(Mis)Representation of Muslims in Contemporary Hindi Cinema: An Analysis of Rensil D'Silva's *Kurbaan*

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Abstract

Cinema as a medium plays a very significant role in any society, and the things represented in cinema have a significant impact on its populace. The portrayal of Muslims in Hindi cinema has drastically changed over time. In post-colonial Hindi cinema, the representation of Muslims was either as the emperors, Mughals, or prostitutes. However, this representation took a shift after the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the 9/11 attacks. This paper aims to analyze the transition of Muslims in Hindi cinema from the Mughals to the deadly terrorists. For this purpose, a detailed analysis of the Hindi movie Kurbaan is provided at the end of the paper.

Keywords: Islamophobia, Hindu-Muslim, Stereotype, Terrorism.

Introduction

Cinema as an art form has always been important in forming religious and political discourses. It had played a significant role in propagating ideologies of the state from the very beginning. India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, with marvelous cultural, ethnic, and communal diversity. India is home to the two largest faiths in the world, i.e., Hinduism and Islam. These two faiths often have conflicts with each other due to religious differences and, more often, because of the politics involved behind them. Politics have played a very significant role in shaping the destiny of the largest minority in the largest democracy of the world. This politics is not restricted to votes and elections; it has reached almost every aspect of human life and civilization, and cinema is an important aspect that politicians have often exploited for their personal and political benefits. Movies significantly impact society; they foster new ideas and trends and tend to reinvent old customs, trends, and traditions. If an idea succeeds in a society, it gets transferred to other societies and future generations. The Indian film industry, often mistaken as Bollywood, is one of the most robust film industries in the world.

The Indian film industry comprises Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Bengali, Malayalam, and other major film industries of the country. Bollywood is identified with the Hindi film industry, which is perhaps the strongest or has the most reach in the country and outside the country for the Hindi-speaking and understanding audience. Cinema has often been used as a weapon in the hands of the state for decades, and this weapon has been used as a tool by the state for propaganda and mass education.

The three most significant incidents that shook the whole narrative of Indian cinema, or more precisely Hindi cinema, were the Babri Masjid demolition by Karsewaks in Ayodhya, the 9/11 or September 11 attacks of New York, and the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. These incidents changed the whole perspective of the Hindi cinema of looking at a Muslim character in the movies. After the Babri Masjid demolition episode, Hindutva politics started surging and led to a number of riots in the country, and the same was depicted by the Hindi film industry in a manner that added more fuel to the situation, which was already worsening. Hindutva politics post Babri Masjid demolition episode tampered with the image of the largest minority of the largest functioning democracy of the world. The public distortion of the image of the minority religion led to harsh propaganda in the hands of the media and cinema. This propaganda was unprecedented and was never witnessed in the past four decades, post-Indian independence. Hindutva politics portrayed Islam as a fundamentally polarized religion, and its sole purpose is to create disharmony and terrorism in the Hindu-majority nation. Islam was portrayed or rather is portrayed by media and Hindi cinema as Invader's religion. These projections created certain stereotypes about Muslims, which further created an environment of discrimination and hate against the minority religion practitioners. These stereotypical perspectives have affected the lives of millions of people in this part of the world, which is the second largest home to the minority religion in the world. India has been a secular country from the very beginning, and the portrayal of this secularism was very evident in the movies that were made in the pre-Babri Masjid demolition era. Like the Babri Masjid demolition episode is an important incident in the Indian context regarding the representation of Muslims, 9/11 is an important incident in a global context. It was after 9/11 that the perspective of the world started changing towards Islam, and that too, in a very negative manner. Muslims were blamed for the Twin Tower attacks in New York, and the world was forced or unitedly dragged into the war against terrorism. It was after this incident that Muslims were portrayed as terrorists all around the world. It was at this time only that the Hindi film industry, like the other world film industries, started portraying Muslims as terrorists and Islam as the religion of terrorism. More and more movies were being made on this new fascinating subject of terrorism, and it was only Muslims who were shown as the terrorists in these movies. The 26/11 Mumbai attacks were another blow to the image of Muslims around the world; this created a hostile environment for the Muslims in the country. Terrorist movies started being made in large numbers after the 26/11 incident, and Muslims were shown in an allegiance with the neighboring country of Pakistan, which is often referred to as the hub of terrorism. They were shown as receiving aid and support from Pakistan for carrying out terrorist activities on Indian soil.

