

Stereotyping in Bollywood A detailed analysis of select Hindi films

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Abstract:

Stereotype in film theory is a fixed and simplified characterization that is constantly repeated to gain acceptance by mainstream audiences, usually “marked” by exaggerated physical features (through makeup), costuming, and acting style. These signs act as signifiers of difference and inferiority. Stereotype's draw on one narrow aspect of a social type, amplify it and thoroughly invest a character with this characteristic, so that the character's entire motivation is understood through this narrow lens. Because this representation is one-dimensional, it tends to label the type as either “good” (tolerated by the mainstream) or “bad” (feared and/or hated by the mainstream).

But stereotypes are not simply used to contain non-dominant social groups; they can also be used to reaffirm mainstream ideology. For example, the Western hero in classical Hollywood cinema is independent, single-minded in pursuit of a goal, resistant of domestic/feminine temptations, and uses violence to gain moral ends. The structuring absence includes moral ambiguity and unregulated anger. This stereotype reinforces notion of white American national superiority (replaying the “civilizing” of the once “savage” West) and masculine dominance (Stereotype, www.faculty.washington.edu).

In Hindi Cinema, there have been countless films with countless stereotypes of Africans as primitive people, villains as Vastu-believing Kali worshippers, Muslims are not without the standard beard and *burqa* and the Urdu-ised Hindi etc (Sharma, 2013). This study analyses the messages and stereotypes about Muslims that are overtly and subtly conveyed by the Bollywood filmmakers through the films selected for analysis. Detailed discussion is carried out with proper references from Hindi films to understand the concept of stereotyping in Bollywood.

Keywords:

Films, Bollywood, India, Muslims, Hindi cinema, stereotype, framing, 9/11

Cinema as a tool of communication

Cinema is a mass media. It transcends culture and facilitates better communication. It informs, educates, entertains and transmits culture simultaneously. Cinema draws attention which can be channelized to bring about positive change in the society and its audio visual nature has a pervasive power for social influence. Cinema combines entertainment with communication of ideas and it appeals to the audience. Keeping in view the popularity of the cinema, specific schools are dedicated to the film studies and it has actually emerged as a discipline. This paradoxical element of the cinema is highlighted in a study by Graciela, María and Marta (2007), “The cinema offers us both an “artificial” and a real world, in the latter case sometimes so real that it leads us to forget that what we are seeing on the screen is not real. For many theorists, this apparent reality/illusion paradox is the very essence of the

cinema.” However, it can be safely said that, “media images are not neutral but evince the power and point of view of the political and economic elites who operate and focus it. And the special genius of this system is to make the whole process seem so normal and natural that the very art of social construction is invisible” (Gamson, Hoynes, Sasson, 1992).

The narrative and representational aspects of film make it a wholly unique form of art. Moreover, the collective experience of film as art renders it a wholly distinct leisure activity. The unique properties of attending the cinema can have decisively positive effects on mental health. Cinema attendance can have independent and robust effects on mental wellbeing because visual stimulation can queue a range of emotions and the collective experience of these emotions through the cinema provides a safe environment in which to experience roles and emotions we might not otherwise be free to experience. The collective nature of the narrative and visual stimulation makes the experience enjoyable and controlled, thereby offering benefits beyond mere visual stimulation. Moreover, the cinema is unique in that it is a highly accessible social art form and the participation in it generally cuts across economic lines. At the same time, attending the cinema allows for the exercise of personal preferences and the human need for distinction. In a nutshell, cinema attendance can be both a personally expressive experience, good fun and therapeutic at the same time (Uhrig, 2005).

Cinema is able to convey an imaginary world to the viewers, but the one which they are ready to accept as real since it connects with their emotions, feelings, fears and the most universal dreams. Viewers are equally likely to be confronted by something absolutely normal or something completely extraordinary. Cinema allows the viewers to recognize and transform themselves and lets them enter the process of identification or rejection. It is based on images that reach out to all of the spectators, although differently. Each spectator receives a different message that allows him/her to individualize it and adapt it to his/her own characteristics, needs and wishes. Graciela L. et al (2007) record the views of Hans-Georg Gadamer, a German philosopher who holds that the cinema is close to the approach to a work of art and that this is an experience of the world and in the world that radically changes the person involved. The cinema not only compares what is new with other readings of reality but also alters what has already been established, to generate something that will surpass this.

Ingrid Therwath (2010) establishes that the popular Hindi cinema has, since the first film was made in India in 1913, played a central role in the formulation of the national identity and in the promotion of normative behavior. So much so that the ‘film is perhaps the single strongest agency for the creation of a national mythology of heroism, consumerism, leisure, and sociality’ (Appadurai & Breckenridge 1996: 8, cited in Ingrid Therwath, 2010). The author adds that the cinema, more than other media like television, mobile phones or the Internet, constitutes a medium for the enacting, teaching and dissemination of this nationalist discourse heralding the combined virtues of consumerism and devotion and of cosmopolitanism and roots.

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), affirming the impact of cinema, mentions the judgment of the Supreme Court on their website (<http://cbfcindia.gov.in/>) which says that film certification becomes necessary because a film motivates thought and action and assures

a high degree of attention and retention as compared to the printed words. The combination of act and speech, sight and sound in semi-darkness of the theatre with elimination of all distracting ideas will have a strong impact on the minds of the viewers and can affect emotions. Hence, as per CBFC, it has as much potential for evil as it has for good and has an equal potential to instill or cultivate violent or good behavior. Therefore the cinema cannot be equated with other modes of communication which makes certification by prior restraint not only desirable but also necessary.

Susmita Dasgupta (2012) calls cinema - a unique innovation of our times and a combination of every form of art which has ever existed for mankind, namely painting, music, art, dance, pottery, crafts, architecture, dress designing, ornament designing, make up and others. She writes that the universal appeal and the universal circulation of the cinema largely derive from its economics since it is expensive to produce cinema. Also it cannot sustain economically, until and unless it can access a large market and collects revenues from large volumes of sale of tickets. Economics and the technology of the large screen and it being an audio visual medium make cinema itself a public space. However the risk that cinema carries with it is not that it would influence politics and business but that it might itself emerge as politics and business. The politics of cinema lies just here; it neither challenges the State nor the society but purports to become a self-contained society in itself. The factors through which cinema acquires this attribute is contained in its very technology. Scholars have often said that the cinema represents the modern day myths. The crucial difference between cinema and myths is that myths are supposed to be cosmic truths and hence fixed in time. The viewers are fully aware of cinema's fleeting temporality and regard it as the defining truth of the moment. Despite the timelessness of myths and the temporality of cinema, the myth like quality of cinema derives once again from its universality. Cinema assumes that it speaks about everyone though not everyone accepts a film. There are many who have not liked *Mughal-E-Azam*, or *Sholay* or even *Sound of Music* but this does not alter cinema's intention. Cinema intends to appeal to everyone just like myth does.

Explaining the relationship between early Asian cinema and the public sphere, Prof. Wimal Dissanayake (2007) writes that the cinema has become one of the most popular and important forms of mass entertainment throughout Asia. It has also, over the years, become a valuable site in which negotiation of meaning related to a complex web of issues such as modernity, nationhood, westernization, feminism, colonialism, urbanisation, civil society, cultural citizenship get purposefully articulated. No cinema emerges from a cultural vacuum; indeed, all cinemas display the stamp of the culture, social formations, political structure, historical moment that produced them. Most film-goers would agree that cinema is a significant social practice inflecting communities in complex and interesting ways and there are manifold dimensions to cinema – social, cultural, political, ideological, technological, aesthetic and so on which deserve close and sustained attention. These dimensions are closely and vitally interconnected and constitute an important cultural discourse with vast ramifications. It is often remarked that cinema mirrors social reality; however, it is equally important to appreciate the fact that cinema shapes and informs reality in fascinating ways.

Cinema and Stereotypes

Charles Ramirez-Berg (2002) establishes at the onset that despite the worthwhile research done on stereotypes and stereotyping, stretching back over decades, social scientists have yet to agree on a definitive meaning for either term. For some cognitive psychologists, stereotyping describes a value-neutral psychological mechanism that creates categories and enables people to manage the swirl of data presented to them from their environment. This categorizing function was recognized in 1922 by Walter Lippmann, who first coined the term “stereotyping”. For him, this was a necessary, useful, and efficient process, since “the attempt to see all things freshly and in detail, rather than as types and generalities, is exhausting, and among busy affairs practically out of the question.” However if stereotyping means simply the creation of categories based on the recognition of gross difference(s), then all people stereotype each other. This sort of stereotyping is not “wrong,” nor is it something that only bad people or prejudiced, ignorant, or racist people do. In fact if cognitive psychologists are right about how the human brain perceives processes, stores and recalls information then such type of stereotyping is needed. The reason of it being important is that it helps to distinguish one thing from another. And if people create categories then potentially they are in a position to imbue those categories with positive or negative-notations. However this sort of negative generalizing is in fact what is usually meant when people think of stereotyping and not the simply value-neutral category-making.

For most of the people, stereotyping is the act of making judgments and assigning negative qualities to other individuals or groups. The question then arises that how does stereotyping evolve from being a value-free process to being a value-laden one. Two crucial elements need to be added to plain category-making to develop ‘negative’ stereotyping. One is ethnocentrism, classically defined as the “view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled or rated with reference to it.” Adhering to the circular logic of stereotyping, the out group (“Them”) is compared to the standard defined by the in-group (“Us”). By this measure, and not surprisingly, “They” are always incomplete and imperfect. The second necessary ingredient that transforms neutral categorization into a discriminatory practice is prejudice: judging “Others” as innately inferior based on ethnocentrically determined difference. Prejudice holds that “They” are inherently not as good (not as clean, civilized, righteous, religious, intelligent, trustworthy, respectful of life, decent, hardworking, honorable, etc.) as “We” are because “They” are different from “Us” (in the foods they eat, their religion, skin color, language, nationality, etc.). Judging the “Other” as inherently inferior is a key feature of prejudicial thinking. It is most troubling one in that it indicates the intransigent view that “They” cannot change and such extremely biased and rigid judgments about the out-group results in disastrous results (Charles, 2002).

Charles (2002) further explains that, stereotyping in the negative and derogatory way can accordingly be represented as an amalgamation of ethnocentrism and prejudice. A stereotype is the result of this process and can be defined as a negative generalization used by an in-group (Us) about an out-group (Them). Lippmann called these mental constructs “pictures in our heads.” There are sociological, psychological, and psychoanalytical approaches to stereotyping but there are a number of important characteristics common to all stereotypes -

individual or collective, mediated or not. According to one view, stereotyping is triggered by a reductive, all-or-nothing logic, by which stereotypes place anyone identified as an out-group member into the stereotyped category and then assigns the stereotypical traits to that individual. There is a degree of psychic comfort in fixing the other and the world in this way, as if once named and defined they could be contained once and for all. This attempt to control the world beyond the self by taxonomy is what Edward Said shows, is at the heart of the scientific aspects of Orientalism. Of course, the flaw in such thinking is that the world, the self, and the Other are organic, dynamic, and ever-changing, and attempts to freeze them can only lead to frustration. Indeed, stereotypes exist partly to cope with this confounding inconstancy. A primary function of stereotypes says Richard Dyer, is “to make fast, firm and separate what is in reality fluid.”

