Interpolating Xenophobia through Cultural Artefacts: A Case Study of Selected Bollywood Historical Adaptations as G(local) State Apparatus

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Abstract

Cinema has a unique quality that engages diverse audiences and transcends spatial and cultural constraints. Considering this widening impact of films on designing and influencing thought paradigms, my study investigates how film media can be used as a Glocal state apparatus to gain greater ideological ends. Over the years, the Bollywood film industry has produced many films that reinforce the national sentiment by weaving racial, ethnic, and cultural prejudices into the narrative of productions exclusively dealing with the us/them dichotomy. The study's argument would restrict itself to scrutinising the characters, narrative, plot construction, point of view, and mise en scene, as filmed in the Bollywood historical adaptations Padmavaat (2015), Jodha Akbar (2008) and Earth (2009). Though the movies are cross-temporally situated, the author has chosen these film texts on thematic grounds, i.e. ethnic dichotomies. These film texts will be analysed by referring to Althusser's theorisation of ideology, ideological state apparatuses, and interpellation to find out how certain cultural artefacts can transcend their prescribed role as means of entertainment and become Glocal state apparatus to get the local as well as the global audience interpellated into a desired narrative. Moreover, the study has also benefitted from Linda Hutcheon's journalistic formula for analysing adaptations, which is used as a supporting lens to uncover the ideological implications of the selected film texts. The study has delimited its discussion on the role of ideological state apparatuses in executing an ideology.

Keywords: *Interpolation, Cultural Artifacts, Bollywood Historical Adaptations, Glocal, Xenophobia, Interpolation*

The Trajectory of Films from Trans-spatial Entertainment to Political Activism

Since its inception in the late nineteenth century, Film has passed through profound transformation processes that switched its status from a sheer means of entertainment to a potent propagandist tool. More than anything else, this trajectory is made possible through the Film's integration of realistic settings, its natural tendency to engage people emotionally, and its mass accessibility. Film has become the most potent weapon hitherto designed among the cultural artefacts by man to propagate meaning shaded in targeted hues. "Film doesn't reveal the real in a moment of transperancy, but rather that film is constituted by a set of discourses which (in the positions allowed to subject and object) produce a certain reality" (MacCabe 11). The selection and organisation of specific values or ideas that together become an ideology to impart a particular meaning and its consequent interpellation in a particular context with clearly crafted motives have become the most significant function performed by films as cultural products for the past many decades. The Film holds the undivided attention of the masses, who do not turn to other mediums to question the authenticity of the information conveyed by a bunch of characters who execute a carefully designed plot to gain certain social, political, or cultural ends.

From the earliest films on technological wonder by the Lumiere brothers in 1895 to silent films like *Charlie Chaplin* in the early twentieth century, cinematic productions were a means of pure entertainment for the people faced with the crises of war and economic depression during the first half of the twentieth century. However, like other cultural artefacts, films could not resist the influence of world wars that switched cinema's aesthetic and entertaining function with a political one. Films were used as potential political tools to shape public opinion, i.e., bolstering war sentiment and dehumanising the enemy. *The Birth of a Nation (1915)*, *The Battle of Somme (1916)*, and the series *Why We Fight (1942-1945)* are illustrations in this regard. A critical study of these movies unveils their pivotal role in unifying nations and propagating ideologies. *Triumph of Will (1935)* is a key example that categorically sets cinema's impression as a political tool. The Nazis used this film as a propaganda tool to exalt Hitler's policies and practices and to dehumanise the opponents. By deliberately exposing imagery, emotion, and symbolism, the film contributed to winning the mass following for Hitler (Kracauer). There was a noticeable surge in cinema's use as a political instrument during the sociopolitically turbulent decade of the 1960s. Films like *Dr. Strangelove (1964)*, *The Battle of Algiers (1966),* and *The Graduate (1967)* addressed the burning issues of the age, like civil rights, anti-war sentiment, and the rise of counter-sociopolitical discourses.

Hence, films did not take long to transgress the boundaries of sheer entertainment and entered the arena of politics to be used as potent political tools that could de/construct popular narratives. On the one hand, it stimulated communal politicking and a critical approach; on the other, it became a vehicle for ideological stratagems. However, the lines between entertainment and political messaging have never been as blurred as in contemporary

films, which can be interpreted as cinema's version of post-modernism. The hegemony of Hollywood in the film industry across the globe has played a key role in shaping the trends in the national and international cinema industries. Its power to shape public opinion and global political narratives has specifically turned the Film into a benign propagandist tool. While discussing the political aspects of films, the contemporary critic Slavoj Žižek states, "[m]odern [c]inema is no longer a mere reflection of political reality; it actively participates in shaping our political imaginations" (Fienness 00:15:30). The case of cultural/ethnic identities, feminism, racism, and concerns like climatic action and social justice, which are the focal points of countless contemporary discourses, were cinematised in blockbusters like *Black Panther (2018)*, *Wonder Woman (2017)*, *Do not Look Up (2016),* and *Civil War (2024)*, a few examples from a remarkably significant number produced by Hollywood that reflect and generate political discourses on significant issues.