The stereo typification of the muslim community by the majority religion practitioners plays a very significant role in elevating the problems, and this stereotypification is carried on in cinema as well. To understand the term "stereotype" in its current usage, it is important to look into Walter Lippmann's discussion on stereotypes. He defined "stereotype" as a "distorted picture or image in a person's mind, not based on personal experience, but derived culturally." Lippmann reasoned that the formation of stereotypes is driven by social, political, and economic motivations, and as they are passed from one generation to the next, they can become quite pervasive and resistant to change. Historically, state actors have mobilized stereotypes in service of the social process that

Lippmann calls "the manufacture of consent." For instance, in times of war or economic hardship, governments have used stereotypes to reconfigure ethical landscapes and delineate new boundaries separating protagonists (the "in-group") from antagonists (the "out-group" or "enemy"). Taken to a logical extreme, this sort of us-versus-them polarization ultimately enables members of the in-group to tolerate or even rationalize harming members of the perceived out-group.

Raymond Williams explored the role of media in shaping social consciousness, particularly through image and representation. Williams argued that media is not just a neutral tool but a cultural form shaped by social, economic, and political conditions. He opposed technological determinism (the idea that technology alone determines societal changes) and emphasized that media must be analyzed in the context of historical and social structures. Williams viewed representation not as a direct reflection of reality but as a process influenced by ideology and power. Media images are not neutral; they are shaped by dominant social interests and reinforce particular values and worldviews. Williams viewed representation not as a direct reflection of reality but as a process influenced by ideology and power. Media images are not neutral; they are shaped by dominant social interests and reinforce particular values and worldviews. Williams introduced the concept of "selective tradition," where media and cultural institutions selectively highlight certain images, stories, and values while marginalizing others. This process ensures that dominant ideologies remain influential while alternative or oppositional perspectives are often suppressed. Williams acknowledged that images in media (such as television, film, and advertising) are not mere reflections but active constructions that shape how people perceive reality. He critiqued the way mass media often simplifies, stereotypes, and commodifies culture. He argued that media images create a sense of "false immediacy," where audiences feel a direct connection to events or people, even though these representations are mediated and constructed.

Jean Baudrillard, a French philosopher and cultural theorist, explored representation and image extensively, particularly through his concepts of simulation, hyperreality, and the precession of simulacra. His work critiques how media and images shape and distort our perception of reality. Traditional representation assumes a real world that media and images attempt to depict or reflect. Baudrillard argues that in postmodern society, media no longer represents reality but creates a simulated version of it, detached from any real referent. This process leads to a world where signs and images replace the real, making it impossible to distinguish between reality and its representation. Baudrillard famously claimed, "*The Gulf War did not take place*." By this, he meant that the media's representation of the war through highly curated images, narratives, and selective framing created a version of the war that replaced any objective reality. The war existed more as a televised spectacle than as an actual, experienced event for most people. In the age of social media, AI, and digital content, his ideas are more relevant than ever. We increasingly live in a world dominated by simulated experiences where deepfakes, virtual influencers, and AI-generated content blur the lines between real and fake. His work urges us to critically examine how images and media shape not just our perception of reality but reality itself.

The 'good Muslim' versus 'bad Muslim' dichotomy has become more prominent in the films post 9/11. It should be noted that 9/11 perceptibly transformed the ways in which cinema began to deal with and represent terrorism. Representational changes were aided by the changing business models in the industry, the increasing corporate links with media houses in the US in particular, significantly influenced the cinematic treatment of terrorism (Gabriel and Vijayan 301).