Priyanka Srivastava (2013) writes about the stereotypes that are seen in the Hindi films for ages. Culture clash between north and south has always been a favourite idea for Bollywood filmmakers. Deepika Padukone's Meenamma and her extended family in *Chennai Express* (2013), besides the film's Tamil Nadu background, is an example. However, Abhay Deol as the Tamil bureaucrat Krishnan brought alive the nuances of the community without caricaturing the same in Dibakar Banerjee's *Shanghai* (2012). So, barring a few, most filmmakers fail to present it well. The author claims that almost every Yash Raj and Karan Johar film since the nineties has cashed in on Punjabiya since the Punjabi community has ruled Bollywood scripts mostly because it allows room for lavish masala entertainment. Exaggerated Punjabi humour, extravagant weddings, glittering *Karva Chauth* ceremonies, Punjabi rap, Patiala peg, Patiala salwar, *lassi* and *sarson ke khet* are but a few musts in the films, all of it thanks to the success Yash Chopra and Karan Johar productions have seen. The overwhelming Punjabification of Bollywood is evident from the fact that north India is mostly represented in the films by Punjabi characters and characteristics. Words such as *mauja*, *munda*, *oye*, *rabba*, and *kudi* are a few common ones that have become favourite with the lyricists. When it comes to the depiction of minority communities of India like Parsis, Bollywood has always portrayed Parsis as Bawa, Rustom or Batliwala. Hindi films have mostly cracked jokes about their appearance, nature and style of talking. Films like *Shirin Farhad Ki Toh Nikal Padi* (2012) and *Ferrari Ki Sawaari* (2012) once again set the comic tone but minus the caricature cliches, though in the two films Boman Irani and Sharman Joshi respectively stuck to the hackneyed depiction of Parsi men as sissies who blindly obey their parents.

Rachel Dwyer (2013), a Professor of Indian Cultures and Cinema at SOAS, University of London discusses another significant minority of India - Muslims and writes about the community in an article *Top Ten Muslim Characters in Bollywood* in *Critical Muslim* - a quarterly magazine. The author says that Muslims have long played a major role in the Indian film industry. There are many Muslim iconic figures such as actor and great directors yet, Muslim characters in Bollywood, as it is known since the 1990s, are doomed to minor roles fated simply to represent their community and conform to a series of well-established stereotypes. Hindi films usually have lead actors and actresses who are north Indian upper-caste Hindus, who can be seen as ‘normal Indians’, while characters from other regions or

religions are usually typecast, not infrequently in negative roles. Bollywood portrays Muslims specifically in a group of sub-genres called 'Islamicate' - that is films which deal with the cultural, rather than religious, life of India's Muslims. Furthermore Bollywood divides Muslims into the genres including the Arabian Nights fantasy, the devotional film, the historical films which particularly talks about the Mughal period, the films about the culture of the courtesan (tawaif) and the 'Muslim social'. However the author notes that a new genre has emerged post 9/11 in which Muslims are portrayed just as badly as an Islamophobic worldview suggests they do. These genres usually feature particular forms of music, notably the qawwali and the ghazal; styles of dress associated with India's Muslims; make generous use of poetic Urdu and create a world of excessive formality.

Aditi Nigam (2013) writes about the absence of the Muslim character that lives like any other member of any other community. The author argues, "flesh-and-blood Muslim characters - who we meet, see, work and interact with every day - never seem to have been on the radar of Hindi film-makers." A documentary filmmaker quoted in the report agrees with the argument, "You will never see a Muslim school teacher, professor, factory owner, engineer or even clerk," says Sohail Hashmi, a documentary film-maker, who feels 'real life' Muslim characters never occupied any space in the minds of Bollywood film-makers, then and now. "Since the 1950s, Muslims have been depicted as endearing Pathans, because they were clearly outsiders and spoke a different language. They wore shalwars, long shirts and jackets and could not be confused with Indian Muslims... they did not alter the image of the Indian Muslim, who was either a decadent feudal, or a drunken, dreamy-eyed poet, or a woman who was always a courtesan," says Hashmi. The great yesteryear actor Jayant (father of Amjad Khan aka Gabbar Singh of Sholay) appeared in about 150 films but is, till this day, etched in memory only as an endearing Pathan. Post-9/11 saw the assertion of 'religious identity'. India had its share of terror attacks in Mumbai, Delhi, Malegaon, Hyderabad among other places, followed by the post-Godhra riots in Gujarat, in which thousands of Muslims were killed. Bollywood, which by now was getting corporatised as far as financing is concerned, probably saw a 'selling opportunity'. Soon the industry produced films that increasingly depicted Muslims only as 'terrorists', followed by 'good Muslim' and 'bad Muslim' films. Yes, an occasional *Iqbal* (2005) did turn up like a whiff of fresh air, though not strictly from what is called the mainstream Bollywood stable. Bollywood is an industry which was once dominated by film-makers such as Mehboob Khan, Kamal Amrohi, K. Asif, Khwaja Ahmed Abbas, actors such as Waheeda Rehman, Madhubala, Meena Kumari and Dilip Kumar (name changed), and to this day is ruled by the Khans — Shah Rukh, Salman, Aamir (names not changed). But Muslim characters are still shown playing a marginal, stereotypical role in Bollywood films. This is because, as Hashmi expresses that, "the average Muslim has been marginalised in social consciousness, primarily because s/he has been marginalised in society as well." "The Muslim is paying for staying back (during the Partition of 1947). The only positive role that a Muslim gets in mainstream cinema is to die saving a Hindu. This is the only way s/he can prove his/her patriotism," says Hashmi. Interestingly, even as Muslim 'stereotypes' have stayed in Hindi films in one form or the other, one thing has clearly changed in the 'business' of Hindi films - the credit rollout. Earlier, the film name in the

credits rolled out in three languages - Hindi, Urdu and English. With films moving away from single screens to multiplexes, Urdu has been dropped.

M. A. Khan and S. Z. Bokhari (2011) explain the change in the world in the context of Bollywood after in the incident of 9/11. The war against terrorism was started after the incident of 9/11 when Twin towers of New York were been hit by two passenger planes. The responsibility of this incident was laid upon “Muslims” by the west. After that, Muslims are blamed as terrorists all over the world without any discrimination of gender or age and the wave of terrorism and the picture of Muslims as terrorist, invaded the world almost simultaneously. The authors infer that Indian film industry took a benefit of this situation and they started to present Muslims as terrorists in their films. Films were made on the subject of terrorism and only Muslims were shown as terrorists who were fostering terrorism not only in India but in the whole world. Muslims in general and Pakistani Muslims in particular are shown as terrorists who are involved in all sort of terrorists acts whether it is in India, Kashmir or elsewhere. Pakistan is portrayed as the shelter provider to all the terrorists. Film, generally, has enormous impact on the societies. It gives new trends, ideas and traditions etc. Films not only make the opinion but also reshape the opinions. If one idea prevails strongly in a society then it can be transmitted from one society to another. Among the film industries around the world, Bollywood is one of the famous industry and has influence and strong impact on the masses. Worldview about Islam and Muslims is not good anyway and Bollywood has played a notable role in making this image stronger along with the western media especially after the incident of 9/11 (Khan & Bokhari, 2011).

DISCUSSION

This study seeks to understand the concept of stereotyping in Bollywood and the changes that the Muslim characters have undergone a decade before to a decade after 9/11. A decade before the incident of 9/11 i.e. the era of nineties saw various incidents like the uprising in Kashmir (1990), demolition of the Babri Masjid (1992) and then the Kargil War (1999), all of which charged the political climate of India and the fallout led to the changes in the social setting of the country as well. Therefore a considerable shift took place in the portrayal of the Muslims in the Bollywood. Hindi cinema of the nineties increasingly began to depict Muslims as ‘terrorists’ and a potential threat to the sovereignty of India. India and Pakistan have been involved in the cross-border confrontations in 1948, 1965, 1971 and the Kargil war of 1990s served as a painful reminder of the unresolved disputes between the two nations.

After 1990, the people of Kashmir picked up arms against the Indian establishment in Kashmir and Bollywood made films related to Kashmir conflict. These films invoked the images of nation and nationality while portraying the freedom struggle of Kashmir as illegitimate and Pakistan as a manipulator. Mani Ratnam's *Roja* (1992) depicted Kashmiris as stooges in the hands of sources in Pakistan who can betray the people of Kashmir anytime. The sources can be any agency working against Indian establishment in Kashmir, providing arms and ammunition to the people of Kashmir with the only aim of getting the land of Kashmir and are not bothered about the people of Kashmir. Liyaqat's younger brother is killed by the Pakistani forces in *Roja*, even though they were the ones who invited the young

men of Kashmir including Liyaqat's brother for arms training. Liyaqat admits and regrets that in the film so does Altaf in *Mission Kashmir* (2000) after realizing that the terrorist Hilal was using him for his benefit and Rehan in the film *Fanaa* (2006) knowing that his grandfather cares only for the 'mission'. A message is conveyed to the people of Kashmir that Pakistan is not their friend but a 'turncoat' and whoever has any inclination towards Pakistan will eventually suffer. An incident is shown in the film *Lamhaa* (2010) in which those Kashmiris who crossed the border to get training from Pakistan are regretting the move. Aatif arranges a call across border and a Kashmiri man who is in Pakistan for training calls his mother in Kashmir. It is shown that he regrets crossing the border and desperately wants to come back and says that the condition in Pakistan is worst than Kashmir.

Further, Hindi films like *Mission Kashmir*, *Lamhaa* portray Pakistan, not only as an enemy state in general but a specific enemy to India vis-a-vis Kashmir. The Hindi films analysed in the study, by and large, portray firstly Pakistan to be responsible for the terrorism in India in general and Kashmir in particular. The films made on Kashmir, in addition of blaming Pakistan, blame Kashmiris for being swayed by the Pakistani agencies which can be the Pakistani government directly as in the film *Sarfarosh* (1999) or some independent organization as in *Mission Kashmir* that pumps money in India with the sole aim of carrying out the acts of terrorism.

