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### Lights, Camera, Transformation: The Westernization of Bollywood

When someone mentions Bollywood, most people think of melodramatic movies whose actors spontaneously burst into song and dance. Indeed, these are defining traits of Bollywood movies. Avid Bollywood-lovers will never forget Amitabh Bachchan's dance to the hit song "Khaike Paan Banaras Wala" from the movie *Don* or Sridevi's performance to "Mere Haathon Mein Nau Nau Choodiyan" in the movie *Chandni*. But what is Bollywood really?

Bollywood is an unofficial term for the world's largest film industry based in Mumbai, India. Like it sounds, the name is a neologism made by combining "Bombay," the British name for Mumbai, and "Hollywood."<sup>1</sup> Exactly how this term originated is unclear, but by the late 1960's, people had begun using "Bollywood" as a synonym for Indian cinema.<sup>2</sup> However, Bollywood and Indian cinema are not the same. Indian cinema includes films from all regions of India along with several different languages, such as Marathi, Bhojpuri, and Tamil. Bollywood,<sup>3</sup> on the other hand, consists of mainly Hindi-language movies, implying that the term refers to Hindi movies made by Mumbai's film industry after 1960.<sup>4</sup> Viewers often look to Bollywood to discern what constitutes Indian culture, as a strong sense of Indian values and morals is embedded in these movies. In fact, the basis of countless Bollywood films has been the idea of upholding these values and morals. Films like *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak* and *Bobby*, for

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<sup>1</sup> Blackwell, Fritz. *India*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004. Print. Global Studies: Asia. 15

<sup>2</sup> Blackwell 157

<sup>3</sup> In this paper, only trends in popular Bollywood movies (i.e. films meant for mainstream theatrical release) will be considered, since these are the movies that garner the most viewership and affect the majority of audiences.

<sup>4</sup> Gokulsing, K. Moti, and Wimal Dissanayake. *Indian Popular Cinema*. Rev ed. N.p.: n.p., 2004. Print. 21

example, deal with the Indian values of obeying parents.<sup>5</sup> Other movies, including *Deewar* and *Karan Arjun*, focus on the importance of the mother in Indian culture. Perhaps the most evident aspect of traditional Bollywood movies is their emphasis on family entertainment. Classic movies like *Gol Maal*, *Maine Pyar Kiya*, and *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun* present a story that the entire family can watch together. This is because in India, a country with over one billion people, movies have for decades persisted as the most popular form of mass entertainment.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, for the average Indian, going to the movies is not a casual pastime. Rather, it is a huge event, an activity the entire family prepares for and enjoys together. Typically, one member of the family will go out and buy tickets the day before, and the day of, the entire family will dress up for the occasion and plan what to eat before watching the movie. Bollywood movies bring families closer together. Naturally, filmmakers have catered to this practice, which has significantly shaped the content of Bollywood movies. Traditional Bollywood films rarely showcase any actions or images that would make a family member uncomfortable. Instead, they focus on promoting the idea of a perfect family by highlighting the importance of good morals and behavior.<sup>7</sup> And yet several new movies made after the year 2000 lack all these traditional qualities of Bollywood. The 2003 film *Kal Ho Naa Ho*, for example, portrays a broken family living in New York, and the 2012 movie *Cocktail* shows a couple in a live-in relationship and has little reference to India. Both these stories present content that would have seemed undesirable to Bollywood audiences in the 1980's. The strong sense of Indian culture that permeated Hindi movies for decades is slowly fading away.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix D for a translation of Hindi movie titles appearing throughout this paper

<sup>6</sup> Kavoori, Anandam, and Aswin Punathambekar, eds. *Global Bollywood*. New York: New York UP, 2008. Print. 3

<sup>7</sup> Cook, David A. "Satyajit Ray and Indian Film." *A History of Narrative Film*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1981. 596-98. Print.

As the 1990's went by, Bollywood witnessed changes that set it off on an unprecedented path in Indian cinema. It was a path that contradicted what Bollywood had presented in the past, that displayed new ideas to traditional audiences, that reshaped the very basis of Bollywood. As the world became unified through technological means and began to increasingly emphasize the importance of a global community, Bollywood took that globalization into account. The role of traditional Indian values and ideas diminished in Hindi movies. A new culture replaced these values. By the turn of the century, it was clear that Bollywood was becoming something different; it was becoming westernized.<sup>8</sup> Yet, instead of resisting this influence like it had in the past, the Hindi movie industry began embracing and even encouraging this transformation. This influence has changed the flavor of Bollywood cinema and is still shaping Hindi movies today, and Bollywood is allowing this renovation to occur in order to achieve one main goal. Bollywood is becoming westernized in order to appeal to as many overseas viewers as possible, thereby expanding its market outside of India and increasing its profits.