Pre-Babri Masjid Demolition Era

The cinema of the pre-Babri Masjid demolition era was somewhat neutral; it tried to maintain harmony in the country by displaying a positive relationship between the two major religions of the

subcontinent. The Muslim characters were portrayed as backward and fundamentalist. The films that were made during colonial rule were known as 'Empire Cinema,' and these films constructed the 'Muslim menace' by showing Muslims as anti-national and backward. Another genre of films that became quite famous after independence was 'Partition films.' These films depicted Hindu-Muslim solidarity. These films blamed the Muslims for the partition of the country. Another genre of films that was quite popular was the 'Muslim Social'; in this genre, the lives of Muslim families were depicted, and these films were not by any means Islamic. Other genres of Hindi films, besides these genres, showed Muslims as the "other," and these depictions came from the stereotypes that were prevalent about Muslims in the society. Very few films have featured a Muslim character as the protagonist, and this has almost reduced to nil in today's times. The 1983 blockbuster movie *Coolie* starring Amitabh Bachchan was one such film in which the protagonist was a Muslim character from the lower strata of the society. The two main depictions of the Muslims in the Pre-independence films were either as a Mughal emperor or king or as prostitutes at the *Kotha* (brothel). A number of films were made on the theme of prostitution, like, *Pakeezah, Umrao Jan* and *Nikaah*. With the passage of time and Hindi films entering the 70s and 80s, the Muslim character was portrayed as a loyal policeman or sidekick to the hero.

The films of the initial decades after independence were based on the principles of Nehruvian Socialism, which advocated Secularism. In these films, the Muslim characters were shown as sensible, devout, and overall good. These films were quite popular during the 1950s and 1960s. These films focused on Secularism so much because those were the times of the height of the Hindu-Muslim riots in the country, and these films tried to maintain a balance and calm the situation to some extent. Several films in this era portrayed stereotypical images of Muslims by showing them as Mughal emperors speaking polished Urdu and reciting poetry and Ghazals; these images were far from reality because they did not show the plight of the average Muslim of the country that was struggling for his survival. A strange thing to notice in the films of this era was that no film mentions the name of Pakistan as compared to today's films, where every other film mentions Pakistan as an enemy nation. Many Muslim Hindi film actors, like Dileep Kumar, Pran, and Madhubala, kept Hindu names in this era.

90's from Secularism to Chauvinism

The decade of the 1990s began with a traumatic incident in the nation's history. It disturbed the age-old harmony between the two major religions of the country. Babri Masjid of Ayodhya was demolished by the Kar Sewaks of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad on the claims that the masjid was constructed after demolishing a temple under the orders of Mughal emperor Babur. This led to several riots between Hindus and Muslims. The 1993 Mumbai Bombings were also an aftermath of the Babri Masjid demolition episode. Thousands of people lost their lives and became homeless due to these riots. These riots between Hindus and Muslims were perpetuated by the politicians of the country. It was after this horrendous incident only that Hindutva politics started gaining momentum in the erstwhile secular state of India. This was unprecedented because nothing of this sort was witnessed in the past four decades after independence. A Hindu narrative was widely spread, this narrative contributed to the divisive agenda and othering of the Muslim and gave him the designation of a second-class citizen in his own country. This created a hostile environment for the Muslims and other religious minorities of the country. The Muslims of the country were accused of being anti-India and anti-national.

The Muslim character who was seen as a protagonist in the previous decades started disappearing in the 90s and after the Babri Masjid incident hardly any films were made featuring the character of Muslim as protagonist. After the Babri Masjid demolition episode, the Muslim Protagonist

completely disappeared from the big screen, and he was now seen in the role of a minor character like that of the hero's friend. The Muslim who was previously shown as a loyal policeman was now shown in the roles of villain, smuggler, international spy, and most importantly, terrorist. The Muslim characters were forced into such situations where they had to prove their love for their nation. It was scarce to see Muslim characters as freedom fighters or defense personnel; they were instead portrayed as having connections with terrorist groups and militant organizations.