Bollywood, the Indian film industry, has skillfully chipped itself into this prevalent trend in the cinema industry. From the narratives that reinforce Indian nationalism, i.e. *Mother India (1957),* to the reflection of social issues like poverty, gender inequality, and racial discrimination i.e. *Pink (2016)* and *Thappad (2020),* from the critique and support of political agendas, i.e. *Haider (2014)* to the creation of biopics, i.e. *The Legend of Bhagat Singh (2002)* and *PM Narendra Modi (2019)*, Bollywood's role in Indian sociopolitical landscape is diverse. From challenging norms to reinforcing politically informed ideologies, it is struggling to keep pace with the popular trends in cinema across continents. By reflecting societal concerns and cultural identities through its content and techniques, Bollywood cinema plays a significant role in shaping the political imaginaries of its consumers (Ganti). The Bollywood production *Border (1997),* written in the context of the India-Pakistan war, focuses on constructing national identity and promoting national sentiments. While portraying the enemy, the film reasserts the binary of good and evil, where the Indian soldiers symbolise good with their surging patriotism and self-sacrificing stances. In contrast, the Pakistani soldiers are presented as epitomes of evil and self-centeredness. *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) also represents ideological conflicts between India and Pakistan. Besides fostering national sentiment, the film justifies the use of military force to crush the evil designs of the enemy, i.e., Pakistan, in the context of the film.

Given this historically rich context, where the intersection between films and politics has contributed immensely in reflecting and re/shaping ideologies, the present study aims to unfold the political implications of Bollywood cinema by critically examining a selected number of historical adaptations. The historical context of the selected movies and the nature of the perpetual belief-driven conflict between Hindus, a dominant majority in present-day India, and Muslims, a minority in India but a Majority group in Pakistan, provides a rationale for this study. While detailing the miscellaneous aspects and functions of representation, the cultural theorist Stuart Hall calls it a complex business, "especially when dealing with 'difference', it engages feelings, attitudes, and emotions, and it mobilises fears and anxieties in the viewer, at deeper levels than we can explain in a simple, common-sense way" (226). In

light of Stuart's theorisation of representation and cinema's political role in contemporary times, the researcher will attempt to unfold Bollywood's role in reinforcing the historical Hindu/Muslim conflict. My study will adopt the method of narrative analysis to analyse the nature and scope of the selected film texts while theorising them as political constructs. While deploying this method to study, I will focus on the genre, story, plot, characters, and the use of mise en scene in the selected film texts to reach deeper insights that may correspond to the needs and aims of this study. However, as a point of departure, my study will establish a theoretical connection between film and ideology to postulate the possibility of its role as a *Glocal* state apparatus in essence and function

Films as Ideological Texts

Before elaborating on the theoretical and practical role of ideology in the selected films, which my study intends to pursue as an objective, it is important to foreground the notion of ideology itself as a point of start. A simple version explains ideology as the body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture. The term's coinage is attributed to the French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy (1796), who called it "the science of ideas" (qtd. in Emmet Kennedy 353). According to the eminent Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser, ideology is more a product of imagination than real-life circumstances. He calls it an "imaginary misrecognition of the subject's relation to (his or her) real conditions of existence" (346). It is the binding force, the soul, to the body of a socially and culturally united group. Stuart Hill's thesis on culture also provides a cogent explanation in this regard. According to him, culture is a physical manifestation of ideology as it denotes the "shared values" of a group or society.

> It is not so much a set of things —novels and paintings or TV programs and comics —as a process, a set of practices. Primarily, culture is concerned with the production and exchange of the giving and taking of meaning between the members of a society or group. (02)

This exchange is made possible in all needed aspects and through all available and possible mediums. Cultural artefacts are one such medium through which this meaning is conveyed. Hall explains this process of collaboration as,

> It(meaning) is produced and transmitted in a variety of different media, especially these days, in the modern mass media, the means of global communication, by complex technologies, \which circulate meanings between different cultures on a scale and with a speed hitherto unknown in history. (10)

In the context of Film, one may safely assert that a set of ideas within the Film can influence a viewer's perception of reality. Films transcend the borders of entertainment and become a powerful medium of influence when viewed through ideology. "Ideological considerations allow us to understand the relationship between film texts and their cultural contexts" (Hall 171). Comolli and Narboni argue that because every film is part of an economic system, it is also part of an ideological system, for "cinema and art are branches of ideology (30). According

to Douglas Kellner, "[i]n film, ideology is transmitted through images, scenes, generic codes and narrative as a whole" (375).