Bollywood more often than not portrays some Muslims to be cut off from the larger Muslim community as is done in the following films. Jaan Mohammad, the foster father of the character Refugee in the film *Refugee* despite being involved in smuggling of arms has a heart of a patriot and to prove it he gives up his life for India. Before dying for his motherland India, he tells his brother Atta Muhammad that the people of his village will not support his terrorist activities just because they share the same religion. Jaan Mohammad warns his brother to go back to Pakistan because he won't be able to divide India on the lines of religion and if he thinks so then his thinking and the thinking of 'his' community is flawed. By 'his' community he means the Muslim community as if he is not its member. In *Fanaa*, Zooni's father, Zulfikar Ali questions the possibility of the existence of a free Kashmir and cuts himself off from Kashmiri Muslims by saying, '*Unka ye azaad desh chalayega koun?* (Who will run this free country of theirs?)' In the film *A Wednesday* (2008) Inspector Arif distances himself from the viewpoint of the terrorist when he says that 'you' spread terror in the world but 'you people' have committed a mistake by coming to India with the same intention. By calling him '*Tum log* (you people)' Arif cuts himself off from him and the Muslim community even though Arif and Khurshid Lal both are Muslims and both are talking about Muslims. All the Pakistanis are blamed for picking a fight with Indians unnecessarily in the movie *Gadar* and the 'nationalist' Sakina is separated from the Muslim community when Sakina's son asks her that what is wrong with the Pakistanis that they are after 'us', notwithstanding the fact that Sakina is also a Muslim, moreover the daughter of a Pakistani.

Indian supremacy over Pakistan is also highlighted in many films like in *Refugee* Jaan Mohammad rebukes his brother for thinking to harm India since India is the land of their forefathers. Also Raghuvir Singh – an Indian BSF commandant clearly expresses the

superiority of India over Pakistan when he says to the Mohammad Ashraf - a Pakistani ranger that in the Indian tradition, a son is provided a separate place after he grows up i.e., India is the one who gave birth to Pakistan but Pakistanis are not content even after getting a separate place. Sakina's cousin, who is not mentally well, is used in the film *Gadar* (2001) to put across Indian worldview about the partition of 1947. Sakina's mentally unstable cousin does not agree with the division of India, questions the existence of Pakistan and tries to hoist Indian flag in Pakistan. He sings songs about Indian nationalism '*Saare jahan say acha Hindustan hamaara*', '*Dur hatto ay duniya waalo Hindustan hamaara hai*'. Patriotism of Indians is flaunted in the film when Ashraf Khan wants Tara Singh to raise slogans in favour of Islam and Pakistan if he wants Sakina. He did raise but retorted back as soon as Ashraf Khan wanted Tara Singh to raise slogans against India. It is depicted that, for Pakistan at least, a 'true Muslim' is the one who is anti-India. That is why Ashraf Khan wanted Tara Singh to raise slogans against India which will prove that he is a 'true Muslim'. Tara Singh counters this reasoning by asking Ashraf Khan that there are more Muslims in India than in Pakistan and they are patriots, so aren't they 'true Muslims' then?' Tara Singh continues that the religion of a person is to protect his family, Raam and Raheem, Kashi and Kabba are one but Ashraf Khan, despite that Tara Singh is ready to accept Islam, is not ready to believe him until he becomes anti-India. Therefore it is portrayed that for Pakistan, a 'true Muslim' is the one who loves Islam, Pakistan and more importantly hates India. The existence of Pakistan is mocked and questioned in the film when Darmiyaan Singh - the Sikh friend of Tara says to an army personal of Pakistan that India is the father of Pakistan, since Pakistan came from India. The film portrays that Ashraf Khan hates Indians so much that he wants to kill every Indian. Tara Singh retorts back by boasting that the identity of Pakistan is due to India because Indians gave crores of rupees to Muslims and then they survived in Pakistan. The identity of Pakistan is mocked again when Tara Singh says that Pakistan can't save itself from rain, let alone having the nerve to bomb India.

Furthermore, Bollywood has been promoting the Indian viewpoint about Kashmir: '*Kashmir is an integral part of India*'. The film *Roja* shows the protagonist Rishi being given an assignment to go to Kashmir and his senior warns him about the volatile situation there. But Rishi says that Kashmir is in India and that there should be no apprehensions about visiting any part of India whether is Kashmir or any other state. The interview of Adda in the film *Yahaan* (2005) is full of the rhetoric trying to scale down the Kashmir conflict to emotions and negating all the practical elements that can be sorted out if all the parties involved in the Kashmir conflict are given a fair chance. Adda says that she cannot hold any grudge against the army who gave her a 'good' hearted person like Aman. She preaches that the Kashmiri youth who left their family to fight for the freedom of Kashmir to come back home. *Yahaan* does not go into the important details of why they left in the first place or what made them to leave the comfort of their homes to go on such a journey. Zulfikar's statement in the film *Fanaa: Sahi aur galat ke bech faisla karna asaan kaam hai. Lekin dou sahi raston mai behtar chun'na aur do galat raston mai munasib chun'na, yehi faisle hamari zindigi ke faisle karte hain.* (It is easy to choose between right and wrong but to choose a better way between two right paths and a feasible path between two wrong paths is what determines our fate, translation mine). This statement is the extension of the same ideology that is presented in

other Hindi films based on Kashmir conflict. What is implied is that the Kashmiris might have two right ways to decide their destiny since if given the promised right to plebiscite, then they can or cannot choose to be with India (which means either merge with Pakistan or remain independent). But they should be wise enough to choose the better way i.e. accept their union with India because it is neither 'better' nor 'feasible' for Kashmir to live an independent existence, more precisely to cut off from India. This ideology of Zooni's father guides Zooni throughout the film and helps her to choose a 'better' way and a 'better' future i.e. preference to India over her 'traitor' husband.

Atif's speech in the film *Lamhaa* describes fairly realistic and somewhat balanced viewpoint about the Kashmir conflict. He asks the Pandit community to come back to Kashmir since both Muslims and Hindus have already suffered a lot. He says that Kashmiri Pandits have taken bullets from the militants and Kashmiri Muslims from the military, Pandits left their mansions in Kashmir and are living in refugee camps while as Muslims are living in a beautiful jail called Kashmir. He accuses politicians to exploit the situation of Kashmir for their own gains due to which only common Kashmiris are suffering. He warns them that what has been happening in Kashmir can happen in Jammu tomorrow if initiatives of peace are not taken and tells them that the Pandit community that the personal differences between Hindus and Muslims were little but some agencies made it big for their benefit.

However Indian viewpoint about the Kashmir conflict is also portrayed in the same film by the same character Aatif. Haji deems Lashkar to be an important part of his struggle and Haji's misdeeds are exposed in the end. While as Atif wants to leave gun as well as Lashkar since he considers Lashkar's activities against Islam. It is proved when Aatif reaches out to the Kashmiri Pandit community in Jammu during the election campaigning and a bomb blast is planned by Lashkar to disrupt the efforts of peace. Therefore due to difference in the point of view, Aatif breaks away from Haji's party and decides to contest elections since he thinks that the Kashmiris have tried gun and now they will try ballot. Hence the Indian viewpoint is put forth i.e. Pakistan plans terrorist attacks during elections or otherwise and the way to resolve the Kashmir conflict is to take initiatives within the framework of the constitution of India and that is to participate in the elections either as a voter or as a contestant.

Historical account of the events related to Muslims in any way is missing in the Bollywood films, be it demolition of the Babri Masjid or the Kashmir conflict or 9/11 event or any other significant episode in the recent history. The Indian version of the Kashmir conflict is discussed in the film *Yehaan* when Shakeel - a Kashmir militant questions the legitimacy of India in Kashmir to which Aman - an Indian army officer, gives a short history that the Indian government saved Kashmir when Pakistan attacked Kashmir in 1947. Hence this is what makes Kashmir an 'integral' part of India while as the series of incidents that followed and promises of the Indian state to the people of Kashmir that they will have right of self-determination i.e. to decide the future status of their homeland is conveniently skipped. Shakeel without giving any befitting and historically accurate reply is shown acting emotionally and just wants the Indian forces to leave Kashmir to which Aman replies that if the Indian troops leave then the Pakistani troops will capture Kashmir again and that Kashmir is not equipped militarily to survive independently. If the glimpse of the history of the

Kashmir conflict is ever given, it is hardly discussed in the Hindi films. A brief historical account, about the promise of India to allow plebiscite in Kashmir, the right of self determination of the people of Kashmir and the demand of an independent Kashmir by the Kashmiris, is given in the Kunal Kohli's *Fanaa* but the discussion is left halfway.

The portrayal of Indian army in the Hindi films is also interesting especially if it is operating in Kashmir. As per Bollywood, the Indian army is kind-hearted, helpful for the people and hard only on those who are a threat to the law and order. It is portrayed that the army does everything to compensate if any untoward incident happens by chance like the police officer Inayat Khan does in *Mission Kashmir* by adopting Altaf whose parents he killed by accident. The film further shows a Sikh policeman explaining to his enraged Kashmiri Pandit comrade that they are not killers but saviors and they have to save Kashmir and humanity. In the film *Lamhaa*, an Indian army personnel deals harshly with a Kashmiri driver while asking him to give him the proof of his identity but his behavior is justified immediately when a suicide bomber blows himself and a taxi up, in which a separatist leader gets killed. Thus it is portrayed that the harshness of the Indian agencies in Kashmir is justified otherwise the 'terrorists' will cause chaos.

Many a time Bollywood goes to such unrealistic levels that it looks comical. Mani Ratnam's *Roja* shows the terrorists setting the Indian flag on fire and Rishi jumping in fire to blow it off. He, singlehandedly with his hands tied, fights with a bunch of terrorists while the terrorist Liyaqat is praying and a patriotic song is playing in the background. Furthermore, the film shows Rishi and Roja witnessing an awkward fear in the air of Kashmir, 24 hour curfews and restrictions in free movement during the day yet shows Kashmiri girls doing a group dance at night on the top of a hill while the couple sings a song. In Mani Ratnam's another film *Bombay*, riots are about to erupt and the news of bloodshed is coming from different parts of India yet the couple is singing and dancing while fantasizing about the third baby. *Gadar* shows a huge contingent of the Pakistan army is frightened with just one shout of Tara Singh. After that Sunny Deol's shout became a must in his action filled movies, somewhat similar to what a shirtless Salman is to his films. *Maa Tujhhe Salaam* depicts a scene where the protagonist Major Pratap Singh could not bear to see Indian tricolor on floor. So he runs to lift it, defeats the Pakistani attackers while holding the Indian flag high. It keeps getting unrealistic until at the end he emerges as a winner, gunning down all the attackers, fighting with the terrorist Gul Mastan one on one even after getting multiple bullets throughout his body.