A key milestone that was essential to this expansion of Bollywood's market was the liberalization of the Indian economy. After India received independence from British rule in 1947, its economy formed from a mix of industrialist and socialist policies which focused mainly on inward economic growth. This push to grow the domestic economy resulted from India's recently-gained independence and its necessity to build a nation without relying on British support. For this reason, the pre-liberalization Indian economy placed a strong emphasis on import substitution industrialization, advocating the replacement of foreign imports with domestic production. However, this economic approach failed to capitalize on the expansion of

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<sup>8</sup> *westernize*: v. to imbue with qualities native to or associated with a western region, especially the noncommunist countries of Europe and America. (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012. Web. 11 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>>). In this context, westernized will refer specifically to traits associated with the United States and England, two global entities which have had a significant cultural impact on India.

trade that occurred after India's struggle for independence, and the economy proved to be corrupted, inefficient, and struggling by the 1990's. India was in great debt and asked the International Monetary Fund for a 1.8 billion dollar bailout loan, which the IMF granted on the condition that India would implement economic reforms.<sup>9</sup> To ameliorate the situation, India switched to free-market policies and liberalized<sup>10</sup> its economy in 1991, which encouraged international investments and promoted the growth of new industries.<sup>11</sup> Both of these consequences were beneficial to Bollywood. By investing more in the foreign market, India opened a whole new channel through which Bollywood could access audiences across the globe. Furthermore, the Indian government encouraged Bollywood to expand by officially granting it industry status at this time, which allowed Bollywood to become more structured and organized, as well as have better control over finances than it had in the past.<sup>12</sup> Since liberalization, India's economy has continually been on the rise, currently standing as the ninth largest economy by GDP in the world and expected to become the third largest economy by 2035.<sup>13</sup> A significant part of this rising economic superpower, the Bollywood industry has grown to become the largest producer of films in the world, seeing a growth rate of 10 percent per year.<sup>14</sup> With these economic changes in place, Bollywood was prepared to make its mark on the global economy.

Technological advances during the 1990's determined exactly how Bollywood would make that mark. New resources and technologies – like VCR's, DVD's, advanced websites, and satellite television – expanded sources of revenue for Bollywood, with about 11 percent of

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<sup>9</sup> "India's Surprising Economic Miracle." *The Economist*. N.p., 30 Sept. 2010. Web. 13 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.economist.com/node/>>.

<sup>10</sup> Economic liberalization refers to fewer government restrictions in the economy to allow private entities to have more economic growth. ("India's Surprising Economic Miracle.")

<sup>11</sup> Singh, Ajay, and Arjuna Ranawana. "Local Industrialists against Multinationals." *TIME Magazine*. N.p., Mar. 2007. Web. 12 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/asia/>>.

<sup>12</sup> Gokulsing 121

<sup>13</sup> "India's Surprising Economic Miracle."

<sup>14</sup> Gokulsing 121

industry revenues today coming from cable and satellite rights.<sup>15</sup> But along with this influx of profits came an influx of foreign culture. With the advent of satellite television, India began to witness and recognize new cultural ideas that had seemed completely distant before this time period. The station that influenced India the most was MTV.<sup>16</sup> This channel directly exposed Indian audiences to western culture. Through MTV, Indian audiences became aware of pop culture in both British and American societies, creating a foundation for the growth of western culture in Indian society, especially among the youth. This exposure allowed western influences to seep into Indian media and light sparks of change within the Hindi film industry.

What truly allowed these sparks of change to ignite widespread reform was international recognition. A handful of Bollywood movies became huge international successes. Among these movies were the 1995 *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, 1998 *Kuch Kuch Hota Hain*, and 1999 *Taal*. These films established overseas markets as significant sources of revenue for Bollywood. In fact, a press release by Eros Entertainment stated that *Taal*'s box office collections within three days of its release surpassed those of Hollywood blockbusters, including *Eyes Wide Shut* and *The Blair Witch Project*.<sup>17</sup> This success was largely attributed to the growing population of Indian immigrants overseas, which at that time was just around 10 million.<sup>18</sup> These immigrants have been integrated into western audiences since then and today total around 25 million.<sup>19</sup> Due to hit movies like these, Bollywood began to accumulate international recognition by the year 2000. Finally, in 2001, one movie pulled Bollywood into the western limelight. Ashutosh Gowariker's *Lagaan* received international critical acclaim and was a huge success in both

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<sup>15</sup> "The Indian Bollywood Industry." *International Business Development*. Ed. Ejvind Vogg. Danish India, May 2012. Web. 5 Feb. 2013. <<http://di.dk/SiteCollectionDocuments/DIBD>>

<sup>16</sup> Rao, Shakuntala. "The Globalization of Bollywood." *Texas A&M University*. N.p., 2007. Web. 3 Dec. 2012. <<http://worldroom.tamu.edu/Presentations/India/Bollywood/pdf>>.

<sup>17</sup> Kavoori 19

<sup>18</sup> Gokulsing 4

<sup>19</sup> Kavoori 98

Indian and overseas markets.<sup>20</sup> A film that explores pre-independence tensions between India and Britain through the game of cricket, *Lagaan*<sup>21</sup> was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2002 and was later ranked in Empire Magazine's "The 100 Best Films of World Cinema" and Time Magazine's "The All-TIME 25 Best Sports Movies."<sup>22</sup> Because of *Lagaan*, Bollywood realized that it could appeal to western audiences and suddenly viewed England and America as countries that held untapped potential for revenue and viewership. As a result, Bollywood began catering to these new viewers. This shift in focus caused Bollywood to implement swift and drastic changes that have, in a span of barely 20 years, extensively transformed the face of Hindi cinema.