Althusser's thesis on ideology lifts it from the abstract space of ideas and mental representation and lands it on concrete plains of assertions and demonstrations. By ascribing a material essence to ideology, Althusser paves the way for introducing those mediums through which the ideology becomes a concrete reality. It works via particular apparatuses that can both be *repressive* (Army, Judiciary, Police) and *ideological* (church, media, art) (121-138). The thesis of this study uses Althusser's theorisation of "ideological state apparatus" as an analytical lens to study Film as a *Glocal* state apparatus that builds and strengthens ideological narratives while targeting a local as well as global audience.

Films are ideological texts in the sense that more or less almost every film is projected with either an implicit or an explicit understanding of ethics/morality/, with an unflinching bond of fidelity towards an ideology based on the dichotomy of right and wrong, good and evil, human and inhuman, native and foreign, divine and mundane, us and them. The transcultural and the transtemporal nature of the medium grants it the liberty to delve into different cultures by moving across the temporal and the spatial limits to fall in favour of some and to turn hostile towards others. Considering this broader perspective on films, the study investigates how transcoding or translating a particular cultural ideology through the medium of films is becoming one of the most effective *(G)local* state apparatuses in contemporary times by focusing mainly on Bollywood cinema. The shift in the screen's position from a recreational activity to a propagandist tool has made it an effective weapon in favour of state-sponsored ideology. Films are believed to reflect the fundamental beliefs of a society – ideologies (Phillips).

Film ideologies can be conveyed either explicitly (showing) or implicitly (explaining). The working of an implied ideology in a film can be tracked while being on a deeper level of interpretation. The moral, religious, political, and cultural messages can be conveyed through the characters' growth, their dealings with other characters in the film, their sense of the world, their aims, ambitions, and consequent actions are the routes to reach the destination of the implied ideology deftly knitted in the film by the production house. Hence, the couched ideology demands a vigilant viewership that is alive in the role of interpretation and understanding. On the other hand, explicit ideology does not demand any interpretive and reflective role from the audience. Contrary to implicit ideological techniques, it is more transparent. The point of view is communicated through extensive imagery, mise en scene, and an open allegiance or taking sides. The study takes this ground as a departure point to investigate selected films' role as ideological tools.

Politics on the Edge: The Role of Bollywood Historical Adaptations

In the Film domain, adaptation is considered an advanced process designed to cater to specific ideological needs and guard particular cultural myths by projecting them to a *(G)local* (global & local) audience. According to Dean Duncan, all productions are adaptations.

Adaptations are often discussed, as Seymour Chatman has suggested using a lover's vocabulary: "One is faithful, another betrays, i.e., dis/loyal to the source" (qt in *Adaptation, Enactment, and Ingmar Bergman's Magic Flute*). In general, the critics of historical representations stress the contextual considerations. Such considerations relate to the audience's expectations at which a product is targeted and the overall socio-political and cultural context within which a product is produced and received (Perdikis 251). Adapting historical figures or events for a visual presentation or representation is one of the most effective means to kindle a particular ideology among the receivers of that adapted text/film that somehow carries some more extensive interests, not always but often of a state-sponsored policy. "Adaptation has also been viewed as a process that depends on those involved in their making" (Hutcheon 84). While observing this aspect of historical adaptations, the study aims to investigate the portrayal of Subcontinental Muslim emperors in the pre-colonial period and of the Muslims at the time of partition, in comparison and contrast to the other ethnicities, in particular, the Hindus, in the selected Bollywood films.

  Padmavaat (2015), *Jodha Akbar* (2008), and *Earth* (1999) are a few popular Bollywood cinema productions that adapt the historical figures from the late thirteenth and sixteenth centuries and a historical event from the first half of twentieth-century Indian history, respectively. Alla ud Din Khilji's portrayal in *Padmavaat* with that of Raja Ratan Singh and his wife, Rani Padmavati, as his counterparts seem to be involved in the controversy of adapters allegiance/xenophobic reaction towards a chapter in the history of undivided India. The betrayal of Ratan Singh's trustee forces these central characters into a triangular relationship throughout the plot to highlight the evil in Khilji's character and virtue in Ratan Singh and Padmavati. Khilji's ambitious pursuit of Rani Padmavati and his use of force, deceit, and lies to materialise his ambition starkly contrast with the brave, bold, and honest stance of both Ratan Singh and his wife Padmavati. The movie offers Khilji's character in a negative light from beginning to end. His Machiavellian ascends to power, his sexual promiscuity, his crookedness, his cowardice that always seeks refuge in deception, his caricatured physical appearance being reflective of his inner corruption, his barbarism, his callousness and his obsessions, all these aspects set him as a foil to his male rival, Raja Ratan Singh, who is presented as an epitome of honesty, integrity, bravery, truth, straightforwardness, honour, dignity, and manly grace. Under his influence, the character of Rani Padmavati is exalted from her traditional subaltern position and shifted from the margin to the centre. She has been given the agency to exert her subjectivity in both the private and public spheres, contrary to a woman's sociocultural space in that society.