Yahaan shows a Kashmiri wedding in which Punjabi song is sung, dressing of the attendees is not Kashmiri and the way wedding is held is not Kashmiri at all. The official language in Kashmir is Urdu but the school curriculum in the majority of schools in Kashmir is English, yet the film shows Aman and Adda communicating with each other through letters written in Hindi. Hindi newspapers are delivered to Adda's home and she reads Hindi fluently. Her foster sister also writes in Hindi suggesting Adda to write to the Prime Minister of India about the innocence of Aman. *Fanaa* is about Kashmir but there is nothing Kashmiri in the film. Kashmiri girls are shown representing their state in Delhi on the Republic Day of India but neither their attire, nor music or lyrics have anything to do with Kashmir or its culture

except the attire of Zooni's father in Kashmir. Zooni's home is shown in some lush green area and mother says good bye to her daughter in the Kashmiri language '*Nair Khodayas Hawaali*', perhaps for Bollywood that makes the film about Kashmir. The concept, that Zooni's parents send their blind daughter to Delhi not to perform there but to find the love of her life, is laughable, as if there are no men in Kashmir.

Zooni, her family and the school children salute the Indian flag with utmost patriotism is are unrealistic since the Indian flag being hoisted in Kashmir is a rare sight in and itself, let alone a Kashmiri saluting it. But Zooni is shown eager and enthusiastic to salute Indian flag during the Independence Day of India. Kashmiris have never celebrated or accepted this day i.e. 15th of August as the day of celebration. In fact it is infamous in Kashmir by the name of 'Black day'. The disapproval is shown in Kashmir through many ways like shutdown is observed in the region. The majority of Kashmiris on social networking sites facebook, twitter, whatsApp change their profile pictures to black while as the Indian forces in Kashmir try to prevent people from holding anti-India demonstrations during this day.

Before Zooni's dance performance in Delhi on the eve of the Republic Day of India - 26 January, she says, '*Shahjahan ne jou Kashmir ke liye kaha tha, voh hum Kashmiri ladkiyan maanti hain ki saare Hindustan ke liye kaha jaana chaiye ki agar iss dharti par kahin jannat hai tou voh bass yehin hain yehin hain yehin hain*' (What Shahjahan has said for Kashmir, i.e. 'If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this,' we Kashmiri girls believe should be said for whole India, translation mine). There are a couple of issues with this statement. Firstly this quote is not of Shahjahan, but of the Mughal emperor Jahangir. Secondly, Zooni does not represent the Kashmiri girls; hence she cannot speak on behalf of all of them.

Kashmiris have risen against the Indian rule many times and history is witness to the fact that Kashmiris consider their union to Indian to be coercion yet Zooni is eager to teach her son Indian national anthem. Furthermore, it is no secret that the Kashmiris by and large support any cricket team but Indian. The incidents about Kashmiris cheering for Pakistani cricket team or burning fire crackers to celebrate the defeat of Indian cricket team are frequently in the news during the World cup, T20 or any other cricket match. What is usually the case is that the crackers come from garrisons if India wins and are burst outside garrisons by locals if India loses and it has caused many clashes between Kashmiris and the Indian forces in Kashmir over the decades. But Kunal Kohli's *Fanaa* shows Zooni's son in love with Indian cricket team so much so that he considers Rahul Dravid - the ex captain of the Indian team, to be his idol. Zooni's father Zulfikar Ali happily gives shelter to an Indian military officer and this is unheard in Kashmir considering the relation between the common Kashmiris and the Indian forces in Kashmir. Hence Bollywood presents the picture of Kashmir and Kashmiris that the Indian establishment wants to see.

Bollywood films more often than not blur the line between 'jingoism' and 'patriotism'. The basic premise of the portrayal of secularism in Bollywood is that being a secular figure should be a priority for anyone to be called a 'true patriot'. Bollywood films depict that a 'secular' person is a 'patriot' and a 'patriot' is the one who is an Indian first and anything else

second. Hence a Muslim can only be a 'patriot' if s/he considers her/himself a Muslim second to being an Indian which is what is analysed below.

Bollywood filmmakers use interfaith marriages as one of the common ways to prove one's 'patriotism'. *Bombay* shows interfaith marriage – a Hindu boy Shekhar and a Muslim girl Shaila Bano elopes to marry and name their twin sons Kabir Narayan and Kamal Bashir which is a combination of Hindu-Muslim names. The song having lyrics *Mazhab ko chodo watan ka soncho Hindustani hain pehley hum* (Leave religion and think about country since we are Indians first, translation mine) is playing in the background while the riots are wrecking havoc clearly stresses that primary concern of the Indian Muslims should not be religion. The film does not show demolition of the Babri Masjid or the events that preceded it but the riots between the Hindus and Muslims are portrayed. Shekhar stops riots in his vicinity by emphasizing that the people of India are Indians first and then Hindus or Muslims and that the politicians exploit the sentiments of the common people for their vote bank. The eunuch conveys the same idea and concern to the child Kamal that the religion is a way to get to God and Hindus and Muslims have a different way but the way leads to God only.

The Parsi family in the film *Earth* (1998) is the epitome of secularism as the family has servants of different faiths living together harmoniously. But as India gained independence from British, polarization takes place and the country burns into the communal flame. The partition of the British India in 1947 is metaphorically represented many times in the film for example Lenny baby throws a plate on the floor and it breaks into pieces or a man is ripped when two cars from opposite sides pull him. The communal fire is fanned by British and it is depicted in a scene when fire breaks out after the clashes between the Sikhs and Muslims and instead of water, the British sprays petrol on the burning houses - a symbolic representation of how the communal divide is worsened and deepened by the British.

Even the most peaceful village where the Sikhs and Muslims lived together for ages is not spared by the communal fury and that is what the film *Train to Pakistan* (1998) depicts. As the Muslims of the village leave for Lahore, the Sikh leader expresses his solidarity with them and even keeps the beads used by Muslims as a memento. The news of bloodshed from other parts of the country affects the brotherhood of this village as well. To avenge the blood of the Sikhs shed in other parts of the country, the Sikhs from the adjoining areas come to provoke the Sikh population of this village. They plan to attack the train that is going to Lahore but Jagga, the bandit, sacrifices his life to save the life hundreds of Muslims. Furthermore the Muslims of the village are so secular that the daughter of a Muslim cleric is in love with a Sikh bandit and the whole area knows about it except her blind father but nobody is bothered by this fact. Secularism is explained by Rizwan's mother by an example in the film *My Name is Khan* (2010). She teaches her son Rizwan that there are only two types of people in this world: good and bad. Good people do good things and bad people do bad things and this is the only difference in human beings. Therefore religion takes a back seat and plays no role in determining what is 'good' and 'bad'.

An Indian Muslim is a 'patriot' if s/he gives or takes life for the sake of India, especially if it is the life of his blood brother from Pakistan. Jaan Mohammad in the film *Refugee* (2000)

qualifies to be a 'patriot' since he is unable to take the life of his brother but he gives up his own life. Doctor Akhtar in *Mission Kashmir* treats patients regardless of their faith or political inclinations and considers it his religion. He gets killed eventually for upholding these principles. Inspector Inayat Khan in the same film risks his own life to save Kashmir from the terrorist attack and being consumed by the communal flames. Both are gestures of secularism.

Bollywood usually portrays Muslim women as 'patriots' who are ready to leave their loved ones for their nation. The mother of Sultan, in *Sarfarosh*, kicked him out of her house when he did his first murder and she is ready to hand over her son Sultan to police. Bollywood portrays Muslim women by and large to be 'secular', peace loving and non-violent. Even if an injustice happens to them, a relative is beaten or killed; they simply cry and wail to give vent to their feelings. They don't resort to violence and it is a sign that they are 'good' people. In *Roja*, the sister of the terrorist Liyaqat has a soft corner for the hostage Rishi and at the end she is the one who helps him to escape. The character Fiza in the film *Fiza* is a strong and politically conscious girl who has a clear understanding of right and wrong. She even clarifies some concepts of faith and politics to her brother who was confused about such concepts. Her mother on the other hand is concerned only about her children and when she feels she could not do anything for them, she commits suicide. Likewise in the movie *Refugee* Nazneen only wants Refugee and does not care about the political situation of both countries. The film *Awarapan* (2007) shows Aaliyah 'secular' enough to not want her boy friend Shivam to become a Muslim necessarily but to just believe in a god in any form. Therefore the 'secular', peace loving and non-violent characters are approved by the Bollywood as 'good'.

Mehru, in the film *Anwar* (2007), hates India because she believes that the Indian society puts too many constraints in one's life. She tries to elope with a Hindu boy Udit but her relatives deemed it a crime to fall for somebody outside their own Muslim community. Instead of making her understand the religious rulings about the matter, the whole family including her mother beats her up ruthlessly. Similarly they did not attempt to make Udit understand the whole matter but killed him in cold blood and the already fed-up Mehru hangs herself at the end. Such a portrayal questions one of the fundamental rulings of Islam regarding marriage i.e. A Muslim woman can only marry a Muslim man and depicts it as barbaric. Similarly in the film *Mission Istanbul* (2008), Afghanistan is portrayed as a slaughter house where terrorists rule and terrorist activities take place regularly, openly and where stoning (shown as a barbaric act) is referred as 'play' by the locals. A girl is ruthlessly dragged, stoned and finally shot in the head while people watch the barbarism in silence. Such depiction of Islamic laws presents Islam as the religion that celebrates violence. The same film makes fun of the concept of hijab in Islam when a journalist Jai Kapoor mocks it by saying that the Taliban keep the women wrapped in *burkha* (veil). Since he wanted to ogle the women but is deprived of it because the Taliban don't allow open display of the beauty of the women and that is what bothers him. Here the double standards of the media are revealed. The reports of the eve teasing, stalking and harassing of women come time and again in the media. On the one hand men are preached to be respectful enough to the women folk and leave harassing

them altogether. On the other hand, the same media makes it a norm for a man, in the film a journalist Jai Kapoor, wanting to stare at women. Jai Kapoor pokes fun at Taliban, and by extension at Islam, to command women to observe hijab which does not allow women to flaunt their beauty and deprives him of the chance to ogle them.

The film *Ajab Prem Ki Ghazab Kahani* (2009) has a scene in which the protagonist Prem dons *burkha* (attire used by Muslim women to cover themselves) to help a friend elope his girl-friend. The scene stereotypes Muslims in many ways. First and foremost the hijab is attacked when Prem comes to take the girl in the guise of a woman donning black robe. He being a guy dons *burkha* to conceal his identity, which gives the message that Muslim women can misuse the veil to do illegal acts. He plays a trick to take the girl by throwing his black robe on her and himself acts as a Pathan having two wives. One cannot help but notice the stereotyped dressing of Prem donning a white robe, head covered and Palestinian scarf on his shoulders. The concepts in Islam like veil and polygamy are also made fun of, since the Pathan come with two wives, both wrapped in black robe. The scene goes on poking fun at the Muslims when Prem refuses to show faces of his wives for identification by saying that how can he let anybody see the face of his wives when he himself has not seen the face of his wives properly. Muslims having ties with the terrorists like Osama bin Laden is also portrayed overtly when Prem threatens the body guards of the girl by saying that he will call his brother Osama to bomb their heads.