Following the second half of the nineties, a number of films related Islam to terrorism (majorly aided by Pakistan) wherein, there remained a constant dichotomy between the 'good' and the 'bad' Muslim with the latter being depicted as harboring anti-national (extending to pro-Pakistan) feelings. This apart, in an interview with Tavishi Alagh over the overlapping of Pakistani and Muslim identity in Hindi films, noted Bollywood Lyricist and scriptwriter Javed Akhtar points that the communally charged times starting with the nineties saw a lot of films wherein an implicit Hindu and Indian identity were seen as the same thing. In the course of the conversation, Akhtar noted that there were some filmmakers who were deliberately stoking a certain kind of religious/ jingoistic passion (Alagh 190).

The primary reason behind this shift in the roles of the Muslim characters was the rise of Hindu nationalism and politics in the country. The rise of Hindu nationalist ideology gave birth to the anti-Muslim narrative, which the Hindutva-leaning politicians further fostered. This decade proved to be very harmful and disastrous for the secular fabric of the country; these so-called Hindu nationalist narratives molested the secular values of the country, which were protected in the past four decades. Several incidents of religious violence were witnessed in the country during this period; this led to the death of thousands of people on account of riots and gave rise to extreme hate between the two communities, which were supposed to live peacefully in the same country and were living peacefully for the past centuries. This was the time with the most number of communal riots and these riots were to a great extent triggered by the religious politics involved behind them. A number of leaders of the Right-Wing political parties organized Rath Yatras all over the country, which further triggered tensions between the Hindus and Muslims.

The 1992 Babri Masjid Demolition incident is considered a watershed moment in the history of secular India because it was after this that things started changing and became worse for the secular fabric of the country. It was around these times in 1987 when Ramanand Sagar's Ramayana was telecasted on Doordarshan, and it had a significant impact on viewers around the country. The telecast of Ramayana and its impact can also be analyzed as one of the major reasons which gave rise to the Hindutva sentiment in the country because at this time the Ramayana was at its peak of viewership and so was the Hindutva narrative gaining momentum in the decade of 1990s.

Another major factor that contributed to the deterioration of the ties between the Hindus and the Muslims was the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir has been a favorite subject for filmmakers from Mumbai for quite some time now. With time, the depiction or portrayal of Jammu and Kashmir also changed in the Bombay film industry movies. Earlier, Jammu and Kashmir was shown as an ideal holiday destination; it was referred to as paradise on earth, but this view of Jammu and Kashmir changed, after the Babri Masjid demolition episode. After the Babri Masjid demolition incident, Jammu and Kashmir was depicted in the movies as a hub of fundamental Islamic terrorism. It was frequently mentioned as the home of the separatist leaders and the base of the numerous militant organizations which are continuously trying to create an environment of insurgency in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. These films created a difference between India and the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where Jammu and Kashmir was portrayed as an Islamic ideology-driven state and India as a peace-loving Hindu state.

In the 1990s, a number of war films were made by the major Bollywood production houses; these films constructed a narrative in which the Muslim was always wrong and the Indian state or, more precisely, the Hindutva ideology, always right. Mani Ratnam's 'Roja' was the first such film to be made on the subject of war, this film was set in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The film received the National Integration Award in 1992. Many films of this era employed the theme of India-Pakistan rivalry. A few such films based on this theme are Border (1997), Gadar- Ek Prem Katha (2001), Maa Tujhe Salaam (2002), and LOC Kargil (2003). In these films, an environment of tension, anger, and animosity was depicted, and this anger was directed towards the arch-rival of India, Pakistan. In these films, Pakistan is held responsible for carrying out numerous terrorism-related activities on Indian soil; Pakistan is represented or referred to as the main progenitor and perpetrator of terrorism. It is also shown that the Pakistani state supports the acts of these terrorist masterminds. In these films, Indian Muslims are shown as having an allegiance with the neighboring Pakistan and that they connect to them because of the same religion. A very famous war film of this decade was JP Dutta's Border, which was released in 1997; in the film, there are a number of instances when Muslim Indians are blamed and questioned for their loyalty toward their nation, India. In one such incident, when the army is suspicious of the role of Kashmiri villagers in passing on some crucial information to the Pakistani side, one of the Indian soldiers could be heard saying that it is the Indian Muslims who have relatives on the other side of the border and that these are those Indian Muslims who are helping the Pakistanis in infiltrating into the Indian territory. These films implicitly and intentionally associated Indian nationalism with Hinduism and made suspicious and vague claims that Indian Muslims are in support of Pakistan.