  The 2008 Bollywood production, *Jodha Akbar*, narrates the tale of the conditions that led to the making of a conjugal bond between a Mughal Indian emperor, Jalal ud Din Akbar, and a Hindu Rani Jodha Bai. Akbar's portrayal in *Jodha Akbar* does not show the diabolism introduced as a dominant element of Khilji's character in *Padmavat (2015)*. Nevertheless, Akbar's portrayal seems quite minimalistic when viewed through the accounts provided by many historians who title him as the most potent and ambitious among the Mughal Emperors

(Elgood 135). The initial part of the film presents Akbar's character as a peace spoiler, a usurper of otherwise peaceful states under the supervision and control of Hindu Rajas. Only after his marriage to the Rajput rani, Jodha, he steps on the road to a better, more organised, more informed, and peaceful governess. The more significant part of the film screens him in the overly simplified role of a lover whose sole ambition is winning the goodwill of Jodha, who is presented as an embodiment of human goodness. As portrayed in the movie, success, acceptance, and fame become Akbar's ultimate fate only after he sets on the mission to win Jodha's heart. He does this by taking specific, generous steps for his masses, represented mainly by the Hindu community in the film. The other characters in the film, who represent the two major ethnic groups, i.e., Muslims and non-Muslims, are also placed in conflicting situations caused mainly by Muslims. The ideological agenda of Othering the Other seems quite explicit despite the efforts the adapter put into enhancing Akbar's character with the physical charms that Khilji's character lacks.

The adaptation of the partition scene, prevalent in Lahore by the Bollywood production *Earth (1999),* is yet another example of the strategic campaign the Bollywood industry supports to uphold particular state-crafted ideological stands. The Muslim protagonist in the film stands more or less in the same light as Khilji and is coloured in the same shades that serve to accentuate his savagery, and xenophobia charged in the wake of partition. His betrayal of Hindu friends and Shanta (beloved) in the name of revenge after receiving the chopped, mutilated dead bodies of his sisters from the other side of the border, his show of sadistic mob mentality by becoming a part of riots against the Hindu minority in the post-partition Lahore make the greater focus of the on-screen representation than the emotional trauma, he is forcefully pushed into after experiencing the loss of his family and the pain of unrequited love. No other character in the film from different ethnicities is drawn in as unfavourable a light as Ice Candy Man. The adaptation shifts for screen presentation exclude the emotional and spiritual rebirth and the compensatory steps the protagonist took in the post-partition period.

The Glocalization of Bollywood Cinema: A Way Forward For Glocal Interpellation

Before analysing the selected film texts as *Glocal State Apparatus* interpolating *Xenophobia*, the concepts of *Glocalization*, *Glocal*, and *Xenophobia* need some light in the context elucidated to appropriate the argument of the study that intends to contend these as ideological aspects of the selected historicised Bollywood artefacts. *Glocalisation* is a process that integrates local interests with global forces. It also suggests adapting and interpreting global phenomena at a local level. The sociologist Roland Robertson defines *Glocalization* as "the simultaneous occurrence of both universalising and particularising tendencies" (25). It creates a situation in politics, economy, and cultural studies where the universal and the local coexist as tendencies or considerations. Similarly, the word *Glocal*, an adjective, refers to all those systems, mediums, and situations where Glocalization works as a process. In this way, *Glocal* becomes a channel for communication and a platform to build local and global consensus. The internet

is the most extensively quoted example of *Glocal* apparatuses in the media field as it enables people to generate websites in their native language with global access. Besides the internet, television and commercials are the other traditionally accepted forms of *Glocal* apparatus. They serve as a means for global companies to localise their products.

