, could be unintentional or perceived as wrong by the actor himself. This would make the experience most probably nonrecurring and sanctioned. Therefore it is important that exploration includes the crossing of conceptual boundaries and deviance from representations of space. It enables a critical examination of the own agency and a conscious questioning of the dominant mode of production of space. This argument applies especially when we take the subjective perspective into consideration and personal development as requirement for critical examination of social relations. When we look at the city level and the urban society as a whole, even physical presence, may it be for

whichever reason, beyond determined spaces, can have a certain affect on social dynamics. In these cases the body as element of spatial constitution plays a major role.

The other concept, which is important for a deeper understanding of social realities of students in Pune, is privacy. Privacy is not necessarily connected to private spaces but rather indicates the possibility of making uncoerced decisions in a particular temporal and spatial frame. Uncoerced in this context means the absence of external social control, need for legitimation and adjunctive sanctions by dominant spatial actors like the family, right wing political parties or the police. This experience of privacy can be understood as crucial for the possibility of connecting to one's own needs and desires and enables explorative practices. This understanding also marks the difference to concepts like seclusion, segregation or private space. Privacy can in this context be rather a precondition for critical engagement with the dominant socio-spatial order and appropriation of space than a danger to it.

Before we look at the social relevance of these two concepts, two small remarks are necessary to make. First of all, the main group, on which this analysis is based, is part of the middle class. They enjoy a certain social and economic security and are involved in institutions of higher education. That definitely influenced their way defining problems and difficulties concerning their embedding in the production of space. Secondly, developing these two concepts does not mean that all my interview partners and in general young people in the city are actually motivated to engage with the production of space or to transform anything towards a more democratic and collective space. The emergence of the new middle class and their spaces in the city and the more liberal and global economic orientation of the city are rather based on the seclusion from the rest of the society than the collective social upward mobility. Therefore I cannot assume that young students in Pune are necessarily interested in changing the system, which might include compromises from their side as well. These points should be understood as general remarks and further research on this would be an interesting for following projects.

Despite these explanatory notes about exploration and privacy as crucial elements for the existence and creation of representational spaces for the Youth, these two concepts are socially relevant for the production of space in the city.

For this potential social relevance it is important to understand that in this research, the claims for the right of privacy and exploration were mostly concerning individual experiences and agency and not a socially collective scale. The connection between the individual potential of becoming a producer of space through dynamics of exploration and privacy and the collective and societal level is crucial for the relevance and influence of these two concepts. This connection is missing in most cases that were analysed in this research and therefore any transformative agency remained at the individual level, which is not only a practical but also a conceptual problem. The question that is also missing in Lefebvre's theory of space is how to relate the field of appropriated needs and desires can be actually transformed into concepts of space, which overcome the hegemonic and technocrat character of representations of space. What does this mean for the field of urban planning, policy making and economic development? How can the potential at the individual level be disclosed, developed and fostered to become relevant for the broader political and economic context?

One important condition for this process would be the actual public awareness of the first argument Lefebvre states that space is a social product. As much as this very basic idea has gained foothold in social sciences and at times even in planning practices, the majority inhabitants of a city, the users of space are not consciously aware of the idea of urban space as dynamic and relational product of social, economic and political processes. Obviously this situation is caused by the superiority of spatial practices, representations of space over representational space in the current mode of production in India.

Therefore new spaces for Youth emerging within the liberalising economy mean only a diversification of option how to spend leisure time for a certain part of the population and not a substantial change of public engagement with space. Due to increasing socio-spatial inequality and fragmentation of urban spaces, the economic transformation in Pune makes it even harder to grasp and understand the bigger picture.

The process of rescaling that is taking place in the political-administrative dimension of the socio-spatial order of Pune could carry within some potential for the above mentioned necessity of public awareness of the production of space. But this potential must be disclosed and used by public authorities, who still have the responsibility for processes of urban development planning.

Hence when it comes to the social potential of the lived space of the Youth, there three main arguments that derived from the analysis of this thesis. First strategies and possibilities of enabling privacy and exploration for young people are crucial for their critical engagement with urban space in Pune. Secondly these individual experiences of temporal and spatial constellations for uncoerced decisions of one's own agency and the crossing of material and conceptual boundaries has to be further embedded in collective practices and institutional arrangements to achieve political and spatial significance. Last but not least a precondition and possible outcome of this circular and dynamic process is public awareness of space not being given but socially produced. This production process is multidimensional including social, political and economic structures and has to be understood and analysed holistically. This approach might make the situation for users of space more complex but on the other hand it empowers and makes them capable of acting, it is the possibility to transform themselves from users to producers of space.

This is particularly important for middle class students in Pune because, as I have already mentioned in the remarks on the social relevance of the concepts, they belong to a group of society with purchasing power and access to education and will probably obtain certain position of decision making about the social, political and economic development of Pune and India. The holistic understanding of the production and reproduction processes of space in combination with experiences of privacy and exploration connected to the broader social collective carries within the potential for them being producers of space without fostering inequality and socio-spatial segregation.