War films that were made after the Babri Masjid demolition episode, to a great extent, ignored the Nehruvian socialist and secular narrative and instead adopted the new Hindu Nationalist narrative. This new narrative that was adopted made Indian citizenship and Hinduism equivalent, and all the other forces, be it any who were against this theory or narrative, were declared anti-national and were treated harshly.

Chauvinism touched new heights in this era, anything and everything in these movies was compared with some religious allegory and was justified. In the movie Border there is a scene when Indian troops are faced with the Pakistani side, and the Pakistani side is huge in number at that time Sunny Deol, who is the main protagonist of the film, brings a religious allegory from Sikhism where a militant guru fought hundred and twenty-five thousand people alone, and Sunny Deol boosts the morale of the army by comparing one Indian soldier to hundred and twenty-five thousand Pakistani soldiers and terrorists.

Most of the films on the subject of war, that helped the government in spreading their propaganda, were made tax-free in a number of states. Sarfarosh was one such film that was made tax-free for three months. Other famous films include LOC Kargil, which was made by JP Dutta, who also made another famous war film of the same era named Border. The premiere of LOC Kargil was attended by then Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and other prominent government leaders and ministers. It is interesting to notice that most of the films made on the subject of war were made during the rule of a political party, which is considered a right-wing Hindutva-leaning party.

9/11 and Birth of the Muslim Token Terrorist

Devastating changes occurred after the horrifying incident of the 9/11 attacks, where the Al Qaeda terrorists hijacked two American passenger planes and then collided with the Twin Towers of New York. Almost three thousand people lost their lives in the horrendous incident, and the aftermath was even more dangerous and devastating than the 9/11 incident itself. The whole blame

for this incident was put on the Muslim community. Since then, in general, things have become quite difficult for the Muslim community, especially for those Muslims who are residing in the West. They were looked at with suspicion everywhere. It was not as if this was something new and had not happened earlier, but this was more extreme than it had been earlier. The Western world has always stereotyped Muslims. They have mostly been generalized and depicted as fundamentalist and marginalized. These stereotypes were created by the pictures of the Muslims that were portrayed by the Western media in the world. The aftermath of the 9/11 incident was such that Muslims around the world received a lot of criticism and were discriminated against at almost all levels. Muslims were demonized and were either considered terrorists or sympathizers of terrorists. Islam was portrayed as the religion of hate and terrorism by the world media and especially the Western media. Hate crimes against the Muslims increased drastically after the incident of 9/11. Muslims were viewed as barbaric, irrational, uncultured and lustful beings. Western media played a very significant role in making the situation worse for the Muslims who were living in the West and the other parts of the world where the Muslims were in the minority; it continuously showed Muslims as anti-democratic, aggressive, and full of anger towards the West. The innocent Muslims suffered a lot because of the global outrage against the community; they suffered because of the acts of a few lunatic Muslims who conducted and gave results to these terrorist attacks. Media showed a negative image of Muslims, which generated a negative and derogatory perception of the practitioners of one of the largest religions in the world. Many influential world leaders commented negatively about the Muslim community, which further deteriorated the situation for the Muslims. Muslims residing in America faced a tremendous blow because of the 9/11 incident; they were tortured and discriminated against, they lost their jobs, and a number of incidents of vandalizing of the shops of the Muslims were also reported.