The Film can be discussed as an intervention among the commonly known manifestations of *Glocal* apparatuses since it tends to introduce local cultural and ideological preferences to a global audience. It has often been used as a state-sponsored tool to propagate hatred or fascination for a particular culture clad as *Xenophobia*. *Xenophobia* implies a feeling of fear or extreme hatred for the foreign, the alien, the strange, and the *Other*. It expresses the perceived conflict between an *ingroup* and an *outgroup*. It may manifest in suspicion about the activities of the *Other* as a desire to eliminate their (outgroup) presence and fear of losing national, racial, or ethnic identity. Ingroup refers to a social group or community to which an individual identifies himself psychologically (Bolaffi 332). It can range from family to friends to political, racial, and religious associations that impart some emotional or psychological satisfaction. The intrusion by the *outgroup*, the Other in this comfort zone, is repelled by the subject in fear of the probable damage it can wreak. The repel finds expression in taking all those steps at all those channels that reach and influence the ingroup mates to instil fidelity towards natives and hatred for the *Other*. *Ingroup* favouritism and *outgroup* prejudice at the cost of merit and principles are the significant aspects of xenophobic conduct, leading to many other explicitly taken stands and firmly held beliefs of the ingroup members. Expression of this ideological stance through the medium of Film to exalt the ingroup as an epitome of perfection and to defame the outgroup as deprived of that goodness for a global audience is quite a noticeable feature of the selected movies that explicitly work on the nativistic/ xenophobic agenda.

The selected films successfully create an outgroup homogeneity effect. This effect is created to present the *outgroup* as homogeneous in expressing negative traits. The selected films successfully communicate this allegiance/ xenophobic dichotomy by introducing characters from the *outgroup* and *ingroup* to a *Glocal* audience. The outgroup characters and the events around them are organised in a manner that offers a disgusting foil to all refinement and principal goodness that the characters representing the ingroup claim. The characters of Alla ud Din Khilji, Behram Khan, Adam Khan, Shareef ud Din, the Clerics, Maha Manga, and Ice Candy Man symbolise the *outgroup* homogeneity in terms of moral and ethical deprivations. Contrary to this, the movies present 'ingroup' as heterogeneous or diverse, where one man's evil is an individual case, but goodness is a collective phenomenon. The characters of Raja Ratan Singh, Rani Padmavati, Raja Beharmal, Raja Sureya Man, Rani Jodha, and Shanta symbolically stand for the 'ingroup' who are epitomes of collective goodness.

For Althusser, ideology is not necessarily a false consciousness that forces people to see the world from the dominant point of view, as Marx claimed, while theorising the nature and workings of ideology within a social framework. Contrary to the Marxist school of thought, Althusser explains ideology on two grounds. First, according to him, "ideology represents the

imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." Second, "ideology has a material existence" (153-55). The first point presents ideology as a delusion that must exist permanently in society to connect the people. In the context of the present study, films become a means not only to deliver an ideology to people in an implicit manner but also to refresh the connection of allegiance, companionship, and loyalty among them as a community and to give strength to hatred and disapproval (Xenophobia) for the Other. The selected movies perform this ideological function in multiple ways. They even go to the extent of glorifying the *Subaltern* who happens to be a woman (Padmavati, Jodha) in the patriarchal Indian culture at the cost of the historically privileged Muslim men, the *Other* (Khilji, Akbar). Contrary to the disclaimer in the beginning, the adapter's ideological inclination towards his native culture, through the characters of Ratan Singh, Padmavati, and Jodha, speaks stridently on many occasions throughout the plot development. Moreover, instigating the same reactions of amazement, loyalty, inspiration, and pride coupled with the contrary reactions of shock, hatred, rejection, and criticism in the audience sounds like the working of a carefully drafted ideological agenda of this on-screen re/presentation.

While adding to Althusser's projection of ideology, Robert Stam claims that according to a good number of film theorists, the visual readers or the spectators are "locked into a structure of misrecognition" and accept the realities and identities presented to them through Film in an unquestioning manner (136). This eliminates the difference between the local and the global audience by turning them into the *Glocal* receivers of a *Glocal* screen re/presentations. However, its function for the two kinds of audience slightly varies. For the first (the local audience), it is a reconnection and reclaiming of an ideology already grounded in them. For instance, the films under discussion shake and alert the targeted local audience to some ideological beliefs they are already interpellated with. They are reminded of their subject position about the *Other*, which is far inferior to their refined historical, cultural, and political conditions reflected in the portrayals of Raja Ratan Sing, Rani Padmavati, Rani Jodha, and some other minor characters. For the international audience, it becomes a primary source of information about a particular culture and the ideology it propagates without digging deep into the truths about those representations. Althusser also introduces the concept of *interpellation* to explain the workings of ideology in transforming individuals into subjects in the present context, the audience. The process of countering and internalising the ideological or cultural values of the people is called interpellation. Interpellation explains ideology's workings in making individuals the subjects.

Contrary to Lacanian stance on an individual's journey towards becoming a subject at the "symbolic stage", Althusser claims that people do not become a "subject" during their life journeys. Instead, they are born as "subjects" (119). It is so because almost every individual is conceived in the womb of a particular ideology as a pre-constituted subject. The people as individuals are the bearers of a particular ideology and are always already interpellated as subjects. However, they will be aware of this position once they are placed into a situation

that unveils their veiled ideological position. The Film is one medium that stimulates this "subject formation" process.