One of the first noticeable changes in Bollywood movies was the setting of the stories. Naturally, in order to appeal to foreign audiences, filmmakers began setting stories in foreign locations. They reasoned that basing stories in areas such as London and New York, which were familiar to westerners, would encourage new audiences to come and watch Bollywood movies.<sup>23</sup> As a result, the country of India merely became a land from which the protagonists or their parents had emigrated. Before the 21<sup>st</sup> century, India represented more than just the setting for a Bollywood story. Numerous films were based on the patriotism and loyalty the protagonists showed towards their homeland. In the 1967 film *Upkar*, for example, there is a famous song called "Mere Desh Ki Dharti," meaning "The Land of My Country," dedicated to praising the land of India and all it has to offer.<sup>24</sup> One main actor of the 1970's, Manoj Kumar, even built his entire celebrity image by consistently portraying characters who showed intense patriotism to

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<sup>20</sup> Gokulsing 2

<sup>21</sup> Gowariker, Ashutosh, dir. *Lagaan*. Perf. Aamir Khan, Gracy Singh, and Rachel Shelley. 2001. Film.

<sup>22</sup> "The 100 Best Films Of World Cinema." *Empire*. Bauer, 2010. Web. 13 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.empireonline.com/features/>>.

<sup>23</sup> Kavoori 107

<sup>24</sup> Kumar, Manoj, dir. *Upkar*. Perf. Manoj Kumar, Asha Parekh, and Prem Chopra. 1967. Film.

India and became known as “Mr. Bharat,” or “Mr. India.”<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, most films before the late 1990’s were set entirely in India, including the popular movies *Zanjeer* (1973), *Sholay* (1975), and *Deewar* (1975). But during the 2000’s, the strong sense of belonging and connection the characters shared with their motherland all but disappeared. Movies like *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (2003), *Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna* (2006), and *Ta Ra Rum Pum* (2007), for instance, are based entirely in New York and never even show India. Although the motive of the creation behind such movies is western appeal, the justification to traditional Indian audiences has been that Indians today should be aware of global traditions and familiar with foreign nations.<sup>26</sup> The strategy of using western locations to appeal to western audiences has been succeeding. This success can be seen from the revenues of *Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna*, which totaled about 3.3 million dollars worldwide, making *KANK* the highest-grossing Bollywood movie overseas at that time.<sup>27</sup> Successful director and producer Karan Johar agrees that “setting movies in a beautiful city like New York definitely helps draw more of a crowd.”<sup>28</sup> Though Bollywood films have lost the sense of belonging and Indian patriotism that used to permeate the industry, their foreign locations have succeeded in attracting overseas audiences.

Another change implemented by Bollywood filmmakers has been the increasing use of English in their movies. Hindi has always been the main language of Bollywood. Before forces of change seeped into the industry in the 1990’s, the Urdu language supplemented Hindi. Hearing Urdu words like “jazzbat” (feelings), “ibaadat” (worship), and “shabba khair”

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<sup>25</sup> "Manoj Kumar." *Bollywood 501*. Ed. Byron Aihara. N.p., 7 July 2003. Web. 15 Dec. 2012. <[www.bollywood501.com/](http://www.bollywood501.com/)>.

<sup>26</sup> Rao

<sup>27</sup> "Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna." *Box Office Mojo*. N.p., 2006. Web. 15 Dec. 2012. <<http://boxofficemojo.com>>.

<sup>28</sup> Fadnavis, Mihir. "Interview with Karan Johar." *Blogspot*. N.p., 17 Oct. 2012. Web. 6 Feb. 2013. <<http://mihirfadnavis.blogspot.com/>>.

(goodnight) mixed in with Hindi dialogues was common.<sup>29</sup> However, English, the language of the west, has now replaced Urdu as the supplemental language for Bollywood. Classic Urdu words like “ishq” have been exchanged for the English equivalent, “love.”<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, English has become more than just a supplemental language, often times appearing as the dominant language in post-2000 scripts. 1970’s and 1980’s films utilized English sparingly, like *Deewar*, which had less than 15 English words in the entire 175-minute film.<sup>31</sup> Nowadays, however, movies like *Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna*<sup>32</sup> contain mostly English or Hinglish, a combination of Hindi and English.<sup>33</sup> Other films, such as *Kisna: The Warrior Poet* (2005), have even been filmed in both Hindi and English, using the English version for overseas distribution to encourage and successfully gain international viewership.<sup>34</sup> Justifying the increasing amount of English heard in Bollywood, Johar states, “I try to appeal to as many people as I can.”<sup>35</sup> The liberal use of English in 21<sup>st</sup> century Hindi cinema has made great progress in drawing western audiences but differs significantly from the language used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century films.

The image of the ideal protagonist in Hindi cinema has also changed. Back in the 1970’s and 80’s, the hero of these films would be the poor Indian who stood up and fought for justice. An actor famous for portraying this character is Amitabh Bachchan, who was nicknamed “Angry Young Man” because of his numerous roles in which he struggled to deliver the justice that poor, innocent people deserved.<sup>36</sup> During this period, Bollywood movies depicted the average Indian citizen as the ideal protagonist. In general, foreign countries were looked down upon, and

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<sup>29</sup> Kavoori 45

<sup>30</sup> Kavoori 46

<sup>31</sup> Chopra, Yash, dir. *Deewar*. Perf. Amitabh Bachchan, Shashi Kapoor, and Nirupa Roy. Trimurti Films, 1975. Film.

<sup>32</sup> Johar, Karan, dir. *Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna*. Perf. Shahrukh Khan et al. Yash Raj Films, 2006. Film.