Hindi Cinema borrowed the theme of Muslim terrorism from the West, like many other film industries of the world. It was after the Twin Tower attacks in New York that Muslims were represented as terrorists in the movies, and more precisely, only Muslims were shown as terrorists in Hindi movies. The films that were made before 9/11 dealt with the domestic issue of terror, but the films that were made after the incident of 9/11 dealt with the issue of global Islamic terrorism. The Muslim characters or suspicious terrorists were shown in allegiance with global terrorist masterminds, and the Muslim was shown more concerned about Jihad and his religion more than anything else, be it his family or nation.

The big Bollywood production houses also took an interest in this new genre of terrorist films and made exceptional films such as Fanaa, New York, and Kurbaan. The films of the pre 9/11 era depicted the terrorist as someone who becomes a terrorist because of the oppression and exploitation that he has faced in the society by the majority community. However, the films that were made after 9/11 portrayed a different picture of the terrorist; in these films, the terrorist was not a typical Muslim man wearing a beard and skull cap but an educated young Muslim with a handsome job and personality. In these films, the Muslim chooses to become a terrorist not because of the oppression and exploitation but because of his allegiance and feeling for the international terrorist organizations and Islamic brotherhood; he relates and connects himself with the motives of the international terror outfits.

Hindi cinema focuses a lot on Jihad and considers it as one of the major reasons behind the terrorist attacks that these young Muslim men performed. The literal meaning of Jihad translates as struggle; it is further divided into two categories by Islamic religious scholars: Jihad Akbar, which means greater Jihad, and Jihad Asgar, which means lesser Jihad. The greater Jihad means a struggle against weaknesses of self and how to live and attain piety in this contaminated world. The lesser Jihad means self-defense and self-preservation. The word Jihad is mentioned 41 times in the Islamic holy book Quran.

Hindi movies often make this generalization that an orthodox Muslim is a potential terrorist. The ways of treatment of terrorism in Hindi cinema have evolved; the terrorist individual is shown as a Bad Muslim in the movie, and there are a few minor Muslim characters that are shown as Good Muslims. The typical depiction of any Good Muslim is that he would be open-minded and modern in his approach, he would not wear long beards and skull caps, and he would not put restrictions on women in his house. These good Muslims are employed in movies to counterbalance the situation. These characters of good and bad Muslims can be traced and identified in almost every Hindi movie made on the subject of war and terrorism.

A very famous 2018 film, Mulk, is a classic example of this good and bad Muslim dichotomy. In the film, Shahid Mohammad, played by Prateik Babbar, is represented as a bad Muslim because of his allegiance to a terrorist organization and his planning of a terrorist attack. On the contrary, Murad Ali Mohammad, played by Rishi Kapoor, is represented as a good Muslim because he condemns the acts of his nephew Shahid and tries to disassociate himself and his family from him. Another interesting character in the movie is that of SSP Danish Javed, whom Rajat Kapoor plays; he is the one who shoots down Shahid in an encounter. SSP Danish Javed is a typical example of a good Muslim who is frustrated by the acts of few bad people of his community, he decides to take revenge against those people because of whom the whole community is labeled as anti-national. The character of Murad Ali is a good Muslim but not in an ideal sense because he wears a beard with a plain upper lip and a skull cap, but such is not the case with SSP Danish Javed.

Kurbaan

Directed by Rensil D'Silva, *Kurbaan* was released in 2009, starring Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan in leading roles. The film broke all the stereotypical notions that were already prevalent in the minds of the audience regarding the representation of Muslims as terrorists. The movie starts with the love story between a Muslim lecturer, Ehsan, and a Hindu Professor, Avantika, played by Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan, respectively. The duo falls in love with each other and moves to the United States because of Avantika's job and hopes that Ehsan will also get a job at the same university. They find a house in an Asian Muslim neighborhood where the movie's other characters are introduced. The two influential senior members of the neighborhood are Bhaijaan and his wife, Nasreen; Nasreen is addressed as Aapa by her neighbors. Nasreen has a significant influence over the women of the neighborhood and preaches that they should be obedient and subservient to their husbands and elders. In one of the beginning scenes of the movie, she mentions that the foremost duty of a wife is to take care of her husband and house. The characters shown are very typical in the sense that men wear beards and women wear traditional salwar-kameez. The women are seen wearing Hijabs and are controlled to a great extent by their husbands and aapa Nasreen, they are not allowed to work. Avantika is totally opposite to these women because she is independent, working, and does not wear traditional Muslim clothes. The people who follow faith other than Islam are referred to as Kaafirs in the movie; Avantika is referred to as Kaafir in the movie by Bhaijaan because she is a Hindu.