The film *Kurbaan* (2009) portrays that the Muslim women are just stooges who are forced to behave the way men of the family wants them to behave. Ehsaan and Avantika's visit their neighbors' home and one of the women, Anjum is instructed by her husband to cover the small patch of the hair that was visible. Salma, another woman of the family rebels and wants to inform media about their plans of terrorism but she is killed by her husband and in-laws. The complete segregation between men and women of the household is also portrayed as oppressive for the women. Even Ehsaan threatens to kill Avantika just like Salma was killed when Avantika raised her voice against the terrorist activities her husband Ehsaan was involved in. It is portrayed that Muslim men dominate their women in all spheres of life and the latter are not given authority to make decisions about their own family. For instance in the film *Ishqzaade* (2012) when Zoya goes missing, her father disowns her but her mother has no say in it. The husband doesn't even consider his wife's concern for her daughter rather she is given a verdict by her husband to forget that she ever had a daughter. In the same film Zoya's character is shown carefree and bold enough to do whatever she wants. However when it comes to a serious issue like Zoya's aim and dream of being an MLA, her father, brothers, cousins – all male members of the family laugh at her idea of being an MLA. Even her mother wants her to get married rather than pursuing her dream. This portrayal conveys that in the Muslim culture, notwithstanding the capacity of a Muslim woman, her role is considered limited to her home.

Muslim men are portrayed as unforgiving and violent who can physically harm their women if the latter goes against the decisions of the men. B.R. Chopra's *Nikah* (1982) might be considered to be a break from the typical mainstream genres of Hindi films, yet it also gave the impression of Muslim women being suppressed by their husbands. The film portrayed

husbands having the powers to ruin the life of wives by ending marriage by mere saying the words Talaq (divorce), Talaq (divorce), Talaq (divorce). In Islam, a husband cannot end the marriage for fun plus there are conditions that ought to be fulfilled before pronouncing divorce. Divorce is a serious matter in Islam and not a tool of oppression for Muslim women. It is the last resort to end an unsuccessful and miserable marriage but the films portrays divorce as a tool that men use against women. Liyaqat in *Roja* hits his sister for a petty thing like opening the hands of Rishi to eat and later hits her again because she helps Rishi to escape. Liyaqat has a younger brother as well for whom he cares but he shows no such concern or care for his younger sister. *Bombay* portrays Bashir - the father of Shaila Bano as aggressive enough to control the women of his household by force. Even though the father of Shaila Bano is shown to be concerned about her daughter but he slaps her after knowing that she is in love with a Hindu man and threatens to marry her off within a week as per his choice. He drags his wife by the ear, insults and accuses her for not upbringing their daughter - Shaila Bano well. While Narayan – the father of Shekhar is also shown to be highly patriarchal but exercises restraint with his household and never gets physically abusive with his wife or daughter when they go against him.

The reaction of both the families upon knowing about the intention of marriage between Shaila Bano and Shekhar also reveals some interesting nuances about the two communities. Bashir loses his cool many times and resorts to physical attack to whoever goes against his wishes. He takes out the sword to attack Shekar when he asks the hand of his daughter for marriage. He attacks Narayan with the sword when the later comes to tell him to keep his daughter from meeting Shekher. People from both the communities got involved in the episode and the clash was about to break out but Narayan pacified the fight. The scene has the Muslims attacking, most with the swords in their hands, and the Hindus just retaliating in self defense. Narayan instigated Bashir by telling him to carve out the name Ram on every brick; however it is balanced out immediately when Narayan's son shows his disagreement to his father's comment. Also Narayan does it verbally but Bashir again resorts to violence by attacking Narayan with stick. The tolerance of Hindus towards other rituals is depicted when Narayan allows the relatives of Shaila Bano to do a ritual in his home despite that he does not approve of the marriage while as Bashir does not show any such tolerance. It is Narayan who makes Bashir understand that the couple is living happily and they should not drag the grand children into it.

One of the recurring images in the film is that of Muslims praying, which serves to mark the community as overly religious, and as such, a hindrance in efforts for attaining secularity. Bashir's daily prayer sessions are continually emphasized: he is shown praying three times, while Narayan is only shown praying once, and even this is at a public *arti* ("act of worship celebrating light") where they are singing hymns. The latter is also the only instance shown of Hindus praying in the film, whereas, on the whole, there are more instances of Muslim prayers. This constructs Muslims as overly religious, and as such, unable to abide by secular principles, whereas the religiosity of Hindus is not as stringent. This is a prevalent stereotype about the Muslim community, verified in a 1983 report by the Minorities Commission in India. The report outlines prejudices held by the police against Muslims, one of them being

that “Muslims are excitable and irrational people who are guided by their religious instincts. Hindus, on the other hand, are law abiding and cooperate with the police in controlling communal violence.” In this way, as is stated by George Gerbner in the cultivation theory that, the repeated images of Muslims praying covertly identify their religiosity as the root of the problem in the quest for secularity. (Angie Mallhi, 2005)

Hindi films more often than not try to make connection between Muslim religiosity and violence. After the story finishes in the lush village of Roja, the next shot cuts to a group of terrorists praying with their guns besides them and the terrorist Liyaqat is shown praying multiple times in the film. After the reports of the demolition of Babri Masjid in the newspapers, the film *Bombay* shows a Muslim shouting ‘*Ya Allaah* (Oh God!)’ followed by the scene of the Muslims in the Masjid who finishes prayer and runs to ransack Hindu localities, vandalise shops, abuse police personnel, damage property and police vehicles with weapons in their hands. Large groups of people are merely shown running aggressively without damaging anything or anyone while as the initial clips emphasize the presence of Muslims in such destructive activity by the careful portrayal of white caps on their heads which depicts Muslims as the instigators of the riots which is historically inaccurate.

Babri Masjid was demolished on December 6, 1992 and it affected the psyche of the Muslims in India deeply. Mark Tully (2002), Former BBC South Asia correspondent witnessed at first hand the destruction of the mosque by Hindu hardliners in Ayodhya. He reports that a vast crowd, perhaps 150,000 strong, had gathered and was listening to speeches given by BJP and right-wing Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leaders including LK Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi, now senior figures in the BJP-led government. VHP is an Indian right-wing Hindu nationalist non-governmental organization founded in 1964 by Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar and Shivram Shankar Apte in collaboration with Swami Chinmayananda. The objective of the VHP is to organise - consolidate the Hindu society and to serve - protect the Hindu Dharma. (vhp.org) Mark (2002) adds that the police stood by and watched, while some men wearing saffron headbands who were appointed by the organisers to control the crowd did try to stop them but eventually joined the intruders in beating up television journalists, smashing their cameras and trampling on their tape recorders.

Violette Graff and Juliette Galonnier (2013) chronicles the *Hindu-Muslim Communal Riots in India II (1986-2011)* and narrate the incident of the demolition of Babri Masjid and the issues thereof. The violence was ignited on February 27 by an attack in Godhra (Gujarat) on a train carrying Hindu pilgrims and kar sevaks who were coming back from Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh) where they had offered support for the campaign to construct a Ram temple in place of the destroyed Babri Masjid. It is reported that a mob of 50 to 2,000 people encircled the train and set fire to the wagons, killing 58 Hindus, including 25 women and 14 children. By evening, the corpses had been transported to Ahmedabad for a public ceremony. The VHP, with the support of the BJP administration, subsequently called for a February 28 state-wide bandh (strike) in Gujarat and the violence started on that day. Armed mobs of activists from the VHP, the Bajrang Dal, the RSS and the BJP, some wearing uniforms (khaki shorts and saffron scarves), arrived by truck in Muslim areas, targeting Muslim households with militia-like precision. They used voters' lists from the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation to identify

Muslim houses. The police refused to intervene, having received orders not to give assistance to the Muslim community. Policemen, in fact, participated in some attacks, actively colluding with Hindu criminals. One hundred and eighty-four people died throughout the state of Gujarat-shot by the police.

It is reported that 252 people died in Ahmadabad alone. The largest number of killings occurred in the Naroda Patia and Gulmarg Society areas. In Naroda Patia, 65 people were burned alive by a 5,000-strong mob after having been hacked and raped. In Gulmarg Society, the 250 persons who had sought refuge in the house of former Muslim MP (Member of Parliament) Ahsan Jafry were targeted by a crowd of 20,000. Seventy people were murdered, including Jafry who, in spite of countless calls to the administration, could not elicit any assistance. He was dismembered and burned alive. The entire state of Gujarat was rocked by violence. Sixteen of its twenty-four districts were affected. The violence then spread to rural areas where, it is estimated, 1,200 villages were targeted (Graff and Galonnier, 2013). Hence it is clear that the Muslim localities were targeted and the Muslims were massacred but Hindi films like *Bombay* portray Muslims being the rioters. Hence agenda setting theory applies since an agenda is set in the mass media like cinema by putting the blame of the bloodshed on them and making Muslims look violent in the eyes of other communities of the world.

A documentary film worth mentioning is *Ram Ke Naam* made in 1992 by an Indian filmmaker Anand Patwardhan that explores the issues revolving around Babri Masjid before its demolition. It depicts the campaign launched by Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) to replace the mosque with a temple and the communal fury that it caused. The film received many national and international awards but the right-wing Hindu organisations called the film 'anti-Hindu' and prevented its screening, ultimately it was officially released on YouTube. *Ram Ke Naam* interviews Pujari Laldas, head priest of the Ram temple and his views were felt so 'detested' that was removed from his post as head priest of the Ram temple after the BJP came to power in Uttar Pradesh in 1992 and a year later he was assassinated.

Nikhil Nandigam (2011) notes that as one watches the series of events that unfold in Patwardhan's narrative, many small points prove to become integral in the development of the rhetoric expressed by the Hindu right-wing. For example, Pujari Lal Das of the Ram Janma Bhoomi Temple mentions the striking "political game" played by conservatives in which the right takes advantage of small subtleties to "cash in on Hindu votes." Furthermore, Pujari Lal Das emphasizes how the Vishva Hindu Parishad's (VHP) support of the Temple is purely exploitive of political sentiments, with no true passion for the Temple establishment and its spiritual significance. He notes that the VHP does not pray at the Ram Janma Bhoomi Temple, nor does the organization make donations. As Lal Das vehemently states, the politicians do not mind the killings, but only mind money and seats in Parliament.