<sup>33</sup> Kavoori 108

<sup>34</sup> Kavoori 108

<sup>35</sup> Rao

<sup>36</sup> Rao

Bollywood discredited those who had emigrated out of India.<sup>37</sup> These non-resident Indians, or NRI's, were posed in an unfavorable light. The 1970 film *Purab Aur Paschim*, for instance, depicts NRI's as the prime example of what Indians should not become. Meaning "East and West," this movie tells the story of a man who goes to London and reintroduces the westernized NRI's to their Indian roots.<sup>38</sup> The NRI's in movies like these exemplified what most Indians perceived western culture to be at that time.<sup>39</sup> Several scenes in the movie show the NRI's defying Indian values like respecting elders, such as when Preeti ignores her parents or when Harnam attacks his grandfather. Among other activities, these NRI's kissed in public, wore miniskirts, drank excessive amounts of alcohol, and owned large mansions, forgetting the joy of simplicity in life.<sup>40</sup> However, this very representation of the NRI that Bollywood frowned upon in the 70's and 80's became the image of the typical protagonist in the 2000's. It is now common to see characters like the NRI's in *Purab Aur Paschim* portrayed in a favorable light (see Appendix A). Westernized Indians and NRI's no longer present the image that Indian citizens should avoid, but instead show the characters they should strive to become.<sup>41</sup> In order to appeal to international audiences, Bollywood had to look at westernization with a positive perspective, which it did by idealizing western values.

These foreign values depicted in *Purab Aur Paschim* foreshadowed some more of the changes Bollywood would undergo on its journey to appeal to the west, including that of a changed family structure. The family exists as an institution of utmost importance in Indian society and fosters countless values, including those of maintaining household relationships and

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<sup>37</sup> Rao

<sup>38</sup> Kumar, Manoj, dir. *Purab Aur Paschim*. Perf. Manoj Kumar, Saira Banu, and Pran. Ultra Distributors, 1970. Film.

<sup>39</sup> Rao

<sup>40</sup> Kumar, Manoj, dir. *Purab Aur Paschim*.

<sup>41</sup> Therwath, Ingrid. "Shining Indians': Diaspora and Exemplarity in Bollywood." *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*. N.p., 2010. Web. 3 Dec. 2012. <<http://samaj.revues.org/>>.

respecting elders. The most common organization in the traditional Indian household is the joint family structure, in which the immediate family along with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins live together in the same house.<sup>42</sup> Hence, 20<sup>th</sup> century Bollywood movies appropriately emphasized the importance of family. Films like *Deewar* (1975) and *Ram Lakhan* (1989) stressed the importance of familial ties, and movies like *Hum Aapke Hai Kaun* (1994) and *Hum Saath Saath Hain* (1999) focused on traditional joint families. In *Deewar*, the protagonist even delivers a famous dialogue that stresses the importance of family. When Vijay exclaims (translated from Hindi), “Today I have a bungalow, a car, bank balance. What do you have?” his brother Ravi replies, “I have Mother,”<sup>43</sup> showing that family is more important than anything else. However, newer movies like *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* (2008) or *Cocktail* (2012) not only lack the element of a joint family, but also fail to show the parents of the protagonists, instead focusing on individuals living without the guidance or support of their relatives. This veering away from joint families occurred because nuclear families are more common in western countries, so westerners would not be able to identify with typical joint family situations.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, in order to appeal to western audiences, Bollywood is shedding the notion of the family as a support system, which used to be a crucial component of Hindi films.

Another force of westernization in Bollywood movies manifests itself in the fashion trends of celebrities on the big screen. Back in the 60’s and 80’s, Bollywood stars would wear traditional Indian clothes on screen. Men would often wear a *kurta-pajama*, a *dhoti*, or simple button-down shirts, and women almost always wore *salwars*, *ghagara-cholis*, or *sarees*. Furthermore, female protagonists would rarely ever wear revealing styles, as it was an aspect of

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<sup>42</sup> Wolpert, Stanley. *India*. Berkeley: U of California, 1991. Print. 133

<sup>43</sup> Chopra, Yash, dir. *Deewar*.

<sup>44</sup> Etuk, Lena. "How Family Structure Has Changed." *Rural Communities Explorer*. Oregon State University, 2008. Web. 15 Dec. 2012. <<http://oregonexplorer.info/rural/RuralIssues/FamilyStructure>>.

Indian culture to dress modestly.<sup>45</sup> In modern times, however, the wardrobe of Bollywood actors exudes western influence. Male protagonists these days sport flashy jackets and trendy shirts in place of the traditional kurta. Female protagonists have seen an even larger change in Bollywood fashion as designers swapped the traditional sarees and salwars for pants, skirts, and dresses, which are typical elements of western attire.<sup>46</sup> The styles have also gotten much more liberal and revealing, which goes against the 20<sup>th</sup> century Bollywood notion of dressing with modesty (see Appendix B).<sup>47</sup> Regarding the transformation in Bollywood fashion, successful fashion designer Manish Malhotra insists that he would like to “stay true to his Indian roots” but that fashion critics and others in the industry “label it as being too repetitive.”<sup>48</sup> He explains that Indian fashion today requires a contemporary twist that “needs to be ‘today’ or ‘now’,” which will help increase its global appeal.<sup>49</sup> Hence, Bollywood is shedding its traditional look and trending towards western styles for international gain.