As the narrative proceeds, Avantika gets to know about the evil plans of the people around her to bomb an aircraft that was carrying a delegation to Iraq. In due course of time, Avantika gets to know that her husband Ehsan is also involved in terrorist activities and that he married her just so that he could enter American territory legally. The group led by Bhaijaan finally bombs the aircraft, and in this aircraft travels Rihana, another important character in the movie, because she is the girlfriend of Riyaz, a reporter and an important character in the movie played by Vivek Oberoi. Riyaz and Rihana are the ideal representations of good Muslims because they are modern, peace-loving, and nothing like Bhaijaan and Nasreen. After the death of his girlfriend Rihana,

Riyaz tries to avenge her death by joining the group of terrorists through Ehsan and tries to bring their foul plans in front of the police and the authorities.

The terrorist group led by Bhaijaan then plans to bomb the subway stations, and Riyaz is a part of the squad; the squad is accompanied by the female characters at the end of the movie, and they finally manage to bomb two such subway stations. Ehsan, at the end of the movie, saves the life of Avantika, and he himself dies in the shooting.

The things that are noticeable in the movie are the conversations that take place between the members of the terrorist group and between Riyaz and fellow class members when he attends the lecture given by Ehsan on Jihad. Riyaz, just to win the trust of Ehsan, gets into a quarrel with one of the students and justifies the attempts of terrorism and Jihad by the Muslims. The orders that are given by Bhaijaan to the other members are referred to by Bhaijaan as the will of Allah (God). Bhaijaan justifies all his acts as things that he is doing to save the religion from the whites, and his attempts will bear him fruits after his death.

This movie is a perfect depiction of a modern terrorist movie because it quashes all the traditional stereotypes set about in society regarding Muslim terrorist depiction. Another reason behind the importance of this movie is that it was released in the year just after the horrendous 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attacks. This incident makes the selection of this movie for this particular analysis even more important. The two types of characters portrayed in the movie represent the divisions we claimed earlier in the paper: the good and the bad Muslims. Riyaaz and his partner Rihaana represent the good Muslims in the movie, whereas the bad Muslim characters are represented by Bhaijaan, Nasreen, Ehsan, and their associates. This dichotomy is essential for our understanding of the movie and the politics involved behind it. The movie shows the characters' extreme nature and determination to execute their foul plans. It also shows wonderfully how Ehsan lures Avantika into believing that he is in love with her and finally uses her to enter the United States to execute his plans.

Conclusion

The constant desire for domination over a geographical area by the majority religion has always created problems for the minority religion practitioners of that particular area, this phenomenon applies perfectly to the Indian nation-state. Constant portrayal of a particular community as violent and aggressive has added to the miseries of that particular community and this has caused disharmony in the country. Cinema and other forms of media have played a very significant role in aggravating this problem by presenting false and extreme representations. This paper tried to depict the representation of Muslims in three phases: the Pre-Babri Masjid Demolition era, the Post-Babri Masjid Demolition era, and the post-9/11 attacks era. This paper tried to analyze the various genres explored by the Hindi film industry, ranging from Muslim Social to War and Terrorist films. The paper also focused on the various stereotypes that are created about Muslims in India and in the West by the Western media. Muslims form a substantial portion of the Indian population and the world population, judging them on the basis of a few stereotypes is not justified.

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