No mainstream Hindi film has been made on the issue of the demolition of the Babri Masjid even after it has completed more than two decades now and the reasons are summed by Anand Patwardhan himself in an interview in *The Hindu* (2013). The filmmaker shares that barring exceptions, he does not have faith in mainstream Bollywood or for that matter Hollywood since they have the great advantage of mass reach but the very nature of the huge

finances involved prevents political, social and cultural risk-taking. There is careful calculation and almost inevitable compromise. Sometimes when its heart is in the right place, a film can shift popular perceptions to a tiny degree but usually this happens only when the filmmakers believes their cause to be popular. So for instance, there may be some good films made against rape now but even here the chances are that the commercial instinct will send double messages while appearing to be pro-woman. Therefore the filmmaker believes that the silence on Babri Masjid is not surprising, however one sensitive fiction film that did touch this issue is Saeed Mirza's *Naseem* (1995) though it can't be called Bollywood and it did not enjoy a big release either. Incidentally when Saeed wanted to access TV footage of the attack on the mosque he could not find any, such had been the censorship. He ended up using sound clips from *Ram Ke Naam*. (Omar Rashid, 2013)

It is the misrepresentation of Muslims, Islamic tenets and adherence to it in the Hindi films that creates hostile worldview about it. Social learning theory and cultivation theory applies here since the masses are frequently misinformed about Islam by the mass media like cinema and the masses start believing in it. For instance in *Kurbaan*, the whole family of the terrorists prays before leaving for the suicide attack in different areas of the United States and their terrorist group wants the destruction of the scale of 9/11. Bhaijan does all the acts of terrorism in the name of Islam boasting that the Americans will never die for their God and only Muslims do so since it is the passion of faith that makes a person die for his religion. This shows that the zeal of religion drives Muslims towards the terrorist activities. Furthermore, while sharing a light moment with Riyaz, the terrorists tell him that Bhaijan wants everybody to recite the Qur'an. Since Bhaijaan recites the Qur'an often and wants everybody to do so, therefore it implies towards the source of his destructive thinking and violent activities i.e. the Qur'an. Hence the blame of the terrorist activities is clearly put on Islam since it is portrayed that it is the enthusiasm for the faith that drives Muslim towards violent behavior. Muslims are portrayed as the initiators of violence as in the film *Earth*, a rally of Muslims donning the typical pathani suits and skull caps, holding green flags shout '*Pakistan Zindabaad Hindustan Murdabaad*' and break the windscreen of the car of the parsi family who duck to save their lives. Later in the film, after the partition in 1947, in Lahore, Muslims with the same stereotypical attire shouting *Takbeer* come to Parsi's house to kill the innocent non-Muslims servants of the Parsi family. In *Gadar*, Muslims attack the train full of Sikhs chanting *Allaah-O-Akbar* and the attackers are donning a pathani suits and wearing skull caps. The film attempts to put the blame of the bloodshed in 1947 on the shoulders of the Muslims. Tara's uncle, opposes the marriage of Tara and Sakina, because he believes that it is Muslims who divided India and shed blood of other communities. It is portrayed that Muslims are hostile to family as much as they are to other than family and religious rulings are used as well as manipulated by the Muslims for their own convenience. Despite the fact that in Islam marriage cannot take place without the consent of a girl the Muslim cleric forces Sakina to marry.

Hindi films portraying Muslims in any way are usually full of the stereotypical image of Muslim characters replete with peculiar forms of cultural symbols like 'beard' and 'caps'. The image constructions of Muslims in Bollywood have far reaching effects in shaping the

dominant discourse regarding Indian Muslims that is not restricted to only Indian population but it also crosses borders to reach the diasporic community for mass conservation. In such a situation, symbol regarding Muslims, which shapes the dominant political discourses of equating Muslims with the 'terrorist/anti-national Other'. (Sumaiya Ahmad, 2014) The stereotypical portrayal of Muslims regarding the attire is common in the Hindi movies. In the film *Roja*, all the terrorists are donning pathani suits while as some are covering their faces and heads with *keffiyeh* (Palestinian scarves). Terrorists are introduced in the film, praying donning the typical Muslim attire with their weapons by their side and simultaneously a bomb blast takes place in some army camp. Similarly the gangster Mustafa is introduced in the film *Ghulam-E-Mustafa* while he is praying and the *Athaan* (call for prayer) is resonating in the background. He roams around donning stereotypical Muslim attire -pathani suit, skull cap and a *keffiyeh* around his neck.

The use of the Arabic words like *Jihad*, *In-sha-Allaah*, *Ma-sha-Allaah* and even verses from the *Qur'an* are also common in the Hindi films. Such phrases are usually used when an act of terrorism is planned by the Muslims. The reason of terrorism and violence given by the terrorists in the film *Roja* is Jihad. Liyaqat - the leader of the terrorist organization defines Jihad as the Holy war which he and his party are fighting against India. The terrorist Wasim Khan gives the same explanation to Roja when she asks him the reason for his wrongdoings. Again the violence is associated with Islam through the concept of Jihad. The Qur'anic verse - '*Nasrum Minallaahi Wa Fathun Qareeb*' meaning Help from Allah and success is near and phrases like *Allaahu Akbar*, *In-sha-Allaah* are used many times in the film *Shoot on Sight*. It is used every time a bomb blast is planned by the terrorists or after every sermon is given against the West. Members of the terrorist group pray their prayers before they have to leave to carry out their planned terrorist attack which, again, implies that the religiously devout Muslims are violent and the reason for their violent mindset in their adherence to Islam. Subtly but surely, Islam is shown as the root cause for the reason of terrorism.

However some films show that the reason of terrorist activities can be some hidden agenda like gaining popularity as the terrorist group wanted in *Mission Kashmir* or revenge as is shown in *Kurbaan* and *New York*. The terrorist group in the film *Mission Kashmir* states their aim by saying that since 1947, all the attacks were done by the government of Pakistan but now this unknown terrorist group wants to accomplish the 'Mission Kashmir' to become known and number one. They want to split India as they split TV tower into pieces as it is shown that the aim of their existence is to devastate India. As usual the words like *In'sha'Allaah* are used after every vicious plan is intended. The film *Kurbaan* portrays all the women of the Bhaijaan's household covering their hair. Bhaijaan's wife, Nasreen believes that Ehsaan has found a way to Allaah after meeting them. Her hidden agenda is also revealed and that is to avenge the blood of her people who were killed by the Western forces. She being an Afghan woman has seen scores of innocent people die due to the bombings of the United States in Afghanistan and she wants to take revenge so that the Whites will also know how it feels to lose loved ones.

Another Islamic concept, *fatwa* - a ruling given by a scholar of Islam is mocked in the film *Mission Kashmir*. The terrorist Malikul Khan threatens any doctor who will treat any

policeman and the threat is termed as *fatwa* in the film. Hence *fatwa* is introduced to the viewers as a warning, when *fatwa* only means an opinion and in the Islamic jurisprudence, it is a legal ruling which is only given by learned and established scholars of Islam. It cannot be given by a layman and never be implemented the way it is portrayed in the Hindi films. Furthermore, a terrorist group of Pakistan is ready to pay two crore dollars to complete the 'Mission Kashmir' which is to blow up the Hazratbal Shrine and the Shankaracharya Temple and to start communal fury in Kashmir. The group calls their fight Jihad, themselves the soldiers of freedom and proclaims that the money spent in the way of Jihad is no less than *zakah* (charity). Hence another concept in Islam – *zakah* (one of the five pillars of Islam) is also dragged in the discussion and is portrayed as one of the motivators for Muslims to get involved in terrorist activities since spending in the path of Allaah is equaled to spreading terrorism.

Nafisa Kattarwala in her paper *The Portrayal of Islam in the Indian Mass Media* writes that the mosaic of religions in the Indian sub-continent is so complicated that often the interpretations of a particular faith gets hostile representations. The interesting contrast of monotheism and polytheism in the two leading religions of the region, Islam and Hinduism, the two major contrasting theological dogmas further highlight the different perceptions and images of these religions in the media. Post-Hindutava rise, the Indian Hindu revivalism has distorted the minority religion's public image and has led to a devious propaganda which perhaps was non-existent in a country with a secular tradition for nearly 40 years in post-independence India. The iconoclastic attempts to "reinvent Islam" as a fundamentally polarized ideology and inherently opposed to Hinduism and other allied religions has created an interesting perspective within the cross-section of the media. On one hand, the images are those of a secular and all-encompassing fabric of unity which allows several centuries of melting influences between two faiths. And on the other hand, there is a schism which reinforces the inherently distinct identity of the two religions and juxtaposes Islam as the "outsider's faith".

Agenda setting theory is proved here since the right wing politics has always seen mass media as propagating conservative ideas of nationalism and patriotism. Their arguments stems from the belief in media effects as well as the soft power of Hindi cinema in creating and sustaining imagery, myths and legends about the nation. This is one of the reasons that the key ministers from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government cabinet like the then Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee and Deputy Prime Minister L. K. Advani were present at the premiere of *LOC Kargil*. In the political arena, Pakistan and India were used in gendered metaphors, i.e., to create imageries of the vulnerability of the Indian nation, necessitating extreme caution, military empowerment and the normalisation of violence against a Muslim Pakistan by avenging the wronging of the past atrocities against a Hindu India. The naming of the external Muslim enemy also functions to indirectly remind India of the internal manifestation of that enemy, the Muslim citizen. (Kishore Budha, 2008) Hence, this 'internal enemy' cannot be trusted unless s/he proves their patriotism and they should do so without harbouring any anger towards the system. Bollywood films like *Chak De India* (2007), *My Name is Khan* (2010) depict this phenomenon. Therefore Kabir Khan in *Chak De India* is

guilty by default unless he is proved otherwise and Rizwan Khan in *My Name Is Khan* had to convince The President of the United States to acknowledge that just because his name is Khan does not mean he is a terrorist. Both of them had to do it peacefully and in the end, both had to be happy for themselves and thankful to the system for giving them a clean chit.

Various efforts are done to keep the mass media like cinema in the favour of certain political ideologies. *Garm Hava* (1974), arguably, one of the top poignant films on Partition directed by M.S Sathyu had to grapple with the Central Board of Film Certification for a year before getting the certificate. “They had doubts that the film could create tension in the society. Political leaders like Bal Thackeray and Lal Krishna Advani attacked the film. Advani wrote a review without watching the film. Later, when he became the Information and Broadcasting Minister, he apologised for writing on hearsay,” recalls Sathyu in an interview with *The Hindu* (2014). Angie Mallhi (2005), in a paper *The Illusion of Secularism: Mani Ratnam’s Bombay and The Consolidation of Hindu Hegemony* discusses how the film *Bombay* is a promotion of Hindu hegemony rather than of secularism especially because of Shiv Sena leader Bal Thackeray’s approval of it. In 1966 Bal Thackeray established Shiv Sena (a right-wing Hindu party) that has close ties with Bharatiya Janata Party (a national Hindu right-wing party). Both the parties share the belief in the doctrine of Hindutva. Hindutva is a doctrine promoted by Hindu fundamentalists, which calls for “the eventual de-secularisation of Indian society and the establishment of an ethnoreligious state.” (Gould, 1999) Keith Jones (1998) writes that for both ideological and political reasons, the Shiv Sena is a close ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Hindu-chauvinist party which dominates India's ruling coalition. Through its alliance with the Shiv Sena, the BJP also has a share in Maharashtra's state government - an important nexus to the Indian bourgeoisie, as Bombay is India's financial center. Shiv Sena literally means the army of Shivaji who was a 17th century Marathi warrior-king. This Marathi and Hindu-chauvinist organization is patterned after the fascist Rashtra Swayamsewak Sangh.