Althusser's concept of interpellation and his stance on ideology are enlightening, as they facilitate the discussion on the role and the purposes behind the intervention of ideology in Film. The targeted film texts support the elaboration of this argument. Fusing these theoretical grounds with Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation is likely to add analytical insights while studying adaptations. Linda Hutcheon's foregrounding of the adaptation process on journalistic grounds is a convincing lens while analysing films as ideological state apparatuses. The familiar journalistic questions: What? (Forms), Who? Why? (Adapters), How? (Audience), Where? When? (Contexts). In the domain of screen adaptations, as listed by Hutcheon, the analysis of adaptations provides a logical ground to debate the political nature of the visuals. This parsing of the adaptation process is highly significant while analysing the selected historicised Bollywood films that this study aspires to deal with. Hutcheon's journalistic queries become the theoretical postulates to build the argument on the role that the selected movies play in instigating allegiance to the native culture and *xenophobic* reaction towards the other in the audience. In this way, a means of entertainment becomes a means of interpellating a particular ideology that somehow favours the state's interest at both the local and the global fronts.

The first question that Hutcheon asks (What) relates to the medium or form of adaptation, which in the present case is the Film. Film adaptations have been defined as a *dialogic process* by the film critic Robert Stam in his reviews. Being an adequate and complete sensory experience, the film adaptations of the historical events and characters revive a fresher and greater degree of interest on the part of ordinary men in history, who seldom turn to other sources of information to know their historical past. The Bollywood film industry holds a tangible record of adapting many historical events and characters for representation on Screen. By doing this, it provides the local people and the people living around the globe with the opportunity to set or reset their ties with history. *Padmavaat* (2015) is one such cultural product by Bollywood that brings to contemporary life a thirteenth-century Indian Muslim emperor, Alla ud Din Khilji, from the annals of a distant past. The second central character in the movie is Rani Padmavati, whose historic existence has always been a matter of controversy and doubt for many historians. However, her fictional existence in an epic written by a Sufi poet, Malik Muhammad Jassi, holds great importance even today. Similarly, Jodha Akbar is another cinematic version of the sixteenth-century Muslim Mughal emperor, Jalal ud Din Akbar, and his Hindu Rajput wife, Jodha. The historical episode of India/Pakistan segregation pictured by Bapsi Sidhwa in her internationally acclaimed novel *Ice Candy Man/Cracking India (1988)* was adapted by the Bollywood Industry for the big screen under the title *Earth (1999).*

The second set of questions that Hutcheon asks is more pertinent to the argument under discussion as it addresses the most important considerations in the adaptation process. The questions *Who* and *Why* relate to the adapter's position in the adaptation process. The 'Who' part of the question addresses the adapter's social, political, and cultural position,

which will impact the adaptation process. The *why* part focuses on the reasons or motives for adaptation, ranging from sheer entertainment to a politically, socially, or culturally favoured agenda. Generally, this adaptation process makes all kinds of theoretical interventions possible. Adapter's adherence to a particular philosophy, ideology, or code of morality, his inclinations, likes and dislikes, his cultural and racial background, his loyalty to the state and state policies, and the extent of his exposure and experience all contribute to giving an individualised taste to the adapted version of the source. An adapter's *allegiance* or *xenophobic* reaction towards a particular literary text, historical event, or character not only colours his perception and organisation of the source into an adaptation but also instigates a similar response among the receivers of that adaptation. By merging both these question segments, one can reach a more comprehensive understanding of the selected movies.

The movies offer, to the Native and the international audience, a narrative that exalts the *Native* (adapter) and debases the *Other* (adapted). Hence, an industry that predominantly represents, propagates, and celebrates the native Hindu culture fits into the role of the 'adapter' in the present case. Moreover, the industry represents one of the two cultural forces that are shown in strife with each other. Hence, it is natural for ideological inclinations and prejudices to find a comfortable room to show up. The portrayal of Alla ud Din Khilji's character in *Padmavaat*, who symbolically stands for the *Other* in the Indian cultural orientation, works quite actively throughout the plot. The partiality it imparts to the narrative goes strongly in favour of the cultural, ideological, and political commitments of the adapter. The point of view of the adapter regarding a historical character, whom his cultural and political history brands as a foreign usurper, finds expression by offering a reductive representation of Khilji in terms of appearance, manners, vision, actions, governs, and commitments. The very first appearance of Khilji sets him as a villain. Savage murders, an erotic show of sexuality, aberrant actions, and a lust for beauty and power "hail" the audience to develop a dislike for him that gets stronger with each passing scene. He has been dehumanised to the extent that invites not only the viewer's disgust but also instigates a strong desire for exemplary extermination. The occasional presence of an omniscient narrator further exacerbates Khilji's impression. "That night both of them saw the savagery of Alla ud Din. The earth trembled like grace and the moon in the sky, the one who has a right over every precious thing" (Padmavaat 00:07:03). Akbar's character in *Jodha Akbar* shares the exact reductive portrayal though in a different way. He is not presented negatively but is stripped of the grace and grandeur historically related to his personality, being the most powerful and influential among the Mughal emperors. The film reduces his stature from an ambitious ruler to a lover seeking to win the goodwill of his Hindu wife and doing whatever falls in the way. The film credits Jodha for sparking Akbar's humanism, expressed in his steps to make his society more inclusive (Jodha Akbar 01:59:30 - 02:05:28).