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Zusammenfassung

Diese Arbeit basiert auf einer interdisziplinären und qualitativen Forschung zur sozialen Produktion und Reproduktion von urbanem Raum in Pune, Indien.

Pune, die zweitgrößte Stadt des indischen Bundestaates Maharashtra, gilt in Indien als Zentrum für Höhere Bildung und wird oftmals auch "Oxford of the East" genannt. In den letzten zwanzig Jahre erlebte die Stadt außerdem einen ökonomischen Boom, enormes Bevölkerungswachstum und Wachstum der so genannten neuen Mittelklasse. Die Stadt wurde eines der symbolischen Zentren für das liberalisierte und globalisierte Indien. Ausgehend von der Theorie zur sozialen Produktion von Raum nach Henri Lefebvre, ist das Ziel dieser Arbeit diese Bilder der Stadt kritisch zu hinterfragen und ein tieferes Verständnis der Zusammenhänge zwischen Raum, Gesellschaft und Individuum im heutigen Pune zu erreichen. Besonders die sozialen, politischen und ökonomischen Entwicklungen seit der New Economic Policy 1991, die als Zäsur in der indischen Entwicklung wird, werden dabei analysiert, um zu verstehen, was soziale Produktion und Reproduktion in diesem spezifischen Kontext bedeutet, welche Machtverhältnisse zum Tragen kommen und was das für eine urbane Gesellschaft bedeutet.

Um die historisch-geographische Einbettung von der Produktion von Raum in dieser Analyse zu berücksichtigen, konzentriert sich des weiteren ein Kapitel dieser Arbeit auf die historische Entwicklung Punes seit dem Maratha Königreich bis heute.

Jedoch nicht nur die Veränderungen auf der städtischen Ebene sind relevant für das tiefere Verständnis von der Produktion von Raum, sondern auch das Zusammenspiel von globaler, nationaler und lokaler Ebene. Daher beschäftigt sich die Arbeit in einem nächsten Schritt mit den nationalen Entwicklungen in einer zunehmend globalisierten Welt, die maßgeblich zu der liberalen Transformation Indiens und seinen Städten beigetragen haben.

Im zweiten Teil der Arbeit wird diese theoretisch, historisch-geographisch und multiskalare Analyse von dem sozialen Produktionsprozess von Raum mit der Ebene des Individuums in Beziehung gesetzt, indem subjektive Lebensrealitäten von StudentInnen in Pune näher betrachtet werden.

Ausgehend von der qualitativen Feldforschung, die aus einem Methodenmix aus qualitativen Interviews, teilnehmender Beobachtung und Analyse audio-visueller Medien

bestand, werden die, für diese Lebensrealitäten relevanten, sozial-räumlichen Strukturen in Pune analysiert und verschiedene Formen von räumlichem Handeln junger StudentInnen identifiziert. Diese kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Dialektik von Strukturen und Handeln in Pune, ist in der urbane Nacht, die als spezifische zeiträumliche Konstellation verstanden werden kann, angesiedelt. Verschiedene Beispiele für reproduktives Handeln als auch kritisches Hinterfragen und Potentiale zu transformativem Handeln von StudentInnen in Pune werden im letzten Teil der Arbeit erforscht. Das Ziel ist es zu verstehen wie Individuen und Gruppen, die spezifische und vorherrschende Form der Produktion von Raum wahrnehmen und damit umgehen.

Summary

This thesis is an interdisciplinary and qualitative research on the social production and reproduction of urban space in Pune, India.

Pune, the second biggest city of the Indian State of Maharashtra, is known to be a centre of Higher Education, known as “Oxford of the East”. For the last twenty years the city has furthermore experienced an economic boom, demographic growth and a transformation towards becoming one of the leading centres for India on the way of becoming a global player.

By taking the theory of the production of space by Henri Lefebvre as a starting point, this thesis aims at critically question these images of the city and understanding the interrelations between society, space and individuals in contemporary Pune. Focusing on the developments since the New Economic Policy in 1991, it analyses political, economic and socio-cultural processes in urban Pune to comprehend the mode of production and reproduction of space with its power relations in this specific context and the significance for this process for the urban society.

For a deeper understanding of the historic-geographic dimension and multiscalarity of the production of space, one chapter of thesis focuses of the historic development of Pune since the precolonial times and another chapter on the broader transformation processes since 1991 at the national level.

To relate society and space to the individual level, in the second part the thesis focuses on subjective life realities of students in Pune. Through a mix of qualitative methods, as problem-centred interviews, expert interviews, participant observation and analysis of audiovisual media, this research not only identifies relevant socio-spatial structures that produce space but also looks at different forms of agency of students in Pune. Through the critical analysis of the dialectic of structure and agency in the urban night of Pune, which is the specific social space this research focuses on, the aim is to understand how students perceive and act upon the dominant mode of production of space. Examples for agency that reproduces the existing structures as well as potential for critical questioning and transformative agency are shown.

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