Bal Thackeray described the film *Bombay* as ‘a damned good film’ and Angie Mallhi (2005) argues that there are certain reasons behind Thackeray’s acceptance of *Bombay*. The film consolidates stereotypes about Muslims, which suggests that the community is an obstacle in the process of building a secular nation plus a meeting was set up between Bal Thackeray and Mani Ratnam prior to the release of the film and certain cuts were made based on objections raised by Bal Thackeray. The Maharashtra state’s involvement in the censorship of the film is an overt example of why the film *Bombay* cannot be viewed as a promotion of secularism, but rather, should be seen as an instrument for upholding Hindu hegemony. By comparing reports on the riots to their representation in the film, the reasons for Thackeray’s proclamation that it was ‘a damned good film’ are evident.

The films made on the Partition of 1947 had to discuss Pakistan. Films like *Border* (1997) and *LOC Kargil* (2003) reflected the tensions that simmered along the line of control during the Indo-Pak war of 1971 and the Kargil War of 1991 respectively. *Border* was a box-office success and it was the time of the rise of the right wing politics which eventually lead to the electoral victory of the BJP in 1998. Uses and gratification theory is proved here since the masses wanted to see what the cinema showed them, the masses were gratified, hence the

film was a success. However the film *Gadar* (2001) clearly identified Pakistan as the enemy while as the film *Earth* (1998) depicted the breakdown of the ties of harmony that the people enjoyed before the partition. It is portrayed that the events of partition lead people to undergo a change of character, some went through positive change and some negative. Dil Nawaz was tolerant towards other communities in the beginning but went through a negative change after his two sisters were cruelly killed in the rioting. Dil Nawaz becomes so devoid of humanity and sympathy that, in the scene when Shanta, Hassan and Lenny come to give condolences over the loss of his sisters, he rejoices on slaughtering of Hindus and his reaction shocks all the three. However completely opposite happens with the character of Rasheed in the film *Pinjar* (2003), as he becomes sympathetic, understanding and helpful for his Sikh wife Puro and strives to rectify his mistake of abducting Puro.

After 9/11, while the United States was busy declaring the 'war on terror', BJP engaged in anti-Pakistan activity like digging up cricket pitches before India-Pakistan matches, threatening film actors if found having any connection with Pakistan, with the hope that the tactics would be beneficial for the party vis-a-vis 2002 elections. Some films present narratives in which hostilities between India and Pakistan are relatively black and white while as some touch upon grey areas depicting somewhat balanced interpretation, even offer possible reconciliation. In 1990s, there was a sudden increase of anti-Pakistani rhetoric in the films like Tara Singh's reaction when asked to shout *Pakistan Zindabad, Hindustan Murdabad* and his response, "*Hindustan zindabad tha, zindabad hai aur zindabad rahega*" in *Gadar* and Al-Baksh's dialogue, "*Dhood mangogay tou kheer dengay, Kashmir mangogay tou cheer dengay*" in *Maa Tujhe Salaam*, both of which filled the Indian theaters with applause. However, *Main Hoo Na* (2004) tells a story of reconciliation in which the enemies within India like the character Raghavan creates hurdles in the peace process between the two neighbouring countries. Ram makes effort to bring his bickering family together and the two brothers (Ram and Lakshman) are united at the end which is used as a metaphor, i.e., the condition of both the nations can be restored through love and dialogue. Similarly the arrogant lawyer Zakir Hussain, admitting his defeat at the hands of Saamiya in the courtroom in *Veer Zaara* (2004), pronounces that the future of India and Pakistan lies in the hands of youngsters who doesn't discriminate people on the basis of gender, status or religion and doesn't invoke bitter memories of the wars of 1947, 1965 or 1999 fought between the two countries but addresses the future with truth, justice and nothing can stop such progress.

However after 9/11, filmmakers explored different subjects related to terrorist attacks, bombings carried out by Muslims and hate crimes against Muslims. The world witnessed many disasters in the last hundred years, hence 9/11 is not the greatest tragedy but it impacted the world because the victim was the 'superpower' of the world. Nonetheless David Sirota (2011) argues that the extremist acts by Muslims is seen as a systemic problem worthy of military invasions and now congressional witch hunts but considering the incident of 9/11 as its reason is oversimplification. Anti-Muslim sentiment was embedded in American society much before that attack of 9/11 stoked a bigoted backlash. The overwrought Reagan/Bush-era pop culture first equated "terrorist" with "Muslim." As film scholar Jack Shaheen, author of *Reel Bad Arabs*, discovered that roughly a third of the most blatantly anti-Muslim films of

the last century were made in the 1980s alone. These movies used sporadic atrocities committed by individual Islamic extremists (the Lebanon bombing, the Berlin bombing, etc.) to demonize all Muslims. Consequently, Hollywood's go-to villain in the 1980s became the Muslim terrorist - whether it was *Iron Eagle's* unnamed Middle Eastern country or *Back to the Future's* bazooka-wielding Libyans. That was the norm with Islamophobic pop culture in the Reagan/Bush period and not just in film. Early '80s editions of the G.I. Joe comic book, for example, had the heroes alternately fighting Iranians and "infiltrating a Persian Gulf nation." Likewise, in the lead-up to the first Gulf War, there were Muslim-demonizing board games for kids like *The Butcher of Baghdad* and *Arabian Nightmare*. Also, there was the World Wrestling Federation, whose preeminent Bad Guy was the keffiyeh-clad Iron Sheik described by one wrestling publication at the time as an "evil hitman (who) shows no mercy in terrorist attacks on the USA's best." Therefore what started as a cheap pop culture trope in the 1980s has now become the unquestioned assumption (David Sirota, 2011).

After the fall of Communism in Russia, the West needed an enemy and therefore they started portraying Muslims as terrorists through all means of mass media including cinema. In the book *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, John Trumbour (2003) writes that Samuel P. Huntington - a political scientist from the United States of America famous for his theory Clash of Civilizations believes that the West needs an enemy to keep the Western society from fragmentation. He decries, "the decay of Western liberalism in the absence of a cohesive ideological challenge by a competing ideology, such as Marxism-Leninism. Fragmentation and multiculturalism are now eating away at the whole set of ideas and philosophies which have been the binding cement of American society." Therefore opposition to Islam is then a means of rescuing the West from the "fragmentation" that, Huntington believes, is "now eating away at... the binding cement of American society." The millennial war against Islam is one sufficiently protracted to supply the west with a renewal of self-identity and purpose. Agenda setting theory is proved here since an agenda is set to get the desired outcome. Irving Kristol, the neoconservative patriarch proclaims that "now that the other 'Cold War' is over, the real Cold War has begun. But it is far more intellectually and spiritually interesting Cold War". Peregrine Worsthorne, former columnist for the Tory Daily Telegraph, adds that the U.S capitalism is prone to promote narcissistic materialism and only cold war had restrained these appetites and if only a new adversary could be found, would the society return to discipline and higher purpose. Leo Strauss, a German-American political philosopher and classicist and another German philosopher Carl Schmitt believes that politics is first and foremost about the distinction between 'We' and 'They'. Strauss thinks that a political order can be stable only if it is united by an external threat and if no external threat exists, then one has to be manufactured. And that is what the mass media especially cinema has done to the image of Muslims worldwide i.e. concept of 'bad' Muslims has been manufactured to keep the threat of the 'enemy' lingering. Huntington's article for the seventy-fifth anniversary issue of *Foreign Affairs* expresses it, "Without an enemy to define itself against, America's identity has disintegrated. ... The United States should scale back its involvement in the world until a threat reinvigorates our national purpose" (Qureshi & Anthony, 2003). Therefore the famous film industries of the world like Hollywood joined the bandwagon of making the world Islamophobic and made

film after film revolving around 9/11 with different themes, followed by Bollywood, Lollywood etcetera.

The films *Shoot on Sight* and *Kurbaan* portray the acts of terrorism perpetuated by Muslims to avenge the blood of their people that is shed by the United States in their home countries like Afghanistan or Pakistan while as *My Name is Khan* portray hate crimes committed against Muslims despite having no affiliation with terrorism. *Shoot on sight* and *Kurbaan* hold Muslims responsible for Islamophobia. *Shoot on Sight* shows Imam Junaid to be a 'fanatic' with extreme ideology and to whom both the police officer Tariq Ali and his friend Yunis rebuke for his extremist views and hate against the West. There is no consideration given that non-Muslims are not stooges in the hands of media and they cannot hate the Muslim community because media shows Muslims in bad light and they are at fault if they do so. Both Tariq Ali and Yunis are upset with the treatment they are being given but they bear all silently and do not think to counter the status quo in any way. However after trying to persuade his nephew to surrender, Tariq Ali shoots him when he comes to know that he is a terrorist. Again, the message is sent that the Muslims should bear silently if the system wrongs them but should stand against anybody, be it their loved one, if they create problems for the system.

Throughout the film *Kurbaan*, people running the terrorist organizations in the name of Islam are portrayed as the antagonists whose inhumane actions give bad name to the whole Muslim community worldwide. The father of the journalist Riyaz Masood speaks against American atrocities in Iraq and other Muslim countries to which the 'nationalist' Riyaz accuses him of having 'fundamentalist mentality'. Riyaz considers the attitude of his father and the likes towards the United States to be fundamentalist due to which the image of all the Muslims is ruined. What Riyaz calls fundamentalist attitude, his father calls it faithfulness towards one's religion. Therefore according to Bollywood anyone who does not speak against America's war on innocents in the Muslims lands is a 'good' Muslim i.e. a 'nationalist' and the one who does is immediately, without giving any context, is labeled as fundamentalist or extremist. Riyaz is saddened by the condition of Iraq, calls it a 'mess' when Rehana, his girl friend, asks him about his experience of covering Iraq. But he does not say or do anything about it, instead blames his father of having fundamentalist thinking. Riyaz does speak of the suffering Muslims go through because of America's supposed 'war on terror' and articulates it well with proofs and examples from the recent history during a debate in Ehsaan's class but then the film leaves the discussion halfway. Since the film already made it clear that Riyaz considers such mentality to be 'fundamentalist, therefore what he said in the debate is not what he believes in, no matter how true it actually is. He said it to impress, rather trap Ehsaan.