Ice Candy Man's character in *Earth (1999)* also speaks for the point of view of the adapter, who perceives and interprets the source from the cultural and ideological lens he holds for being a representative of the community that was also a stakeholder in the situation,

represented through the degenerative process in Ice Candy Man's character. The beast in him that rises to its fury in the wake of partition fails to discriminate between friends and strangers along with the other Muslim ravagers. The adapter makes adaptation shifts with a special focus on the violent activities of the protagonist against the Hindu and the Sikh community living in Lahore at that time and by a complete exclusion of the rehabilitation process that soon starts and the regeneration that takes place in the protagonist's character. Moreover, the film does not record any episode where Hindus or Sikhs are shown as indulging in violence against Muslims or even expressing hatred. However, this perception is not supported historically. Hari, the Hindu gardener, the Hindu sweeper, and Shanta, the Hindu Aaya, represent a peace-loving community that fights shy of violent situations. The conversions of some Hindu characters, the reasons for their conversion, and the reaction they face despite being converted are also illustrations from the film that are highlighted in particular to refer to the non-assimilating aspect of Muslim culture. The adapter's manner of adapting a source for the big screen provides an explicit answer to the implied question regarding the adapter's motives. The aforementioned references from the targeted movies serve a particular ideological or cultural need. In the context of the present study, kindling hatred against others and instigating inspiration for the native culture and cultural values of a global audience have become active ideological needs that must be fulfilled.

The third and fourth questions in Hutcheon's list link back to the second set of questions, i.e. "Who" and "Why." The 'How' in Hutcheon's agenda refers to the audience and how they receive and interact with an adaptation. Does that reception or interaction carry some obvious or hidden ideological agenda? The fourth and the last questions of Hutcheon seek answers to *where and when* that relates to the context in which an adaptation process occurs. Together, all these questions create a cogent space for an ideology to set in. The historical, political, and strategic reasons create a context in which the audience interacts with an adaptation. Hence, the overall adaptation process, which includes the form, the adapter, the audience, and the context, becomes a channel to gain certain ideological ends, i.e., the reinforcement of ethnic and ethical superiority in the context of selected films.

Althusser also introduces "hailing" in his stance on ideology as a stimulant to make individuals aware of their position as "subject." "All ideologies hail or interpellate concrete individuals as concrete subjects" (115). The ideological, cultural, or material imperatives acknowledge an individual as a subject through hailing. A person realises his subject position due to that hailing, an idea's forceful, oppressive materialisation. Cultural, political, religious, and social institutions, the ideological state apparatus, as Althusser calls them, hail people in their social interactions. Consequently, a state of hegemonic acceptance and obedience is created for an ideological interpellation. These days, the media of Film is deployed as one of the most influential and wide-ranged ideological state apparatuses, as a concrete form of ideology to hail the audience to make it realise its position as a subject, an integral part of the narrative that the Film delivers. Once the Film builds that connection, it succeeds in getting its audience interpellated. In Althusserian terms, the Film becomes a channel for

Reconnaissance, a point where the subjects practically realise a theoretical problem. The films under discussion perform both these functions quite committedly. Khilji's Machiavellian and diabolical nature in the film sits in sharp contrast to the idealistic portrayal of Raja Ratan Singh, the epitome of bravery, honesty, and steadfastness, who prefers to die while battling valiantly for his honour and integrity instead of compromising on his principles. While on the other hand, Khilji's character is presented in utter deprivation of any such attribute. Instead, he is mimicked to the extent that sexual promiscuity becomes the only defining aspect of his character.