The liberalism associated with westernization is also impacting this film industry. Censorship of sexual content in Bollywood is an area where this liberalization is especially evident. In general, any form of public display of affection or kissing has been inherently prohibited in India for decades; this prohibition is simply a part of Indian culture, even off of the silver screen. For example, in 1980 Bollywood actress Padmini Kholapuri shook the nation by kissing Prince Charles on the cheek; in 1993, actress Shabana Azmi did the same by kissing

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<sup>45</sup> Wolpert 137-39

<sup>46</sup> Christie. "What Should the Average Wardrobe Consist Of?" *SOS Organize*. Blogspot, 13 July 2009. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <<http://simpleorganizedsanity.blogspot.com/>>.

<sup>47</sup> Many scholars associate this liberalization in women's clothing with the idea that the image and role of women in India is changing, and that the traditional Indian woman is gaining more independence. As the scope of this topic is large, it will not be discussed in this paper. For further reading on the changing image of the Indian woman, see source: Biswas, Ranjita. "The Typical Bollywood Heroine Image Is Changing." *Glamsham.com*. Fifth Quarter Infomedia, 2008. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.glamsham.com/movies/features/>>.

<sup>48</sup> Vepa, Shweta. "Haute Talk: Designer Manish Malhotra." *Luxpresso*. Times, 23 Dec. 2011. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <<http://luxpresso.com/interviews-time-n-style/>>.

<sup>49</sup> Agarwal, Shradha. "Lookback." *The Telegraph*. N.p., 14 May 2010. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.telegraphindia.com/>>.

Nelson Mandela.<sup>50</sup> Even recently, kissing in public in India has been an issue, as when a kiss shared by actor Shahid Kapoor and Kareena Kapoor made the news headlines in 2004, or when American actor Richard Gere scandalized the nation by kissing Indian actress Shilpa Shetty in 2006.<sup>51</sup> Non-celebrities get in still more trouble, at times even being arrested for kissing publicly.<sup>52</sup> Unlike western countries where kissing both on and off screen is the norm, public kissing is a big deal in India, and it is for this reason that censorship of sexual content in Bollywood essentially refers to censoring the kiss.<sup>53</sup> Throughout the 1960's and most of the 1970's, not a single kiss was shown in Bollywood.<sup>54</sup> Instead, filmmakers developed a sort of symbolic code that stood for kissing. For example, showing a shot of a couple followed by a shot of two flowers in a garden or a bird on a branch implied that the couple was kissing.<sup>55</sup> Filmmakers would also often use clever photography or camera placement to imply kissing but avoided displaying any actual lip lock (see Appendix C). The Film Censor Board of India stated that it censored such content because it believed that it distinguished India from the West.<sup>56</sup> When the first mainstream kiss of independent India hit the theaters in the 1978 film *Satyam Shivam Sundaram*, it caused havoc across the nation. The kiss between actor Shashi Kapoor and Zeenat Aman was extremely controversial, causing public protests and even leading to three court cases against the film for being obscene.<sup>57</sup> Now, 35 years later, the Film Censor Board has allowed numerous films to show kissing. Newer films like *Dhoom 2* (2006), *Jab We Met* (2007), and *Guru* (2007) all include kissing scenes. Even Bollywood superstar Shahrukh Khan, who had

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<sup>50</sup> Singh, Vanita. "In India, Kiss and Face the Music." *IBN Live*. CNN, 19 June 2007. Web. 3 Dec. 2012. <<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/>>.

<sup>51</sup> Singh

<sup>52</sup> "No Kissing Please, We Are Indians." *BBC News*. BBC, 6 Feb. 2009. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <[news.bbc.co.uk/](http://news.bbc.co.uk/)>.

<sup>53</sup> Duke, Jennifer S. "The "Kiss Controversy", and Over-Sexualisation of Pride and Prejudice." *The Bennet Sisters*. Wordpress, 10 May 2010. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <<http://thebennetsisters.wordpress.com/>>.

<sup>54</sup> Mehta, Monika. *Censorship and Sexuality in Bombay Cinema*. Austin: U Texas, 2011. Print. 129

<sup>55</sup> Singh

<sup>56</sup> Gokulsing 53

<sup>57</sup> Mehta 129

vowed to never kiss on screen, gave in to the changing forces and kissed Katrina Kaif in *Jab Tak Hain Jaan* (2012).<sup>58</sup> Khan explains, “We keep trying to find a format where we will be able to appeal to a global audience.”<sup>59</sup> Other actors have fully endorsed the kiss in Bollywood, such as Emraan Hashmi who has made a profession of “serial kissing” through numerous movies, including *Murder 2* (2011) and *Raaz 3* (2012).<sup>60</sup> The tight restrictions of Bollywood have begun to loosen up. This liberalization parallels that which Hollywood saw in 1952. Hollywood too had strict censorship in the form of the Motion Picture Production Code, which was adopted in 1930.<sup>61</sup> In 1952, however, Hollywood scrapped the Code in order to become a more competitive industry.<sup>62</sup> It seems Bollywood is moving in the same direction, relaxing its standards in order to become more competitive and recognized overseas.