Roshan – The FBI agent in the film *New York* presents the standard position of the world especially the West on the 'war on terror'. Roshan candidly admits that America has done 'some' mistakes but there are many good things about America that cannot be overlooked. The good things are, as he reminds Omar, that the United States provided them opportunities and freedom despite being immigrants. And that Danial - Sameer's child is playing in an American team despite the fact that his father is a terrorist is a proof of the 'goodness' of

America. Roshan considers it to be the greatness of America as a nation that he being a Muslim is given charge of a sensitive case. While as the issues like those 'some' mistakes done by America or measures to rectify those mistakes are not elaborated upon. Instead Roshan puts all the blame on the Muslim community. He argues that the Muslims themselves have to change the hatred, which is simmering in America and other parts of the world against Muslims, into respect. It is made clear that Muslims have tarnished their image themselves and only they have to make it good again. Therefore the film completely negates the possibility of stereotyping Muslims by the media or any other agency due to which Muslims by and large suffer.

Justification of the detention and killing of the innocent Muslims is given many times in the film. Roshan being a 'good' Muslim justifies the way Sameer and other innocent Muslim Americans were treated and whatever the government did after 9/11 by saying, *Maine tumne Sameer ko nahi maara. Sameer ne jou raasta chuna tha, ussney ussay maara* (We did not kill Sameer but the way he chose killed him, translation mine). The film portrays that it is nobody's mistake that the innocents were killed in the aftermath of the 9/11 incident but it is just that the times were bad. Roshan argues that during bad times both people and the country make bad decisions which affects both and that's what happened post 9/11. The film winds up with Roshan's suggestion to Omar that the new generation has moved beyond 2001 and that it is high time to forget animosity and move forward. The film does not even talk about the justice that should be delivered to the Muslims if they are wronged or holding the system accountable in any way. In fact it absolves the system of the excesses done to lots of innocent Muslims after 9/11 and simply tells the Muslims to erase the bad memories and move forward to live life. However the portrayal of FBI as the reason of the mayhem is trivialization since one agency cannot be held responsible without mentioning the policies of the system that the agency follows.

Aamir (2008) depicts that Muslims feel they are being treated unfairly in India therefore as an act of revenge they plan terrorist attacks on the Indian soil. Several films like *Mr and Mrs Iyer* (2002), *Bol Bachchan* (2012) and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) portray the prejudices that have taken over the world regarding Muslims. In both the films, *Mr and Mrs Iyer* and *Bol Bachchan*, the protagonists had to conceal their identity to save themselves the trouble of persecution. Despite that *Aamir* and *A Wednesday* are considered a break from the typical Bollywood mainstream films yet they depict a disturbing trend that the civilians lose faith in the system and disrupt the law and order of India. Concealing the identity of the main antagonist in *A Wednesday* does not conceal the fact that he is a Muslim. His demand to release the Muslim terrorists reveals him being a Muslim from the very beginning. It gets clearer when he accepts that he is afraid of displaying his Muslim identity by wearing a cap or sporting beard and that is why he kills the released terrorists to rid 'his home' from them, since due to such handful of fanatics the whole Muslim community is blamed. In both the films, the desperate attempt of these 'civilians' do not land them in trouble anyway and they get away with it in the end. It subtly slips in the message that rather than working to strengthen the democratic process of the country, Muslims believe in the violation of the civil laws.

Due to such portrayal the image of the Muslims has been messed up and such images more often than not are mistakenly taken as reality. Hence the social learning theory and cultivation theory is proved here. American Prof. Dr. Jack G. Shaheen, in his book *Reel Bad Arabs* documents and discusses virtually every feature film that Hollywood has ever made - more than 900 films - the vast majority of which portray Arabs by distorting at every turn what most Arab men, women, and children are really like. Shaheen says that for more than a century, Hollywood has used repetition as a teaching tool, tutoring movie audiences by repeating over and over, in film after film, insidious images of the Muslim world. The trend has now been adopted by the Indian film industry. Its engagement with the Muslims as a subject has shifted over time. From lethargic and high living nawabs, badshahs and nobles, Muslims have been reduced to people with nothing but blind faith in Jihad (Jalil Ahmed, 2010).

There are films like *Mr and Mrs Iyer* and *Dhokha* that depict the mistrust and hatred for Muslims in the eyes of the non-Muslims. *Dhokha* depicts that one of the friends of the protagonist Zaid begins to hate him that after 9/11 and when Zaid is implicated in a case, his friend considers him responsible right away and that too without any proof. He even blames the whole Muslim community and calls them 'traitors' and 'terrorists' who 'can betray anybody, therefore can't be trusted and should be hanged'. In *Mr and Mrs Iyer*, it is portrayed that other communities see the Muslim community as a threat. The film shows a non-Muslim passenger commenting on an old Muslim man praying in the bus, 'Look at these terrorists and what they are doing in Kashmir'. All the passengers without any verification started accusing Muslims when they heard that the riots have erupted in the nearby village. They immediately connected the incident to the 9/11 and started blaming Muslims for what happened in the United States in 9/11 bombings. Non-Muslim passengers are shown so skeptic about Muslims that when the police officer says that the 'Hindus are butchering Muslims', one of the Hindu passengers inquired that does the officer mean that the 'Muslims are killing Hindus'. It is also portrayed that the Muslims living in India are still considered outsiders or those who belong to Pakistan since another Hindu passenger in his weak English said, "These Muslims should go back to Pakistan where they belong but they stay here and multiply." Minority status of the Muslims in India is also highlighted when a Sikh passenger rhetorically asks, "Would the Muslims spare us if they were in majority." Later the same police officer upon rescuing a little girl from a village curses Muslims for burning down a Hindu village. Meenakshi has some preconceived notions about Muslims as she begins to doubt Raja the moment she comes to know that his name is Jahangir Chowdhury and that he is a Muslim. She once blames herself for trusting a stranger and on the top of that a Muslim and she even regrets saving his life. The film suggests that police officer and all those who were helpful to Raja aka Jahangir Chowdhary would not have helped him anyway if they would have come to know that he is a Muslim. The film clearly depicts hatred and mistrust of non-Muslims for Muslims. The fellow passengers of Jahangir and Meenakshi described Muslims as terrorists and all the terrorist activities for which Muslims are said to be allegedly guilty are actually attributed to them without any proof.

Commenting on the communal divide between the groups of different faith, Jahangir recounts that any Sikh and anyone with a turban and a beard was a potential victim when Mrs Gandhi was assassinated by a Sikh bodyguard. He narrates an incident about a local Sikh whose arms were chopped off by some goons just because he was a Sikh and as a child he was grateful to God that he was a Muslim and not a Sikh. What happened to that Sikh just because he was a Sikh could have happened to him in the bus just because he was a Muslim, if Meenakshi would not have given him a Hindu name - the name of her husband. Here the film conveys how a particular crime committed by one individual of a particular community can make the whole community villainous and how it was done to Sikhs then and how it is done to Muslims now.

Films like *Sarfarosh*, *Dhokha*, *Kurbaan* and *My Name is Khan* portray Muslims as shady who cannot be trusted fully whether they are artists like Gulfam Hassan or well qualified people like professors, doctors and even home makers like Ehsaan in *Kurbaan*, Dr Faisal Rahman in *My Name is Khan* and Sara in *Dhokha*. In *Dhokha*, the same idea is conveyed by Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) Chief Raj Mehra to Sara's husband. It is difficult to recognize 'jihadis' since they don't talk about their passion of dying for their religion to anyone, not even to their beloved ones. Moreover, it has become more difficult to identify them now because the highly educated lot among the population has joined them. Therefore those people are the members of terrorist networks on whom it is difficult to cast doubt like doctors, engineers, professors and even apparently innocent people like house wives. While explaining the psychology of the suicide bombers, whom Raj Mehra calls 'jihadis', he says that the 'jihadis' want to blow themselves up to get to paradise. Therefore the desire to get to paradise is portrayed as the motivation behind the suicide attacks. It is as if Bollywood is proving the claims of Bernard Lewis – a British-American historian, mentioned in the book *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*. As per Lewis's logic Islam commands Muslims to "dispatch" non-Muslims, therefore non-Muslims should better prepare themselves for the assault and even if Muslims appear peaceable, to trust them is foolhardy because the inherent logic of their faith belies such appearance. This is exactly what happens in these films: ACP Ajay trusted Gulfam Hassan in the *Sarfarosh* and Avantika trusted Ehsaan in the *Kurbaan* and both are deceived. Dr Faisal Rahman in the *My Name is Khan*, despite having a noble profession of saving lives of people, poisons the mind of Muslims by misquoting the verses and misinterpreting the incidents of the Qur'an to carry out terrorist attacks. Hence the road of easy deductions chosen by Lewis is further emphasized by the Bollywood through the moving images.

However some films depict that the politicians are responsible for the conflicts between different communities. In the film *Anwar*, the Imam who is called to persuade Anwar to surrender tells Anwar that when politicians cannot fight poverty, they fight the Muslims so that the mind of the mass is diverted from the real issues. The film depicts politicians taking full advantage of the situation and portraying Anwar as a terrorist for their vote bank. Similarly in *Bombay* it is the politicians who fan the communal flames.

Films like *Iqbal* (2005), *Dor* (2006) come under the exceptional bracket where Muslims are shown living normal lives as any other community in India and struggling with the issues as

the society around them. The character Iqbal in the film *Iqbal* has an ardent desire to be a cricketer which is portrayed without stereotyping him or his family and without showing him having a hidden agenda of harming the interests of his country India. Similarly the character of Zeenat in *Dor* is not of a Muslim woman who is oppressed by her community but that of an independent and confident woman who fights tooth and nail to save her husband. In fact it is shown that the veil, which is usually interpreted as a tool of oppression imposed on Muslim women, can be used by a Hindu Rajput family of Rajasthan to keep their daughter-in-law in check.

Cinema as a mass media continues to play a crucial role to make or break the stereotypes, and if the latter is not done then the problem remains endemic. At a function organised to mark 25 years of the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, the filmmaker Subhas Kapoor said that Bollywood as an industry resists movies which will break stereotypes of Muslims as terrorists and if the filmmaker is progressive then the terrorist is shown dying while trying to save the flag. The filmmaker argues that very few films go against the established Muslim stereotypes. While adding to the filmmakers' argument, one of the trustees of Sahmat Sohail Hashmi maintains that a Muslim character in Hindi cinema has to pay for not going to Pakistan and normally a Muslim character has to die saving a Hindu hero. Mr. Hashmi mentions that the origin of the film *Sarfarosh*, which talks about Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, lies in the attack by Shiv Sena on a ghazal concert of the Pakistani Ghazal singer Ghulam Ali (Mohammad Ali, 2013).

Therefore cinema has the power to continue to plague the minds of the masses with the stereotyping of a particular community or break them for the common good of all the communities. If Bollywood filmmakers take the initiative of making films that represent the peace loving majority of Muslims rather than focusing on the fanatics that are of course in minority then the already distorted image of Muslims would not be distorted further. The prejudices of other communities in India towards Muslims will also be reduced which will result in the harmony among different groups. The realistic portrayal of the Muslims will add to the distinctiveness of the Indian Muslims and the standardized stereotypes have only harmed the Muslim identity.

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