By portraying a Hindu raja in the most illustrious manner and a Muslim emperor in the most notorious way, the Film becomes a means, an apparatus through which the imaginary and the real connect on an ideological plain for the local consumers. Furthermore, the international consumer enters an arena where he gets interpellated in the ideology delivered to him through film media. The idea of assimilation, for instance, is associated with the Hindu culture for being more open, embracing, and generous in approach. Jodha's community accepted Akbar's marriage to Jodha without any serious objection or reaction. Instead, Akbar is welcomed enthusiastically, though as an exotic addition to the community. Contrary to it, the Muslim arrogance towards other cultures and their unwillingness to tolerate cultural differences is presented as a typical reaction of the said community. Akbar comes forward as an exception owing to his fascination with the Rajput culture, which is a constant motif throughout the Film.

The partition narrative in the *Earth (1999)* also presents Muslims as an intolerant community to an international audience whose natural ability to compromise, accept, and forgive is quite limited. The film does not focus as much on the reasons that lead to Ice Candy Man's dehumanisation, the post-partition violence that came into swing on both sides of the border right after the partition, as on the actions that were taken by Ice Candy Man and his fellow Muslims in the wake of partition. His dehumanisation reaches the apex when the mob, following his directions, drags away the Hindu Aaya, the epitome of innocence and helplessness. (Rather, it intensifies agreeing to hand over the Hindu Aaya, with whom he claims to be in love, to the mob to avenge the murder of his sisters, which is a case in point. The Hindu community's flexibility is presented through the characters' willingness to convert to Islam, their unwillingness to become a part of violence and their efforts to restore peace to the land.

As argued by this study, the mise en scene in the fore-discussed films also contributes to fulfilling the ideological agenda at work. For instance, the space assigned to Khilji's palace and Ratan Singh's fort in terms of settings is highly significant. Khilji's place is presented as lacking in space and light display. It is presented as a dull, drab place mostly covered with grey and black shades, the symbols that are traditionally associated with the house of corruption and evils. Contrary to it, the very first appearance of Ratan Singh's fort shows it as a spacious, well-lighted, and colourful place, a specimen of architectural perfection that symbolises the openness of those residing in it (Padmavaat 00:14:28). The costumes and the personal

appearance of the characters also offer a sharp contrast in terms of beauty, grace, and colour choices. In *Jodha Akbar*, the violent scenes of war and bloodshed are associated with Akbar and his people. Conflict of opinion, shedding of blood and hatching conspiracies are more common in the areas under Akbar's jurisdiction than those of Hindu Rajputs. These elements also contribute to the ideological agenda of presenting the Muslim other as impulsively violent. Whereas Jodha and her kin's influence spark Akbar's peacefulness, the other male characters in the movie, i.e. Shareef ud Din, clerics, and some other state officials are portrayed as propagators of violence and anarchy. The stereotyped role of patriarchy is presented as more functional in the scenes that take place inside the palace of Khilji than in the fort of Ratan Singh. The scenes where Khilji can be seen as exploiting his wife emotionally and physically, reducing her to a mere commodity to get certain ends, carry a particular intensity that hails the audience with the idea of female objectification in Muslim societies. Contrary to this, Ratan Singh is portrayed as an upholder of gender equality. Whereas his generosity is personally directed, the acceptance in Akbar of Jodha's individuality is portrayed as a reaction to Jodha's surpassing goodness. Rani Jodha's character in Jodha Akbar and Padmavatti's in Padmavat dominate the scenes as individualised, emancipated, learned, skilled, devoted, and honest to set them in contrast with their Muslim counterparts who are presented either as suppressed, dependent, and limited in personal capacities, i.e Mehru, Saleema, and Bakhshi Bano or crooked and deceptive, i.e., Mahamanga. The *Earth* is also set in the same frame, and contrary to the characters belonging to other ethnic communities, the Ice Candy man's pretentious, sly, and deceptive nature dominates the scenes whether he deals with friends as in the pre-partition part of the movie or foes as in the post-partition part of the movie.

Hence, Film has emerged as one of our time's most complex, impactful, and influential cultural productions. The drastic shift in its status from an absolute means of entertainment to a potential political tool has convinced the state to co-opt it. Consequently, it has become a *Glocal* state apparatus employed to shape the global and local narratives. The ideological, cultural, and strategic conflicts among nations that previously found expressions on limited platforms and had limited access to their desired platforms are now conveniently communicated through film media, clad as entertainment. Bollywood, one of the most influential film industries around the globe, is quite alert to this uplift in Film's position and has adapted itself to the change. The cultural rift between Hindus and Muslims that led to their segregation as Indians and Pakistanis is an ever-active source of providing content for the Bollywood industry, particularly in the realm of historical adaptations. Using these adaptations as a *Glocal* state apparatus for interpolating a state-sponsored policy and getting the local and global audience interpellated to it is a significantly demonstrated aspect of Bollywood films. The study has pursued its argument on these lines and hopes to open new vistas of understanding while reading films, particularly historical adaptations.

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