After implementing all these changes to appeal to international – specifically western – audiences, has Bollywood succeeded in gaining more profits and recognition overseas? Statistics indicate that it has indeed. A 2005 UNESCO report stated that Bollywood movie revenues overseas grew ten-fold between 1995 and 2005.<sup>63</sup> Also, according to NCM Media Networks, Yash Chopra’s last film, *Jab Tak Hain Jaan*, made number eight on the list of weekly top-grossing movies in the U.S. during the week of November 23, 2012.<sup>64</sup> As for recognition, more and more theaters have begun showing Bollywood movies. Regal Entertainment Group, for

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<sup>58</sup> "Jab Tak Hai Jaan." *IBN Live*. CNN, 17 Nov. 2012. Web. 16 Dec. 2012. <<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/>>.

<sup>59</sup> Shell, Amanda. "Bollywood's Success Threatens to Outshine Hollywood." *Tennessee Journalist*. U Tennessee, 20 Aug. 2008. Web. 17 Dec. 2012. <<http://tnjn.com/>>.

<sup>60</sup> Singh

<sup>61</sup> Maltby, Richard. "Censorship and Self-Regulation." *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Ed. Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: Oxford UP, 1997. 235-48. Print. Will Hays helped establish Hollywood’s first self-regulating code to protect audiences from moral evils that specifically many Catholics were opposed to being shown in movies. Though the code initially served its purpose and ensured that the content of movies would be appropriate for their audiences, it went through many revisions over the years. By the 1950’s however, movie attendance had begun to decline, so the code was retired in order to make Hollywood a more competitive industry. (See Appendix E).

<sup>62</sup> "Why Movies Matter." Introduction. *Movies and American Society*. Ed. Steven J. Ross. Malden: Blackwell, 2002. 1-13. Print. Blackwell Readers in American Social and Cultural History 10. 8

<sup>63</sup> Kavoori, Anandam P., and Aswin Punathambekar, eds. *Global Bollywood*.

<sup>64</sup> *NCM Media Networks*. NCM, 2 Dec. 2012. Web. 3 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.ncm.com/>>.

example, has theaters that hold regular Bollywood screenings in sixteen U.S. states and in Washington, D.C.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the United States is not the only country where Bollywood has received more and more attention. As iconic superstar Amitabh Bachchan explains in an interview, “Evidently, our film personalities have begun to matter in the world. Hindi cinema is gaining worldwide recognition.”<sup>66</sup> In fact, Bollywood movies are now viewed not only in South and Southeast Asia, but also in East Africa, Mauritius, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Britain, Canada, Australia, France, Israel, Indonesia, Malaysia, and over 50 other countries.<sup>67</sup> The audience and viewership has steadily increased overseas since the mid 1990’s, and in 2004 Bollywood officially overtook Hollywood in terms of number of viewers to become the film industry with the largest audience.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, Bollywood’s westernization has absolutely helped the Hindi film industry increase its profits and expand its overseas market.

Exactly how this westernization of Bollywood has impacted India as a whole is difficult to determine. However, though the mechanism of change is hard to pinpoint, westernization has had a definite impact on popular Indian culture through Bollywood. For example, western holidays and observances that were not a big deal in India before this wave of change became more glorified and prominent as Bollywood began to incorporate and portray such celebrations. The most notable of these western celebrations that has seen an increasing acceptance in India is Valentine’s Day. With movies like *Baghban* (2003) dedicating songs to this event, modern Indian society too has seen and accepted Valentine’s Day as a welcome western influence.<sup>69</sup> Conversely, changes in Indian society have impacted Bollywood’s view of westernization as well. For instance, women’s rights activists in India have gained more recognition and approval

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<sup>65</sup> *Movies: Bollywood*. Regal Entertainment Group, 3 Dec. 2012. Web. 3 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.regmovies.com/>>.

<sup>66</sup> Kavoori 20-1

<sup>67</sup> Kavoori 98

<sup>68</sup> Shell

<sup>69</sup> Kavoori 62

in the past few years, leading to Bollywood movies like *Kahaani* (2012), which show strong female protagonists that break from the conventional roles of women in Indian society.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, advances like these in Indian society may have resulted from the ongoing globalization in this era of worldwide communication; this globalization is in turn brought to the Indian people through many entities, including Bollywood. Thus the exact roots of westernization in India are hidden deep within a complex, intertwined web of cross-cultural influences and ideas. As far as the impact of Bollywood on India or the impact of India on Bollywood is concerned, Filmfare award-winning director Rajkumar Santoshi sums up the situation perfectly when he explains, “Movies simultaneously shape *and* reflect changes in society. What audiences see is a reflection of what they are, and what they are is influenced by what they see.”<sup>71</sup>

Yet, in this effort to appeal to global audiences, Bollywood may be losing its audience at home. By focusing on urban and overseas viewers, modern Hindi cinema is neglecting the traditional and rural audiences. There is a disconnect between the rural viewers and the characters and ideas portrayed in modern Bollywood. As Krishan, a farmer living in a remote village near Patiala, Punjab exclaims, “The characters in films are not connected to our real lives. Have you noticed they never show the streets now? They never show regular people like us. Most of the time they are not even in India.”<sup>72</sup> Krishan’s frustration and inability to connect with Bollywood protagonists nowadays is shared by much of the rural population of India,<sup>73</sup> which constitutes over half of India’s 1.2 billion people.<sup>74</sup> Another example of the discontent

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<sup>70</sup> Gokulsing 91

<sup>71</sup> Jha, Subhash K. "Raj Kumar Santoshi." *Glamsham.com*. Fifth Quarter Infomedia, 2007. Web. 5 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.glamsham.com/movies/interviews>>

<sup>72</sup> Rao

<sup>73</sup> Rao

<sup>74</sup> "Percentage Living in Rural Areas by Country." *NationMaster.com*. N.p., 2009. Web. 17 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/>>.

experienced by rural audiences due to the westernization of Bollywood can be seen in their reactions to the increased amount of kissing shown. When famous actress Aishwariya Rai Bachchan had her first on-screen kiss in *Dhoom 2*, she received death threats and legal notices for committing such an action. She relates that some traditional viewers harshly criticized her, telling her, “You are iconic, you’re an example to our girls. You have led your life in such an exemplary manner. They’re not comfortable with you doing this on screen, so why did you?”<sup>75</sup> And yet, *Dhoom 2* did extremely well in theaters, becoming the third highest-grossing Indian film ever at the time of its release.<sup>76</sup> Situations like this indicate the growing tensions between the traditional audiences of Bollywood and the filmmakers in the industry working to increase revenue. If Bollywood does not find the perfect balance between global and rural soon, it may entirely lose its traditional audience. Then Bollywood would appeal to urban and international audiences while traditional audiences would flock to the other, smaller forms of Indian cinema. Such a break from traditional audiences would cause Bollywood to become a truly global entity, still deriving support and viewership from urban and modern Indian audiences, but also relying heavily on international audiences to sustain and fuel the industry. In such a scenario, Bollywood would no longer be stuck between western and Indian culture, and no traditional audience would hold the industry back. Rather, if Bollywood kept trying to accommodate the preferences of international fans and adapting to please as many viewers as possible, it would morph into a film industry that represents the generic popular culture of the entire world.

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<sup>75</sup> Bull, Sarah. "Bollywood Actress Aishwariya Rai Bachchan on Her First Screen Kiss." *Mail Online*. Daily Mail, 6 Dec. 2012. Web. 17 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/>>.

<sup>76</sup> Bull

Appendix A: Vices of the NRI in *Purab Aur Paschim* Accepted in Bollywood Today<sup>77</sup>

Figure 1: Short Skirts



*Purab Aur Paschim* (1970)



*Kuch Kuch Hota Hain* (1998)

Figure 2: Drinking



*Purab Aur Paschim* (1970)



*Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu* (2012)

Figure 3: Lavish Lifestyles



*Purab Aur Paschim* (1970)

Notice the size and expensive furnishings of the house in the background.



*Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* (2001)

Notice the private helicopter and the castle-like mansion.

<sup>77</sup> YouTube. Google, n.d. Web. 17 Dec. 2012.

Figure 4: Kissing in Public



*Purab Aur Paschim* (1970)



*Jab We Met* (2007)

Appendix B: Bollywood Fashion Then and Now <sup>78</sup>

Figure 1: Women's Fashion



*Chandni* (1989)

The female protagonist wears a traditional saree.



*No One Killed Jessica* (2011)

The female protagonist wears a skirt and blouse.



*Maine Pyar Kiya* (1989)

The female protagonist wears a chudidaar/salwar kameez.



*Om Shanti Om* (2007)

The female protagonist wears a dress.



*Chandni* (1989)

The female protagonist wears a modest ghagra.



*Tees Maar Khan* (2010)

The female protagonist wears a revealing ghagra/skirt. Clothes with this amount of exposure would have been unacceptable for respectable actresses to wear in the 1970's.

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<sup>78</sup> YouTube.

Figure 2: Men's Fashion



*Purab Aur Paschim* (1970)

The male protagonist wears a traditional kurta.



*Salaam Namaste* (2005)

The male protagonist wears a casual shirt.



*Silsila* (1981)

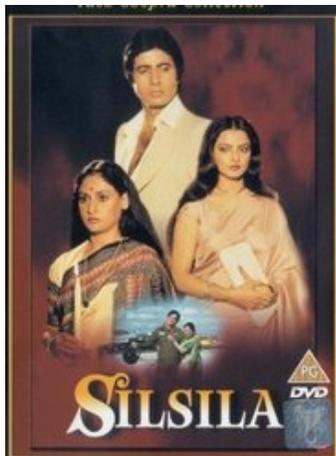
The male protagonist wears a simple jacket.



*Players* (2012)

The male protagonist wears a fancy designer jacket.

Figure 3: Overall Trends



*Silsila* (1981)<sup>79</sup>



*Cocktail* (2012)<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> "Silsila." *Filmiholic*. N.p., 22 Aug. 2006. Web. 17 Dec. 2012. <<http://filmiholic.com/>>.

<sup>80</sup> "Cocktail." *FilmiTown*. N.p., 2012. Web. 17 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.filmitown.com/>>.

Appendix C: Avoiding the Kiss<sup>81</sup>

Figure 1: Camera Placement



*Deewar* (1975)

The camera is placed at such an angle that the actors lips are not visible. Furthermore, this frame lasts on screen for less than a second, as the movie immediately cuts to the next scene.

Figure 2: Symbolism



*Saathi* (1968)

The image on the left is followed by the one on the right, implying the couple kissed.

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<sup>81</sup> *YouTube*.

Figure 3: Clever Photography



*Bobby (1973)*

In this scene, as the boy and girl approach each other, the frame switches to their reflection in a pond. Right as the couple is about to kiss, flower petals fall into the pond, causing ripples that obstruct the view of their lips.

## Appendix D: Information about Bollywood Movies Appearing in this Paper

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Director</u>	<u>Translation</u>
Baghban	2003	Ravi Chopra	Gardener
Bobby	1973	Raj Kapoor	Bobby
Chandni	1989	Yash Chopra	Moonlight
Cocktail	2012	Homi Adajania	Cocktail
Deewar	1975	Yash Chopra	The Wall
Dhoom 2	2006	Sanjay Gadhvi	Crazy Fun 2
Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge	1995	Aditya Chopra	Brave Heart Wins the Bride
Don	1978	Chandra Barot	Don
Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu	2012	Shakun Batra	One Me And One You
Gol Maal	1979	Hrishikesh Mukherjee	Confusion
Guru	2007	Mani Ratnam	Teacher
Hum Aapke Hain Koun	1994	Sooraj Barjatya	Who Am I To You
Hum Saath Saath Hain	1999	Sooraj Barjatya	We Stand United
Jab Tak Hai Jaan	2012	Yash Chopra	As Long As I Live
Jab We Met	2007	Imtiaz Ali	When We Met
Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna	2006	Karan Johar	Never Say Goodbye
Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham	2001	Karan Johar	Sometimes Happy Sometimes Sad
Kahaani	2012	Sujoy Ghosh	Story
Kal Ho Naa Ho	2003	Nikhil Advani	Tomorrow May Never Come
Karan Arjun	1995	Rakesh Roshan	Karan Arjun
Kisna	2005	Subhash Ghai	Kisna: The Warrior Poet

Kuch Kuch Hota Hai	1998	Karan Johar	A Little Something Happens
Lagaan	2001	Ashutosh Gowariker	Land Tax
Maine Pyar Kiya	1989	Sooraj Barjatya	I Fell In Love
Murder 2	2011	Mohit Suri	Murder 2
No One Killed Jessica	2011	Raj Kumar Gupta	No One Killed Jessica
Om Shanti Om	2007	Farah Khan	Peace For All
Players	2012	Abbas-Mustan	Players
Purab Aur Paschim	1970	Manoj Kumar	East And West
Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak	1988	Mansoor Khan	Resurrection to Resurrection
Raaz 3	2012	Vikram Bhatt	The Secret 3
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi	2008	Aditya Chopra	A Match Made By God
Ram Lakhan	1989	Subhash Ghai	Ram Lakhan
Saathi	1968	C.V. Sridhar	Companion
Salaam Namaste	2005	Siddharth Anand	Hello Hi
Satyam Shivam Sundaram	1978	Raj Kapoor	Truth Is Eternal And Beautiful
Sholay	1975	Ramesh Sippy	Embers
Silsila	1981	Yash Chopra	Sequence
Ta Ra Rum Pum	2007	Siddharth Anand	Ta Ra Rum Pum
Taal	1999	Subhash Ghai	Rhythm
Tees Maar Khan	2010	Farah Khan	Killer Of Thirty Men
Upkar	1967	Manoj Kumar	Favor
Zanjeer	1973	Prakash Mehra	Shackles

Appendix E: The Original, 1927, Hollywood Motion Picture Production Code (Hays Code)<sup>82</sup>

It is understood that those things included in the following list shall not appear in motion pictures irrespective of the manner in which they are treated:

1. Pointed profanity – this includes the words God, Lord, Jesus Christ (unless they be used reverently in connection with proper religious ceremonies), S.O.B., Gawd, and every other profane and vulgar expression.
2. Any licentious or suggestive nudity-in fact or in silhouette; and any lecherous or licentious notice thereof by other characters in the picture.
3. The illegal traffic in drugs.
4. Any inference of sexual perversion.
5. White slavery.
6. Miscegenation (sex relationships between the white and black races).
7. Sex hygiene and venereal diseases.
8. Scenes of actual childbirth – in fact or in silhouette.
9. Children's sex organs.
10. Ridicule of the clergy.
11. Willful offense to any nation, race or creed.

It is also understood that special care be exercised in the manner in which the following subjects are treated, to the end that vulgarity and suggestiveness may be eliminated and that good taste may be emphasized:

1. The use of the Flag.
2. International relations (avoiding picturing in an unfavorable light another country's religion, history, institutions, prominent people, and citizenry).
3. Religion and religious ceremonies.
4. Arson.
5. The use of firearms.
6. Theft, robbery, safe-cracking, and dynamiting trains, mines, buildings, et cetera (having in mind the effect which a too-detailed description of these may have upon the moron).
7. Brutality and possible gruesomeness.
8. Technique of committing murder by whatever method.
9. Methods of smuggling.
10. Third degree methods.
11. Actual hangings or electrocutions as legal punishments for crime.
12. Sympathy for criminals.
13. Attitude toward public characters and institutions.
14. Sedition.
15. Apparent cruelty to children and animals.
16. Branding of people or animals.
17. The sale of women, or a woman selling her virtue.
18. Rape or attempted rape.

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<sup>82</sup> Maltby 239

19. First night scenes.
20. Man and woman in bed together.
21. Deliberate seduction of girls.
22. The institution of marriage.
23. Surgical operations.
24. The use of drugs.
25. Titles or scenes having to do with law enforcement or law enforcement officers.
26. Excessive or lustful kissing, particularly when one character or the other is a 'heavy'.

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